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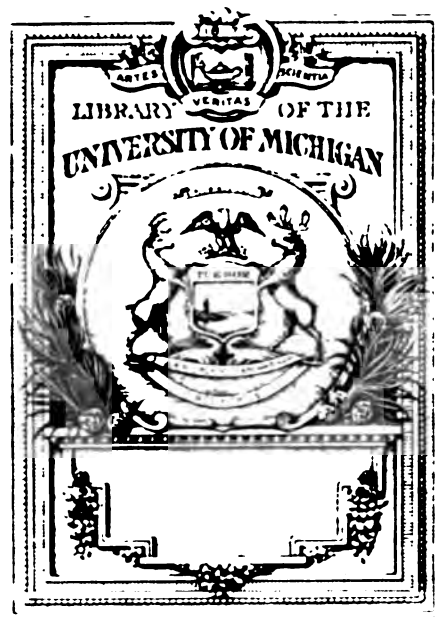
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HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES: -----

5-6955
COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

49° VICTORIÆ, 1886.

VOL. CCCII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE TWELFTH DAY OF JANUARY 1886,

TO

THE FOURTH DAY OF MARCH 1886.

FIRST VOLUME OF THE SESSION.

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1886.

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Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *agreed to*:—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

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| (11.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,430, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Secretary for Scotland" .. | 764 |
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| Original Question put, and agreed to. | |
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- | | |
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- | | |
|---|-----|
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M O T I O N S .

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- | | |
|--|-----|
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Original Question again proposed	1002
After short debate, Original Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill read a second time, and <i>committed for To-morrow</i> .	

MOTIONS.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

<i>Moved</i> , "That a Select Committee be appointed 'to inquire into the operation of 'The Endowed Schools Act, 1869,' and the amending Acts, and to consider and report how far it may be expedient to amend the powers exercised under them by the Charity Commissioners,"—(<i>Sir Lyon Playfair</i>)	1006
<i>Motion agreed to.</i>	

Rivers Purification Bill — <i>Ordered</i> (<i>Mr. Hastings, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Lord Charles Beresford, Sir W. Guyer Hunter, General Sir William Crossman, Colonel Sandys</i>); <i>presented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 101]	1006
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Mines Bill — <i>Ordered</i> (<i>Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Burt, Mr. Blake, Mr. Allison, Mr. Abraham (Rhonda Valley), Mr. Mason, Mr. Saunders</i>); <i>presented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 102]	1007
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Hyde Park Corner (New Streets) Bill — <i>Ordered</i> (<i>Mr. Leveson Gower, Mr. Fowler, Mr. Broadhurst</i>); <i>presented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 103]	1007
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Leaseholds (Facilities of Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill — <i>Ordered</i> (<i>Mr. Lawson, Mr. Burt, Mr. Puleston, Colonel Hughes-Hallett, Mr. Holden, Mr. Arthur Cohen</i>); <i>presented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 104]	1007
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Removal Terms (Burghs) (Scotland) Act (1881) Amendment Bill — <i>Ordered</i> (<i>Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. J. W. Barclay, Mr. Eugene Watson</i>); <i>presented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 105]	1007
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Corrupt Practices (Municipal Elections) (Scotland) Bill — <i>Ordered</i> (<i>Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. W. A. Hunter</i>); <i>presented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 106]	1007
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KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS)—

<i>Committee appointed</i> , "to control the arrangements of the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, in the department of the Serjeant of Arms attending this House:"— <i>List of the Committee</i>	1007
--	------

Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Continuance Bill — <i>Ordered</i> (<i>Mr. John Morley, Mr. Henry Fowler</i>); <i>presented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 107]	1008
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Coal Mines Regulation Act (1872) Amendment Bill — <i>Ordered</i> (<i>Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. T. P. O'Connor</i>); <i>presented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 108]	1008
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Real Assets Administration Bill — <i>Ordered</i> (<i>Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Molloy</i>); <i>presented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 109]	1008
[1.30.]	

LORDS, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23.

NAVY—COAST DEFENCES—RESOLUTION—

<i>Moved</i> , "That there be laid before this House Reports of Admiral Hamilton or of any other officer commissioned to inquire into Coast Defences and the Royal Naval Volunteer Artillery Corps,"—(<i>The Viscount Sidmouth</i>)	1008
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) <i>withdrawn</i> .	

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE—DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE OF 1879 —

Questions, Observations, Viscount Enfield, Viscount Midleton; Replies,
Lord Aberdare, Lord Thurlow

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[5.15.]

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M O T I O N S .

IMPERIAL REVENUE (IRELAND AND GREAT BRITAIN)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That there be laid before this House, a Return of the Gross Imperial Revenue of Ireland derived from taxation, and of the Population of Ireland for the years 1861,

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IMPERIAL REVENUE (IRELAND AND GREAT BRITAIN)—*continued.*

1861, 1871, and 1881, and a like Return for Great Britain for the same years, being in both cases a continuation, in like form, of Parliamentary Paper, No. 407, of Session 1874,"—(*Sir Joseph McKenna*) 1039

After debate, Amendment made, in lines 3 and 4, by leaving out the words "Great Britain," and inserting the words "England and Scotland," instead thereof.

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*.

APPOINTMENTS UNDER THE CROWN—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the method of appointment and apportionment of salaries and duties under the Crown,"—(*Mr. Gosham*) .. 1074

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill [Bill 60]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*) 1079

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Viscount Cranborne* :)—After further short debate, Question put, and *negatived*.

Original Question again proposed 1103

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, and that it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire into the operation of 'The Employers' Liability Act, 1880'" 1114

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill committed to a Select Committee.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire into the operation of "The Employers' Liability Act, 1880:"—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

—o—

Mines Rating Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Warrington, Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Cobb*) .. 1115

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE—

Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1115
[12.45.]

LORDS, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24.

Their Lordships met for Judicial Business only. [11.45.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24.

MR. OCTAVIUS VAUGHAN MORGAN—

Ordered, That the Order [19th February], appointing a Select Committee to consider whether Mr. Octavius Vaughan Morgan is disqualified from sitting and voting as a Member of this House, be read and *discharged*,—(*Sir John Lubbock*.)

QUESTION.

—o—

PUBLIC MEETINGS—SPEECH OF LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL AT BELFAST—

Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1116

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Tenure of Town Houses (Ireland) Bill [Bill 11]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Crilly*) .. 1117
After long debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Bill *withdrawn*.

Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill [Bill 26]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. C. H. James*) 1159
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for Monday 22nd March.

Metropolitan Board of Works (Water Supply, &c.) Bill [Bill 34]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir James M'Garrel-Hogg*) .. 1164
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Coops.*)
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"
—After short debate, it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

Married Women (Maintenance in Case of Desertion) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Puley, Mr. Thomas Blake, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Warmington*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 111] 1168

Payment of Members Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Spensley, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Boyd-Kinnear, Mr. Conybeare*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 112] .. 1168

Land Tax Commissioners' Names Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Leveson Gower, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 113] 1168

School Fees of Non-Paupers Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Llewellyn, Sir Richard Paget, Mr. Hobhouse*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 114] 1168

Income Tax Administration Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hubbard, Sir Charles Forster, Mr. Leatham, Mr. Whitley*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 115] .. 1169

Merchandise Marks Act (1862) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Joseph Cowen, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Baden-Powell, Viscount Cranborne*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 116] 1169
[5.50.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25.

Freshwater Fisheries (Eels) Bill (No. 15)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d,"—(*The Lord Thurlow*) .. 1169
Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^d accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow*.

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES—RESOLUTION—*Moved* to resolve—

"That in the opinion of this House no further steps either of demolition or construction ought to be taken under the Public Offices Site Act before Her Majesty's Government have heard the deputation from the Institute of Architects, arranged to take place on the 1st of March next,"—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) .. 1170
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

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Arbitration Bill [H.L.]—Presented (The Lord Bramwell) ; read 1 ^a (No. 17)	1187
Justices' Jurisdiction Bill [H.L.]—Presented (The Lord Bramwell) ; read 1 ^a (No. 18)	1187
Law of Evidence Amendment Bill [H.L.]—Presented (The Lord Bramwell) ; read 1 ^a (No. 19)	1187
Union of Benefices Bill [H.L.]—Presented (The Earl of Milltown) ; read 1 ^a (No. 20)	1187 [6.0.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25.

P R I V A T E B U S I N E S S .

PARLIAMENT—STANDING ORDERS—

Question, in Standing Order 183A, in line 49, after the word "Metropolis," to leave out the words "or Scotland," put, and <i>agreed to</i>	1188
Question, in line 50, after the word "Department," to insert the words "and as regards Scotland, the Secretary for Scotland," put, and <i>agreed to</i> .	

BELFAST MAIN DRAINAGE BILL—RESOLUTION—

<i>Moved</i> , "That the Petition against the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, deposited in the Private Bill Office on the 19th instant, be printed and circulated with the Votes,"—(Mr. Sexton)	1189
<i>Motion agreed to</i> .	

N O T I C E .

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MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY—

<i>Moved</i> , "That the Orders of the Day subsequent to the Order for the Committee on the Land Registry Bill [<i>Lords</i>] be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of a Bill relating to Crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland,"—(<i>Mr. Gladstone</i>) 1228
Motion agreed to.	

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-6)—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(1.) £460, London University.—After short debate, Vote agreed to	.. 1228
(2.) £750, University Colleges, Wales.	
(3.) £27,700, Public Education, Ireland.—After short debate, Vote agreed to	.. 1234

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(4.) £3,000, Slave Trade Services.	
(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, in aid of Colonial Local Revenue, and to defray the Salaries and Allowances of Governors, &c., and other Charges connected with the Colonies, including Expenses incurred under 'The Pacific Islanders Protection Act, 1875'"	.. 1244
After short debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £45, be granted, &c."—(<i>Mr. T. M. Healy</i>)	.. 1253
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Original Question put, and agreed to.	

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

(6.) £3,000, Superannuation and Retired Allowances.—After short debate, Vote agreed to	.. 1257
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(12.) 2,500 Men and Boys, Navy	
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After further short debate, Question put :—The Committee <i>divided</i> ; Ayes 67, Noes 246 ; Majority 179.—(<i>Div. List, No. 11</i> :)—After further short debate, Original Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> .	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(<i>Mr. Brunner</i> :)—Motion <i>agreed to</i> .	
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ORDER OF THE DAY.	
—•—	
Lunacy (Vacating of Seats, Bill [Bill 85]—	
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Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> .	
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—•—	
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POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS—RESOLUTION—	
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That Standing Order 173A shall be applicable to all Bills referred to the said Committee.	
That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.	
That Five be the quorum,"—(<i>Mr. Broadhurst</i>)	
	1361
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Main Question put, and agreed to.	

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

METROPOLIS—THE METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE—ORGANIZATION—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, no reform of the administration and organization of the Metropolitan Police Force will be satisfactory unless provision is made for such reform of the government of the Metropolis as will insure to representatives of the ratepayers of the Metropolis a direct control over their own police,"—(*Mr. James Stuart*),—instead thereof

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question: "—After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

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SUPPLY—Order for Committee read—*continued*.

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair :"—

LOANS TO LANDOWNERS—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is desirable that more extended facilities should be given by legislation to owners of land to improve their estates by means of moneys borrowed on Terminable Annuities from the State,"—(*Sir John Swinburne*) .. 1450

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question :"—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair :"—

TENANTS OF GLEBE LANDS (IRELAND)—Observations, Mr. W. O'Brien ;
Reply, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler):—Short
debate thereon .. 1473

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," by leave,
withdrawn :—Committee upon *Monday* next.

Sporting Lands Rating (Scotland) Bill [Bill 86]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Dr. Cameron*) .. 1487

After short debate, Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time, and *com-*
mitted for *Monday* next.

M O T I O N S.

—o—

Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill—

Ordered (*Mr. Leeson Gower, Mr. John Morley*) ; *presented*, and read the first time
[Bill 119] .. 1488

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT [STAMP DUTY]—

Considered in Committee .. 1488
Resolution *agreed to* ; to be reported upon *Monday* next.

Compensation for Damages Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Secretary Childers, Mr. Broadhurst*) ;

presented, and read the first time [Bill 120] .. 1488

Marriages (Attendance of Registrars) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Richard Webster, Sir*
Richard Cross, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Baggallay) ; *presented*, and read the first time

[Bill 121] .. 1489
[1.15.]

LORDS, MONDAY, MARCH 1.

Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill (No. 12)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) .. 1489

After debate, Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read 2^d accordingly, and *committed*
to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* the 15th instant.

Lunacy Bill (No. 13)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) .. 1504

Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read 2^d accordingly.

Drill Grounds Bill [N.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Sandhurst*) ; read 1st (No. 24)

.. 1504
[6.15.]

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PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Lambeth Water Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 1505
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time.
Moved, "That the Bill be committed,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*.)

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "to a Select Committee, to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection,"—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers*.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *committed* to a Select Committee, to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection.

Moved, "That all Petitions against the Bill, presented within the time limited by the Standing Orders, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions,"—(*Mr. Courtney*.)

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Ordered accordingly.

Southwark and Vauxhall Water Bill—

Bill read a second time 1511

Bill *committed* to a Select Committee, to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill, presented within the time limited by the Standing Orders, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions,—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers*.)

N O T I C E.

EVICCTIONS (IRELAND)—EMPLOYMENT OF THE MILITARY FORCES OF THE CROWN—Notice of Resolution, Mr. Lewis 1512

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THE METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE—Questions, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. W. H. Smith, Mr. Stuart-Wortley; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) 1512

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE PROCURATOR FISCAL OF ORKNEY—Questions, Mr. Lyell, Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Dr. Cameron; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) 1513

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THE COINAGE—Questions, Mr. S. Montagu, Mr. Brodrick; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) 1516

SCOTLAND—THE SHERIFF CLERK DEPUTE OF SKYE—Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) 1517

SCOTLAND—ARRARS OF RATES IN SKYE—Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) 1518

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—o—

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill—

Moved, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for the transfer of the Ulster Canal and the Tyrone Navigation or Coal Island Canal from the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland to the Lagan Navigation Company, and for other purposes,"—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*) 1652

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor* :)—After further short debate, Motion *agreed to* :—Debate *adjourned* till Monday next.

POST OFFICE—SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CONTRACT (ST. VINCENT TO THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the Contract, dated the 19th day of January 1886, for the construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa be approved,"—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*) 1662

After short debate, Debate *adjourned* till To-morrow.

Shop Hours Regulation Bill—

Select Committee *nominated* :—List of the Committee 1662
[1.15.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MARCH 2.

MOUNTED VOLUNTEER INFANTRY — Question, Observations, Viscount Midleton; Reply, The Under Secretary of State for War (Lord Sandhurst) 1663

VENTILATION OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the evidence of John Percy, Esquire, M.D., taken before the Select Committee on the Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod in session 1869, be laid upon the Table, and that the same be printed,"—(*The Earl of Limerick*) 1664

After short debate, Motion *agreed to* :—The said evidence laid on the Table accordingly, and to be *printed*. (No. 26.)

Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment Bill [H.L.] — *Presented* (*The Lord Rayleigh*) ; read 1^o (No. 25) 1664
[4.15.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MARCH 2.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

East London Water Bill (by Order)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 1665

Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection,"—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers*.)

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill, presented within the time limited by the Standing Orders, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions,—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers*.)

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Midland Railway Bill (by Order)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 1666

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, whilst not unwilling to consider favourably an application from the said Company, under proper conditions, for power to make arrangements with other Companies tending to economise the cost of transport to the Company, refuses to entertain the same as a mere incident in a Bill for miscellaneous objects, and unaccompanied by the offer of any compensating advantages to the public,"—(*Sir Bernhard Samuelson*.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Staveley Hill*):—Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till Tuesday next.

Belfast Main Drainage Bill—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, that they do insert in the Bill Clauses for the following purposes:—

To assimilate the Municipal franchise of the borough of Belfast to the existing Parliamentary franchise;

To enable every person qualified to vote at a Municipal election in Belfast to be a candidate for election to the office of councillor or alderman;

To constitute the present boundary of the Parliamentary borough of Belfast the boundary of the Municipal borough, and to direct and provide for a new division of the Municipal borough into wards, as recommended in the Report of the Municipal Boundaries (Ireland) Commission, dated the 27th of June 1882, and to authorize a proportionate increase in the number of aldermen and councillors;

To provide for an entire new election of all the aldermen and councillors of the borough, upon the reformed franchise, within the present year,"—(*Mr. Sexton*) 1677

Previous Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put,"—

(*The Chairmen of Ways and Means*):—After long debate, Question put:

—The House *divided*; Ayes 84, Noes 200; Majority 116.—(*Div. List*, No. 14.)

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MAINTENANCE OF SOCIAL ORDER (IRELAND)—Notice of Resolution, Mr. Holmes 1751

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THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. JOHN O. PAYNE, J.P., CORK—Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1752

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ARMAUGH UNION—REMOVAL OF A PAUPER BY THE RELIEVING OFFICER—Question, Mr. Alexander Blaine; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley, 1753

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—THE TWEED FISHERIES ACTS—Question, Sir Charles Tennant; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) .. 1753

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POSTMASTER OF BALA—Question, Mr. Henry Campbell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Arnold Morley) 1754

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<i>Moved</i> , "That, in the opinion of this House, immediate steps should be taken to ensure in this Country the full and accurate collection and publication of Labour Statistics,"—(Mr. Bradlaugh) ..	1768
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Amendment proposed,	
To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words "a Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means of collecting and publishing statistics as to Labour in the United Kingdom,"—(<i>Mr. E. Stanhope</i>),—instead thereof.	
Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question :"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, <i>withdrawn</i> .	
Main Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> .	
TOWN HOLDINGS—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That a Select Committee be appointed, 'to inquire into the terms of occupation and the compensation for improvements possessed by the occupiers of town houses and holdings in Great Britain and Ireland,'"—(<i>Colonel Nolan</i>) .. 1804	
After short debate, Motion <i>agreed to</i> .	
ADJOURNMENT—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That this House do now adjourn,"—(<i>Mr. Labouchere</i> :)—Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> . [1.15.]	

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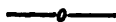
Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill [Bill 10]—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(<i>Mr. Mayne</i>) .. 1810	
After debate, Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.	
Unclaimed Deposits Bill [Bill 77]—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(<i>Mr. Edmund Robertson</i>) .. 1842	
After short debate, Question put :—The House divided : Ayes 107, Noes 88 ; Majority 19.—(Div. List, No. 15 :)—Bill read a second time, and committed for Tuesday next.	
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<i>Moved</i> , "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(<i>Mr. Arthur O'Connor</i>) .. 1849	
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Coal Mines Bill [Bill 92]—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(<i>Sir R. Assheton Cross</i>) .. 1871	
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<i>Moved</i> , "That the Bill be committed for Monday next,"—(<i>Sir R. Assheton Cross</i> :)—After short debate, Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill committed for Monday next.	
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Motion agreed to:—Return ordered to be laid before the House.

Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis) Bill [H.L.]—Presented (<i>The Lord Stratheden and Campbell</i>); read 1 st (No. 27)	1874 [4.45.]
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—o—

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed,
 “That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:”—

MAINTENANCE OF SOCIAL ORDER (IRELAND)—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word “That” to the end of the Question, in order to add the words “this House is unwilling to entertain Estimates for the Civil Establishments in Ireland before being placed in possession of the policy which Her Majesty’s Government intend to pursue for the restoration and maintenance of social order in that Country,”—(Mr. Holmes.)—instead thereof 1917

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Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question "	1998
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Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair :"—	
 SITES FOR THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES—THE WAR OFFICE AND ADMIRALTY—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(<i>Mr. Beresford Hope</i>) ..	1999
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Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and <i>agreed to</i> .	
 SUPPLY—considered in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—	
(In the Committee.)	
 CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.	
(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £31,997, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces "	2000
Committee report Progress ; to sit again <i>To-morrow</i> .	
 Compensation for Damages Bill [Bill 120]—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(<i>Mr. Secretary Childers</i>)	2000
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—•—	
POST OFFICE, SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CONTRACT (ST. VINCENT TO THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA)—RESOLUTION—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Contract, dated the 19th day of January 1886, for the Construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa be approved,"—(<i>Mr. Henry H. Fowler</i>)	2013
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(<i>Mr. Labouchere</i> :)—After short debate, Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Debate <i>adjourned till To-morrow</i> .	
 IRISH INDUSTRIES—	
<i>Ordered</i> , That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Natural Resources and the Present Condition of Manufacturing and Productive Industries in Ireland ; and to consider and report by what means those Natural Resources may be more fully developed, and how those Industries may be encouraged and extended,—(<i>Mr. Sexton</i> .)	
 RIVER LEA—	
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Burial Grounds Bill — <i>Considered in Committee:—Resolution agreed to, and reported:—</i>	
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	[20.]

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13.

Viscount Bangor, *v.* Earl of Erne, deceased.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR SCOTLAND.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18.

Earl of Dundonald, *v.* Lord Borthwick, deceased.

TOOK THE OATH FOR THE FIRST TIME.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14.

The Lord Bishop of Chester.

The Lord Bishop of Southwell.

NEW PEERS.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19.

Sir Thomas Bateson, Baronet, created Baron Deramore of Belvoir in the county of Down.

Garnet Joseph Baron Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., General and General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the Forces in Egypt, created Viscount Wolseley of Wolseley in the county of Stafford.

Henry John Montagu-Douglas-Scott, commonly called Lord Henry John Montagu-Douglas-Scott, created Baron Montagu of Beaulieu in the county of Southampton.

The Right Honourable Charles John Baron Colville of Culross in that part of the United Kingdom called Scotland, K.T., created Baron Colville of Culross in the county of Perth.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21.

John Henry Lord Fermanagh—Was (in the usual manner) introduced by virtue of a Patent dated the thirteenth day of January 1876, his father, the first Baron (Earl of Erne in the Peerage of Ireland, a representative Peer for Ireland), who was created by such Patent, never having taken his seat as Lord Fermanagh.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26.

William Buller Fullerton Baron Elphinstone in that part of the United Kingdom called Scotland, created Baron Elphinstone of Elphinstone in the county of Haddington.

NEW PEERS—continued.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8.

The Right Honourable Sir Farrer Herschell, Knight, Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, created Baron Herschell of the city of Durham.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18.

Sir Charles Henry Mills, Baronet, created Baron Hillingdon of Hillingdon in the county of Middlesex.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23.

Sir Edmund Beckett, Baronet, created Baron Grimthorpe of Grimthorpe in the East Riding of the county of York.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25.

Sir Henry Alsopp, Baronet, created Baron Hindlip of Hindlip in the county of Worcester and of Alsop-en-le-Dale in the county of Derby.

SAT FIRST.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire, after the death of his grandfather.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19.

The Earl of Wilton, after the death of his brother.

The Duke of Newcastle, after the death of his father.

The Marquess of Abercorn, after the death of his father.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21.

The Viscount Halifax, after the death of his father.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28.

The Lord Houghton, after the death of his father.

THURSDAY, MARCH 4.

The Earl of Stradbroke, after the death of his father.

COMMONS.

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21.

For *Croydon*, *v.* Sir William Grantham, knight, one of the Justices of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice.

For *Armagh County (Mid Division)*, *v.* John M'Kane, esquire, deceased.

For *Edinburgh (South Division)*, *v.* Sir George Harrison, knight, deceased.

For *Carlow County*, *v.* Edmond Dwyer Gray, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said County of Carlow, and also for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division), hath elected to sit for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division).

For *Monaghan County (Northern Division)*, *v.* Timothy M. Healy, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said County of Monaghan (Northern Division), and also for the County of Derry (Southern Division), hath elected to sit for the County of Derry (Southern Division).

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1.

For *Galwey*, *v.* Thomas P. O'Connor, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said Borough of Galwey, and also for the Borough of Liverpool (Scotland Division), hath elected to sit for the Borough of Liverpool (Scotland Division).

For *Queen's County (Osseory Division)*, *v.* Arthur O'Connor, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said Queen's County (Osseory Division), and also for the County of Donegal (Eastern Division), hath elected to sit for the County of Donegal (Eastern Division).

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4.

For *Edinburgh County*, *v.* Right honble. William Ewart Gladstone, First Lord of the Treasury.

For *Derby Borough*, *v.* Right honble. Sir William Vernon Harcourt, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

For *Edinburgh (Southern Division)*, *v.* Right honble. Hugh Culling Eardley Childers, Secretary of State.

For *Stirling District of Burghs*, *v.* Right honble. Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Secretary of State.

For *Birmingham (Western Division)*, *v.* Right honble. Joseph Chamberlain, President of the Local Government Board.

For *Hawick District of Burghs*, *v.* Right honble. George Otto Trevelyan, Secretary for Scotland.

For *Sheffield Borough (Brightside Division)*, *v.* Right honble. Anthony John Mundella, President of the Board of Trade.

NEW WRITS ISSUED—*continued*.

For *Hackney Borough (South Division)*, v. Charles Russell, esquire, Attorney General.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6.

For *Newcastle upon Tyne*, v. John Morley, esquire, Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

For *Leeds (Southern Division)*, v. Right honble. Sir Lyon Playfair, Vice President of the Council.

For *Great Grimsby*, v. Edward Heneage, esquire, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

For *Berwick County*, v. Honble. Edward Marjoribanks, Controller of the Household.

For *Bedford County (Southern Division)*, v. Cyril Flower, esquire, Commissioner of the Treasury.

For *Stafford County (North Western Division)*, v. George Granville Leveson Gower, esquire, Commissioner of the Treasury.

For *Clackmannan and Kinross*, v. Right honble. John Blair Balfour, Lord Advocate of Scotland.

For *Elgin District of Burghs*, v. Alexander Asher, esquire, Her Majesty's Solicitor General for Scotland.

For *Banff County*, v. Robert William Duff, esquire, Commissioner of the Admiralty.

For *Northampton County (Mid-Division)*, v. Honble. Charles Robert Spencer, Groom in Waiting.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18.

For *Flintshire*, v. The Right honble. Richard de Aguila Grosvenor, commonly called Lord Richard Grosvenor, Chiltern Hundreds.

For *Somerset County (Southern Division)*, v. The Right honble. Frederick Edward Gould Lambart, commonly called Viscount Kilcourseie, Vice Chamberlain of the Household.

For *Cardiff Borough*, v. Sir Edward James Reed, K.C.B., Commissioner of the Treasury.

For *Borough of Grantham*, v. John William Mellor, esquire, Judge Advocate General.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24.

For *the Battersea Division of the Borough of Battersea and Clapham*, v. Octavius Vaughan Morgan, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28.

Croydon—The Hon. Sidney Herbert.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1.

Burgh of Edinburgh (South Division) — Right Hon. Hugh Culling Eardley Childers.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18.

Carlisle County—John Aloysius Blake, esquire.

Berwick County—The Honble. Edward Marjoribanks.

Derby Borough—The Right honble. Sir William George Granville Venables Vernon Harcourt, knight.

Elgin District of Burghs—Alexander Asher, esquire.

Sheffield (Brightside Division)—The Right honble. Anthony John Mundella.

Bedford County (Luton Division)—Cyril Flower, esquire.

Newcastle upon Tyne—The Right honble. John Morley.

Combined Counties of Clackmannan and Kinross—The Right honble. John Blair Balfour.

Northampton County (Mid Division)—The Honble. Charles Robert Spencer.

Great Grimsby—The Right honble. Edward Heneage.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN—continued.

Hackney (South Division)—Charles Russell, esquire.

Hawick District of Burghs—The Right honble. George Otto Trevelyan.

Birmingham (West Division)—The Right honble. Joseph Chamberlain.

Leeds (South Division)—The Right honble. Sir Lyon Playfair, K.C.B.

Banff County—Robert William Duff, esquire.

Burgh of Edinburgh (South Division)—The Right honble. Hugh Culling Eardley Childers.

Stirling District of Burghs—The Right honble. Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

Stafford County (North Western Division)—George Granville Leveson Gower, esquire.

Armagh County (Mid Division)—Sir James Porter Corry, baronet.

Edinburgh County—The Right honble. William Ewart Gladstone.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19.

Queen's County (Osory Division)—Stephen O'Mara, esquire.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22.

Galway Borough—William Henry O'Shea, esquire.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25.

Somerset County (Southern Division)—Right honble. Frederick Edward Gould Lambart, commonly called Viscount Kilcoursie.

Grantham—John William Mellor, esquire.

MONDAY, MARCH 1.

Cardiff Borough—Sir Edward James Reed, K.C.B.

Monaghan County (Northern Division)—Patrick O'Brien, esquire.

Battersea—Octavius Vaughan Morgan, esquire.

BY THE QUEEN.

A PROCLAMATION,

*For dissolving the present Parliament, and declaring the
Calling of another.*

VICTORIA, R.

WHEREAS We have thought fit, by and with the Advice of Our Privy Council, to dissolve this present Parliament, which stands prorogued to *Saturday* the Fifth Day of *December* next: We do, for that End, publish this Our Royal Proclamation, and do hereby dissolve the said Parliament accordingly: And the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses, and the Commissioners for Shires and Burghs, of the House of Commons, are discharged from their Meeting and Attendance on the said *Saturday* the Fifth Day of *December* next: And We, being desirous and resolved, as soon as may be, to meet Our People, and to have their Advice in Parliament, do hereby make known to all Our loving Subjects Our Royal Will and Pleasure to call a new Parliament: And do hereby further declare, that, with the Advice of our Privy Council, We have given Order that Our Chancellor of that Part of Our United Kingdom called *Great Britain* and Our Chancellor of *Ireland* do respectively, upon Notice thereof, forthwith issue out Writs, in due Form and according to Law, for calling a new Parliament. And We do hereby also, by this Our Royal Proclamation under Our Great Seal of Our United Kingdom, require Writs forthwith to be issued accordingly by Our said Chancellors respectively, for causing the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, who are to serve in the said Parliament, to be duly returned to, and give their Attendance in, Our said Parliament; which Writs are to be returnable on *Tuesday*, the Twelfth Day of *January* next.

Given at Our Court at *Windsor*, this Eighteenth day of *November*, in the Year of Our Lord One thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, and in the Forty-ninth Year of Our Reign.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

BY THE QUEEN.

A PROCLAMATION,

*In order to the Electing and Summoning the Sixteen
Peers of Scotland.*

VICTORIA, R.

WHEREAS We have in Our Council thought fit to declare Our pleasure for summoning and holding a Parliament of Our United Kingdom of *Great Britain and Ireland* on *Tuesday*, the Twelfth day of *January* next ensuing the date hereof: In order, therefore, to the electing and summoning the Sixteen Peers of *Scotland* who are to sit in the House of Peers in the said Parliament, We do, by the Advice of Our Privy Council, issue forth this Our Royal Proclamation, strictly charging and commanding all the Peers of *Scotland* to assemble and meet at *Holyrood House*, in *Edinburgh*, on *Thursday*, the Tenth day of *December* next, between the Hours of Twelve and Two in the Afternoon, to nominate and choose the Sixteen Peers to sit and vote in the House of Peers in the said ensuing Parliament by open Election and Plurality of Voices of the Peers that shall be then present, and of the Proxies of such as shall be absent (such Proxies being Peers, and producing a Mandate in Writing duly signed before Witnesses, and both the Constituent and Proxy being qualified according to Law); and the Lord Clerk Register, or such Two of the Principal Clerks of the Session as shall be appointed by him to officiate in his Name, are hereby respectively required to attend such Meeting, and to administer the Oaths required by Law to be taken there by the said Peers, and to take their Votes, and immediately after such Election made and duly examined to certify the Names of the Sixteen Peers so elected, and to sign and attest the same in the presence of the said Peers the Electors, and return such Certificate into Our High Court of Chancery of *Great Britain*: And We do, by this Our Royal Proclamation, strictly command and require the Provost of *Edinburgh*, and all other the Magistrates of the said City, to take especial care to preserve the Peace thereof during the time of the said Election, and to prevent all manner of Riots, Tumults, Disorders, and Violence whatsoever: And We strictly charge and command that this Our Royal Proclamation be duly published at the *Market Cross* at *Edinburgh*, and in all the County Towns of *Scotland*, Ten Days at least before the Time hereby appointed for the Meeting of the said Peers to proceed to such Election.

Witness Ourselves at *Windsor* this Eighteenth day of *November*, One thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, and in the Forty-ninth Year of Our Reign.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

THE MINISTRY

OF THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY, K.G.,
AT THE OPENING OF THE TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT, JAN. 12, 1886.

THE CABINET.

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Prime Minister)	Right Hon. Marquess of SALISBURY, K.G.
Lord Chancellor of England	Right Hon. Lord HALSBURY.
Lord Chancellor of Ireland	Right Hon. Lord ASHBORNE.
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland	Right Hon. Earl of CARNARVON.
Lord President of the Council	Right Hon. Viscount CRANBROOK.
Lord Privy Seal	Right Hon. Earl of HARROWBY.
First Lord of the Treasury	Right Hon. Earl of IDDESLEIGH, G.C.B.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Right Hon. Sir MICHAEL HICKES-BEACH, Bart.
Secretary of State, Home Department	Right Hon. Sir RICHARD ASSHETON CROSS, G.C.B.
Secretary of State for the Colonies	Right Hon. FREDERICK ARTHUR STANLEY.
Secretary of State for War	Right Hon. WILLIAM HENRY SMITH.
Secretary of State for India	Right Hon. Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.
First Lord of the Admiralty	Right Hon. Lord GEORGE HAMILTON.
Secretary for Scotland and Vice President of the Scotch Education Department	His Grace the Duke of RICHMOND and GORDON, K.G.
Postmaster General	Right Hon. Lord JOHN MANNERS, G.C.B.
President of the Board of Trade	Right Hon. EDWARD STANHOPE.

NOT IN

THE CABINET.

Field Marshal Commanding in Chief	H.R.H. the Duke of CAMBRIDGE, K.G.
Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education	Right Hon. Sir HENRY THURSTON HOLLAND, Bart.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Vice President of the Committee of Council on Agriculture	Right Hon. HENRY CHAPLIN.
President of the Local Government Board	Right Hon. ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.
First Commissioner of Works and Public Buildings	Right Hon. DAVID ROBERT PLUNKET.
Lords of the Treasury	{ CHARLES DALRYMPLE, Esq. Hon. SIDNEY HERBERT. Colonel WALBROND.
Lords of the Admiralty	{ Vice Admiral HOOD, Vice Admiral Sir ANTHONY HOSKINS, Vice Admiral GRAHAM, Captain COD- RINGTON, ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, Esq.
Joint Secretaries to the Treasury	{ ARTHUR AKERS-DOUGLAS, Esq. WILLIAM LAWIES JACKSON, Esq.
Secretary to the Admiralty	CHARLES THOMPSON RITCHIE, Esq.
Secretary to the Board of Trade	Baron HENRY DE WORMS.
Secretary to the Local Government Board	Right Hon. Earl BROWNLOW.
Under Secretary, Home Department	CHARLES BEILBY STUART-WORTLEY, Esq.
Under Secretary, Foreign Department	Right Hon. ROBERT BUCKLE.
Under Secretary for Colonies	Right Hon. Earl of DUNRAVEN.
Under Secretary for War	Right Hon. Viscount BURY.
Under Secretary for India	Right Hon. Lord HARRIS.
Paymaster General	Right Hon. Earl BRANCMAN.
Surveyor General of Ordnance	Hon. GUY CUTHBERT DAWNEY.
Financial Secretary to the War Department	Hon. H. S. NORTHCOKE.
Judge Advocate General	Right Hon. WILLIAM THACKERAY MARRIOTT, Q.C.
Attorney General	Sir RICHARD E. WEBSTER, Q.C.
Solicitor General	Sir JOHN ELDON GORST, Q.C.

SCOTLAND.

Lord Advocate	Right Hon. JOHN HAY ATHOL MACDONALD, Q.C.
Solicitor General	J. P. BANNERMAN-ROBERTSON, Esq.

IRELAND.

Lord Lieutenant	Right Hon. Earl of CARNARVON.
Lord Chancellor	Right Hon. Lord ASHBORNE.
Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant	Right Hon. Sir WILLIAM HART DYER.
Attorney General	Right Hon. HUGH HOLMES, Q.C.
Solicitor General	JOHN G. GIBSON, Esq., Q.C.

QUEEN'S HOUSEHOLD.

Lord Steward	Right Hon. Earl of MOUNT-EDGUMBE.
Lord Chamberlain	Right Hon. Earl of LATHOM.
Master of the Horse	Right Hon. Earl of BRADFORD.
Treasurer of the Household	Right Hon. Viscount FOLKESTONE.
Comptroller of the Household	Right Hon. Lord ARTHUR HILL.
Vice Chamberlain of the Household	Right Hon. Viscount LEWISHAM.
Captain of the Corps of Gentlemen at Arms	Right Hon. Earl of COVENTRY.
Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard	Right Hon. Viscount BARRINGTON.
Master of the Buckhounds	Most Noble the Marquess of WATERFORD.
Chief Equerry and Clerk Marshal	Lord ALFRED H. PAGET.
Mistress of the Robes	Her Grace the Duchess of BUCCLEUCH.

ROLL OF THE LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN

THE FIRST SESSION OF THE TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND
IRELAND.

49° VICTORIÆ 1886.

MEN.—According to the Usage of Parliament, when the House appoints a Select Committee, the Lords appointed to serve upon it are named in the Order of their Rank, beginning with the Highest; and so, when the House sends a Committee to a Conference with the Commons, the Lord highest in Rank is called first, and the rest go forth in like Order: But when the Whole House is called over for any Purpose within the House, or for the Purpose of proceeding forth to Westminster Hall, or upon any public Solemnity, the Call begins invariably with the Junior Baron.

His Royal Highness THE PRINCE OF WALES.	EDWARD WHITE Archbishop of CANTERBURY.
His Royal Highness ALFRED ERNEST ALBERT Duke of EDINBURGH.	HARDINGE STANLEY Lord HALSBURY, Lord High Chancellor.
His Royal Highness ARTHUR WILLIAM PATRICK ALBERT Duke of CONNAUGHT AND STRATHMARN.	WILLIAM Archbishop of YORK.
His Royal Highness LEOPOLD CHARLES EDWARD GEORGE ALBERT Duke of ALBANY.	GATHORNE Viscount CRANBROOK, Lord President of the Council.
His Royal Highness GEORGE WILLIAM FREDERICK CHARLES Duke of CAMBRIDGE.	DUDLEY FRANCIS STUART Earl of HARROWBY, Lord Privy Seal.
	HENRY Duke of NORFOLK, Earl Marshal of England.
	ARCHIBALD HENRY ALGERNON Duke of SOMERSET.

ROLL OF THE LORDS

CHARLES HENRY Duke of RICHMOND.	FREDERICK WILLIAM JOHN Marquess of BRISTOL.
AUGUSTUS CHARLES LENNOX Duke of GRAFTON.	ARCHIBALD Marquess of AILSA.
HENRY CHARLES FITZROY Duke of BEAUFORT.	GEORGE AUGUSTUS CONSTANTINE Marquess of NORMANBY.
WILLIAM AMELIUS AUBREY DE VERE Duke of SAINT ALBANS.	GEORGE FREDERICK SAMUEL Marquess of RIPON.
GEORGE GODOLPHIN Duke of LEEDS.	WILLIAM Marquess of ABERGAVENNY.
FRANCIS CHARLES HASTINGS Duke of BEDFORD.	GAVIN Marquess of BREADALBANE.
WILLIAM Duke of DEVONSHIRE.	WILLIAM HENRY Earl of MOUNT EDGUMBE, <i>Lord Steward of the Household.</i>
GEORGE CHARLES Duke of MARLBOROUGH.	EDWARD Earl of LATHOM, <i>Lord Chamberlain of the Household.</i>
CHARLES CECIL JOHN Duke of RUTLAND.	CHARLES HENRY JOHN Earl of SHREWSBURY.
WILLIAM ALEXANDER LOUIS STEPHEN Duke of BRANDON. (<i>Duke of Hamilton.</i>)	EDWARD HENRY Earl of DERBY.
WILLIAM JOHN ARTHUR CHARLES JAMES Duke of PORTLAND.	WARNER FRANCIS JOHN PLANTAGENET Earl of HUNTINGDON.
WILLIAM DROGO Duke of MANCHESTER.	GEORGE ROBERT CHARLES Earl of PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY.
HENRY PELHAM ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS Duke of NEWCASTLE.	WILLIAM REGINALD Earl of DEVON.
ALGERNON GEORGE Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND.	HENRY CHARLES Earl of SUFFOLK AND BERKSHIRE.
His Royal Highness ERNEST AUGUSTUS WILLIAM ADOLPHUS GEORGE FREDERICK Duke of CUMBERLAND AND TEVIOTDALE.	RUDOLPH WILLIAM BASIL Earl of DENBIGH.
HENRY Duke of WELLINGTON.	FRANCIS WILLIAM HENRY Earl of WESTMORLAND.
RICHARD PLANTAGENET CAMPBELL Duke of BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS.	MONTAGUE Earl of LINDSEY.
GEORGE GRANVILLE WILLIAM Duke of SUTHERLAND.	HARRY Earl of STAMFORD.
HARRY GEORGE Duke of CLEVELAND.	GEORGE JAMES Earl of WINCHILSEA AND NOTTINGHAM.
HUGH LUPUS Duke of WESTMINSTER.	HENRY EDWIN CHANDOS Earl of CHESTERFIELD.
JOHN Marquess of WINCHESTER.	EDWARD GEORGE HENRY Earl of SANDWICH.
HENRY CHARLES KEITH Marquess of LANDSOWNE.	ARTHUR ALGERNON Earl of ESSEX.
JOHN VILLIERS STUART Marquess TOWNSHEND.	WILLIAM GEORGE Earl of CARLISLE.
ROBERT ARTHUR TALBOT Marquess of SALISBURY.	WILLIAM HENRY WALTER Earl of DONCASTER. (<i>Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry.</i>)
JOHN ALEXANDER Marquess of BATH.	ANTHONY Earl of SHAPTESBURY.
JAMES Marquess of ABERCORN. (<i>Duke of Abercorn.</i>)	——— Earl of BERKELEY.
HUGH DE GREY Marquess of HERTFORD.	MONTAGU ARTHUR Earl of ABINGDON.
JOHN PATRICK Marquess of BUTE.	ALDRED FREDERICK GEORGE BRESFORD Earl of SCARBROUGH.
WILLIAM ALLEYNE Marquess of EXETER.	GEORGE THOMAS Earl of ALBEMARLE.
WILLIAM Marquess of NORTHAMPTON.	GEORGE WILLIAM Earl of COVENTRY.
JOHN CHARLES Marquess CAMDEN.	VICTOR ALBERT GEORGE Earl of JERSEY.
HENRY Marquess of ANGLESEY.	WILLIAM HENRY Earl POULETT.
GEORGE HENRY HUGH Marquess of CHOLMONDELEY.	WALTER HENRY Earl of MAR AND KELLIE. (<i>Elected for Scotland.</i>)
ERNEST AUGUSTUS CHARLES Marquess of AILESBURY.	

SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL.

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| <p>CLAUDE Earl of STRATHMORE AND KINGHORN. (<i>Elected for Scotland.</i>)</p> <p>GEORGE Earl of HADDINGTON. (<i>Elected for Scotland.</i>)</p> <p>JOHN TROTTER Earl of LINDSAY. (<i>Elected for Scotland.</i>)</p> <p>DAVID STANLEY WILLIAM Earl of AIRLIE. (<i>Elected for Scotland.</i>)</p> <p>ALEXANDER Earl of LEVEN AND MELVILLE. (<i>Elected for Scotland.</i>)</p> <p>GEORGE JOHN Earl of NORTHESK. (<i>Elected for Scotland.</i>)</p> <p>GEORGE WILLIAM HAMILTON Earl of ORKENY. (<i>Elected for Scotland.</i>)</p> <p>SEWALLIS EDWARD Earl FERRERS.</p> <p>WILLIAM WALTER Earl of DARTMOUTH.</p> <p>CHARLES Earl of TANKERVILLE.</p> <p>CHARLES WIGHTWICK Earl of AYLESFORD.</p> <p>FRANCIS THOMAS DE GREY Earl COWPER.</p> <p>ARTHUR PHILIP Earl STANHOPE.</p> <p>THOMAS AUGUSTUS WOLSTENHOLME Earl of MACCLESFIELD.</p> <p>DOUGLAS BERNESFORD MALISE RONALD Earl GRAHAM. (<i>Duke of Montrose.</i>)</p> <p>WILLIAM FREDERICK Earl WALDEGRAVE.</p> <p>BERTRAM Earl of ASHBURNHAM.</p> <p>CHARLES AUGUSTUS Earl of HARRINGTON.</p> <p>ISAAC NEWTON Earl of PORTSMOUTH.</p> <p>GEORGE GUY Earl BROOKE and Earl of WARWICK.</p> <p>SIDNEY CARR Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.</p> <p>WILLIAM THOMAS SPENCER Earl FITZWILLIAM.</p> <p>FREDERICK GEORGE Earl of GUILFORD.</p> <p>CHARLES PHILIP Earl of HARDWICK.</p> <p>HENRY EDWARD Earl of ILCHESTER.</p> <p>REGINALD WINDSOR Earl DE LA WARR.</p> <p>JACOB Earl of RADNOR.</p> <p>JOHN POYTIZ Earl SPENCER.</p> <p>ALLEN ALEXANDER Earl BATHURST.</p> <p>ARTHUR WILLS JOHN WELLINGTON BLUNDELL TRUMBULL Earl of HILLSBOROUGH. (<i>Marquess of Downshire.</i>)</p> <p>EDWARD HYDE Earl of CLARENDON.</p> <p>WILLIAM DAVID Earl of MANSFIELD.</p> <p>JOHN JAMES HUGH HENRY Earl STRANGE. (<i>Duke of Athole.</i>)</p> <p>WILLIAM HENRY Earl of MOUNT EDGUMBE. (<i>In another place as Lord Steward of the Household.</i>)</p> <p>HUGH Earl FORTESCUE.</p> <p>HENRY HOWARD MOLYNEUX Earl of CARMARVON.</p> | <p>GEORGE HENRY Earl CADOGAN.</p> <p>JAMES HOWARD Earl of MALMESBURY.</p> <p>JOHN VANSITTART DANVERS Earl of LANESBOROUGH. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)</p> <p>EDWARD NUGENT Earl of MILLTOWN. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)</p> <p>HENRY JOHN REUBEN Earl of PORTARLINGTON. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)</p> <p>HUGH Earl ANNESLEY. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)</p> <p>JOHN HENRY REGINALD Earl of CLOM-MELL. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)</p> <p>GEORGE CHARLES Earl of LUCAN. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)</p> <p>SOMERSET RICHARD Earl of BELMORE. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)</p> <p>JAMES FRANCIS Earl of BANDON. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)</p> <p>JAMES Earl of CALEDON. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)</p> <p>FRANCIS ROBERT Earl of ROSSLYN.</p> <p>WILLIAM GEORGE ROBERT Earl of CRAVEN.</p> <p>WILLIAM HILLIER Earl of ONSLOW.</p> <p>CHARLES Earl of ROMNEY.</p> <p>HENRY THOMAS Earl of CHICHESTER.</p> <p>SEYMOUR JOHN GREY Earl of WILTON.</p> <p>EDWARD JAMES Earl of POWIS.</p> <p>HORATIO Earl NELSON.</p> <p>LAWRENCE Earl of ROSSE. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)</p> <p>SYDNEY WILLIAM HERBERT Earl MANVERS.</p> <p>HORATIO Earl of ORFORD.</p> <p>HENRY Earl GREY.</p> <p>HUGH CREIL Earl of LONSDALE.</p> <p>DUDLEY FRANCIS STUART Earl of HARROWBY. (<i>In another Place as Lord Privy Seal.</i>)</p> <p>HENRY THYNNE Earl of HAREWOOD.</p> <p>WILLIAM HUGH Earl of MINTO.</p> <p>ALAN FREDERICK Earl CATHCART.</p> <p>JAMES WALTER Earl of VERULAM.</p> <p>ADELBERT WELLINGTON BROWNLOW Earl BROWNLOW.</p> <p>HENRY CORNWALLIS Earl of SAINT GERMANS.</p> <p>ALBERT EDMUND Earl of MORLEY.</p> <p>ORLANDO GEORGE CHARLES Earl of BRADFORD.</p> <p>FREDERICK Earl BEAUCHAMP.</p> <p>JOHN Earl of ELDON.</p> |
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ROLL OF THE LORDS

RICHARD WILLIAM PENY Earl HOWE.	ROUNDELL Earl of SELBORNE.
GEORGE EDWARD JOHN MOWBRAY Earl of STRATHMORE.	STAFFORD HENRY Earl of IDDESLEIGH.
FRANCIS CHARLES Earl of KILMOREY. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)	ALEXANDER WILLIAM GEORGE Earl of FIFE.
CHARLES STEWART Earl VANE. (<i>Marquess of Londonderry.</i>)	ROBERT Viscount HEREFORD.
WILLIAM PITT Earl AMHERST.	HENRY Viscount BOLINGBROKE AND ST. JOHN.
JOHN FREDERICK VAUGHAN Earl CAWDOR.	EVELYN Viscount FALMOUTH.
WILLIAM GEORGE Earl of MUNSTER.	GEORGE STANLEY Viscount TORRINGTON.
ROBERT ADAM PHILIPS HALDANE Earl of CAMERDOWN.	CHARLES WILLIAM Viscount LEINSTER. (<i>Duke of Leinster.</i>)
THOMAS GEORGE Earl of LICHFIELD.	FRANCIS WHEELER Viscount HOOD.
JOHN GEORGE Earl of DURHAM.	MERVYN EDWARD Viscount POWERSCOURT. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
GRANVILLE GEORGE Earl GRANVILLE.	JAMES Viscount LIFFORD. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
HENRY Earl of EFFINGHAM.	HENRY WILLIAM CROSSIE Viscount BAKGOR. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
HENRY JOHN Earl of DUCIE.	HAYES Viscount DONERAILE. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
CHARLES ALFRED WORSLEY Earl of YARBOROUGH.	CORNWALLIS Viscount HAWARDEN. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
JAMES HENRY ROBERT Earl INNES. (<i>Duke of Roxburgh.</i>)	CORNEGIE PARKER Viscount ST. VINCENT.
THOMAS WILLIAM Earl of LEICESTER.	ROBERT Viscount MELVILLE.
WILLIAM Earl of LOVELACE.	WILLIAM WELLS Viscount SIDMOUTH.
LAWRENCE Earl of ZETLAND.	GEORGE FREDERICK Viscount TEMPLETOWN. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
CHARLES WILLIAM FRANCIS Earl of GAINSBOROUGH.	JOHN CAMPBELL Viscount GORDON. (<i>Earl of Aberdeen.</i>)
FRANCIS CHARLES GRANVILLE Earl of ELLESMERE.	EDWARD FLEETWOOD JOHN Viscount EXMOUTH.
GEORGE STEVENS Earl of STRAFFORD.	JOHN LUKE GEORGE Viscount HUTCHINSON. (<i>Earl of Donoughmore.</i>)
KENNELM CHARLES EDWARD Earl of COTTENHAM.	RICHARD SOMERSET Viscount CLANCARTY. (<i>Earl of Clancarty.</i>)
WILLIAM HENRY Earl COWLEY.	WELLINGTON HENRY Viscount COMBERMERE.
ARCHIBALD WILLIAM Earl of WINTON. (<i>Earl of Eglintoun.</i>)	HENRY CHARLES Viscount CANTERBURY.
WILLIAM HUMBLE Earl of DUDLEY.	ROWLAND CLEGG Viscount HILL.
JOHN FRANCIS STANLEY Earl RUSSELL.	CHARLES STEWART Viscount HARDINGE.
JOHN Earl of KIMBERLEY.	GEORGE STEPHENS Viscount GOUGH.
RICHARD Earl of DARTREY.	CHARLES Viscount EVERSLEY.
WILLIAM ERNEST Earl of FEVERSHAM.	CHARLES LINDLEY Viscount HALIFAX.
FREDERICK TEMPLE Earl of DUFFERIN.	ALEXANDER NELSON Viscount BRIDPORT.
JOHN ROBERT Earl SYDNEY.	EDWARD BERKELEY Viscount PORTMAN.
HENRY GEORGE Earl of RAVENSWORTH.	EDWARD Viscount CARDWELL.
EDWARD MONTAGU STUART GRANVILLE Earl of WHARNCLIFFE.	GATHORNE Viscount CRANBROOK. (<i>In another Place as Lord President of the Council.</i>)
THOMAS GEORGE Earl of NORTHBROOK.	ROBERT Viscount SHERBROOKE.
JOHN THOMAS Earl of REDESDALE.	RICHARD BICKERTON PEMELL Viscount LYONS.
ARTHUR WILLIAM Earl CAIRNS.	
EDWARD ROBERT LYTTON Earl of LYTTON.	
EDWARD Earl of LATHOM. (<i>In another Place as Lord Chamberlain of the Household.</i>)	
GEORGE WATSON Earl SONDES.	

SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL.

HENRY BOUVIERE WILLIAM Viscount
HAMPDEN.

GARNET JOSEPH Viscount WOLSELEY.

FREDERICK Bishop of LONDON.

JOSEPH BARBER Bishop of DURHAM.

EDWARD HAROLD Bishop of WINCHESTER.

JOHN THOMAS Bishop of NORWICH.

JAMES COLQUHOUN Bishop of BANGOR.

HENRY Bishop of WORCESTER.

CHARLES JOHN Bishop of GLOUCESTER
AND BRISTOL.

THOMAS LEGH Bishop of ST. ALBANS.

JAMES Bishop of HEREFORD.

WILLIAM CONNOR Bishop of PETER-
BOROUGH.

HARVEY Bishop of CARLISLE.

ARTHUR CHARLES Bishop of BATH AND
WELLS.

JOHN FIELDER Bishop of OXFORD.

RICHARD Bishop of CHICHESTER.

JOSHUA Bishop of ST. ASAPH.

WILLIAM BASIL Bishop of ST. DAVID'S.

ANTHOXY WILSON Bishop of ROCHESTER.

WILLIAM DALRYMPLE Bishop of LICH-
FIELD.

JOHN CHARLES Bishop of LIVERPOOL.

ERNEST ROLAND Bishop of NEWCASTLE.

RICHARD Bishop of LLANDAFF.

GEORGE HOWARD Bishop of TRURO.

WILLIAM Bishop of CHESTER.

GEORGE Bishop of SOUTHWELL.

DUDLEY CHARLES Lord DE ROS.

ALFRED JOSEPH Lord MOWBRAY.

GEORGE MANNERS Lord HASTINGS.

EDWARD SOUTHWELL Lord DE CLIFFORD.

THOMAS CROSBY WILLIAM Lord DACRE.

CHARLES HENRY ROLLE Lord CLINTON.

ROBERT NATHANIEL CECIL GEORGE Lord
ZOUCHÉ OF HARYNGWORTH.

CHARLES EDWARD HASTINGS Lord BOT-
HEUX. (*Earl of Loudoun.*)

FRANCIS ROBERT Lord CAMOYS.

HENRY Lord BEAUMONT.

HENRY Lord WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE.

SACKVILLE GEORGE Lord CONYERS.

HUBERT GEORGE CHARLES Lord Vaux OF
HARROWDEN.

RALPH GORDON Lord WENTWORTH.

ALFRED THOMAS TOWNSEND Lord BRAYE.

ROBERT GEORGE Lord WINDSOR.

WILLIAM HENRY JOHN Lord NORTH.

ST. ANDREW Lord ST. JOHN OF BLETSO.

FREDERICK GEORGE Lord HOWARD DE
WALDEN.

WILLIAM JOSEPH Lord PETRE.

FREDERICK BENJAMIN Lord SAYE AND
SELE.

JOHN FRANCIS Lord ARUNDELL OF WAR-
DOUR.

JOHN STUART Lord CLIFTON. (*Earl of
Darnley.*)

JOHN BAPTIST JOSEPH Lord DORMER.

GEORGE HENRY Lord TEYNHAM.

AUGUSTUS FREDERICK FITZHERBERT Lord
STAFFORD.

GEORGE FREDERICK WILLIAM Lord BYRON.

LEWIS HENRY HUGH Lord CLIFFORD OF
CHUDLEIGH.

WILLIAM COUTTS Lord ASHFORD.

HORACE COURTENAY GAMMELL Lord
FORBES. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

ALEXANDER Lord SALTOUN. (*Elected for
Scotland.*)

CHARLES WILLIAM Lord SINCLAIR.
(*Elected for Scotland.*)

CHARLES Lord BLANTYRE. (*Elected for
Scotland.*)

ALEXANDER HUGH Lord BALFOUR OF
BURLEY. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

WALTER HUGH Lord POLWARTH. (*Elected
for Scotland.*)

RICHARD EDMUND SAINT LAWRENCE Lord
BOYLE. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery.*)

GEORGE Lord HAY. (*Earl of Kinnoul.*)

DIGBY WENTWORTH BAYARD Lord MID-
DLTON.

WILLIAM JOHN Lord MONSON.

FREDERICK GEORGE BRABAZON Lord
PONSONBY. (*Earl of Bessborough.*)

ALFRED NATHANIEL HOLDEN Lord SCARS-
DALE.

GEORGE FLORANCE Lord BOSTON.

CHARLES GEORGE Lord LOVEL AND HOL-
LAND. (*Earl of Egmout.*)

GEORGE WILLIAM HENRY Lord VERNON.

EDWARD ST. VINCENT Lord DIGBY.

GEORGE DOUGLAS Lord SUNDRIDGE. (*Duke
of Argyll.*)

EDWARD HENRY JULIUS Lord HAWKE.

HENRY THOMAS Lord FOLEY.

ARTHUR DE CARDONNEL Lord DINEVOR.

ROLL OF THE LORDS

THOMAS LORD WALSHINGHAM.	ROBERT LORD CLONBROCK. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
WILLIAM LORD BAGOT.	CHARLES MARK LORD HEADLEY. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
CHARLES HENRY LORD SOUTHAMPTON.	EDWARD HENRY CHURCHILL LORD CROFTON. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
JOHN RICHARD BRINSLEY LORD GRANTLEY.	HERCULES EDWARD LORD LANGFORD. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
GEORGE BRIDGES HARLEY DENNETT LORD RODNEY.	DAYROLLES BLAKENEY LORD VENTRY (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
PHILIP REGINALD LORD SOMERS.	HENRY FRANCIS SEYMOUR LORD MOORE. (<i>Marquess of Drogheda.</i>)
RICHARD HENRY LORD BERWICK.	JOHN HENRY WELLINGTON GRAHAM LORD LOFTUS. (<i>Marquess of Ely.</i>)
EDWARD LENNOX LORD SHERRBORNE.	WILLIAM LORD CARYSFORT. (<i>Earl of Carysfort.</i>)
JOHN HENRY DE LA POER LORD TYRONE. (<i>Marquess of Waterford.</i>)	GEORGE RALPH LORD ABERCROMBY.
HENRY BENTINCK LORD CARLETON. (<i>Earl of Shannon.</i>)	CHARLES EDMUND LORD ELLENBOROUGH.
CHARLES LORD SUFFIELD.	AUGUSTUS FREDERICK ARTHUR LORD SANDYS
DUDLEY WILMOT LORD DORCHESTER.	HENRY NORTH LORD SHEFFIELD. (<i>Earl of Sheffield.</i>)
LLOYD LORD KENYON.	WILLIAM MACNAGHTEN LORD ERSKINE.
CHARLES CORNWALLIS LORD BRAYBROOKE.	GEORGE JOHN LORD MONTEAGLE. (<i>Marquess of Sligo.</i>)
WILLIAM ARCHER LORD AMHERST.	GEORGE ARTHUR HASTINGS LORD GRANARD. (<i>Earl of Granard.</i>)
EDWARD LORD FISHERWICK. (<i>Marquess of Donegal.</i>)	HUNGERFORD LORD CREWE.
HENRY CHARLES LORD GAGE. (<i>Viscount Gage.</i>)	——— LORD GARDNER.
THOMAS JOHN LORD THURLOW.	JOHN THOMAS LORD MANNERS.
WILLIAM GEORGE LORD AUCKLAND.	JOHN ADRIAN LOUIS LORD HOPETOUN. (<i>Earl of Hopetoun.</i>)
CHARLES GEORGE LORD LYTTELTON.	RICHARD LORD CASTLEMAINE. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)
HENRY GEORGE LORD MENDIP. (<i>Viscount Clifden.</i>)	CHARLES LORD MELDRUM. (<i>Marquess of Huntly.</i>)
GEORGE LORD STUART OF CASTLE STUART. (<i>Earl of Moray.</i>)	GEORGE FREDERICK LORD ROSS. (<i>Earl of Glasgow.</i>)
ALAN PLANTAGENET LORD STEWART OF GARLIES. (<i>Earl of Galloway.</i>)	WILLIAM WILLOUGHBY LORD GRINSTEAD. (<i>Earl of Enniskillen.</i>)
JAMES GEORGE HENRY LORD SALTERSFORD. (<i>Earl of Courtown.</i>)	WILLIAM HALE JOHN CHARLES LORD FOXFORD. (<i>Earl of Limerick.</i>)
WILLIAM LORD BRODRICK. (<i>Viscount Middleton.</i>)	FRANCIS GEORGE LORD CHURCHILL.
FREDERICK HENRY WILLIAM LORD CALTHORPE.	GEORGE ROBERT CANNING LORD HARRIS.
PETER ROBERT LORD GWYDIR.	REGINALD CHARLES EDWARD LORD COLCHESTER.
CHARLES ROBERT LORD CARRINGTON.	SCHOMBERG HENRY LORD KER. (<i>Marquess of Lothian.</i>)
WILLIAM HENRY LORD BOLTON.	HENRY FRANCIS LORD MINSTER. (<i>Marquess Conyngham.</i>)
GEORGE LORD NORTHWICK.	JAMES EDWARD WILLIAM THEOBALD LORD ORMONDE. (<i>Marquess of Ormonde.</i>)
THOMAS LITTLETON LORD LILFORD.	FRANCIS RICHARD LORD WEMYSS. (<i>Earl of Wemyss.</i>)
THOMAS LORD RIBblesDALE.	
EDWARD LORD DUNHANY. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)	
EDWARD DONOUGH LORD INCHICUIN. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)	
JOHN THOMAS WILLIAM LORD MASSY. (<i>Elected for Ireland.</i>)	

SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL.

- JOHN STRANGE Lord CLANBRASSILL. (Earl of Roden.)
 WILLIAM LYGON Lord SILCHESTER. (Earl of Longford.)
 CLOTWORTHY JOHN EYRE Lord ORIEL. (Viscount Massereene.)
 HUGH Lord DELAMERE.
 GEORGE CECIL WELD Lord FORESTER.
 JOHN WILLIAM Lord RAYLEIGH.
 EDRIC FREDERIC Lord GIFFORD.
 HUBERT GEORGE Lord SOMERHILL. (Marquess of Clanricarde.)
 JAMES LUDOVIC Lord WIGAN. (Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.)
 UCHTER JOHN MARK Lord RANFURLY. (Earl of Ranfurly.)
 GEORGE Lord DE TABLEY.
 CHARLES STUART HENRY Lord TENTERDEN.
 WILLIAM CONYNHAM Lord PLUNKET.
 WILLIAM HENRY ASHE Lord HEYTESBURY.
 ARCHIBALD PHILIP Lord ROSEBERRY. (Earl of Rosebery.)
 RICHARD JAMES Lord CLANWILLIAM. (Earl of Clanwilliam.)
 WILLIAM DRAFER MORTIMER Lord WYNFORD.
 WILLIAM HENRY Lord KILMARNOCK. (Earl of Erroll.)
 ARTHUR JAMES FRANCIS Lord FINGALL. (Earl of Fingall.)
 WILLIAM PHILIP Lord SEFTON. (Earl of Sefton.)
 ROBERT BIRMINGHAM Lord CLEMENTS. (Earl of Leitrim.)
 THOMAS Lord KENLIS. (Marquess of Headfort.)
 WILLIAM Lord CHAWORTH. (Earl of Meath.)
 CHARLES ADOLPHUS Lord DUNMORE. (Earl of Dunmore.)
 AUGUSTUS FREDERICK GEORGE WARWICK Lord POLTIMORE.
 LLEWELYN NEVILL VAUGHAN Lord MONTY.
 HENRY SPENCER Lord TEMPLEMORE.
 VALENTINE FREDERICK Lord CLONCERRY.
 JOHN ST. VINCENT Lord DE SAUMAREZ.
 THOMAS Lord DENMAN.
 WILLIAM FREDERICK Lord ARINGER.
 PHILIP Lord DE L'ISLE AND DUDLEY.
 ALEXANDER HUGH Lord ASHBURTON.
 EDWARD RICHARD Lord HATHERTON.
 GEORGE HENRY CHARLES Lord STRAFORD.
 ARCHIBALD BRABAZON SPARROW, Lord WORLINGHAM. (Earl of Gosford.)
 WILLIAM FREDERICK Lord STRATHEDEN.
 GEOFFREY DOMINICK AUGUSTUS FREDERICK Lord ORANMORE AND BROWNE. (Elected for Ireland.)
 SIMON Lord LOVAT.
 WILLIAM BATEMAN Lord BATEMAN.
 JAMES MOLYNEUX Lord CHARLEMONT. (Earl of Charlemont.)
 ALGERNON HAWKINS THOMOND Lord KINTORE. (Earl of Kintore.)
 GEORGE PONSONBY Lord LISMORE. (Viscount Lismore.)
 DERRICK WARNER WILLIAM Lord ROSSMORE.
 ROBERT SHAPLAND GEORGE JULIAN Lord CAREW.
 CHARLES FREDERICK ASHLEY COOPER Lord DE MAULEY.
 ARTHUR Lord WEOTTESLEY.
 CHARLES DOUGLAS RICHARD Lord SUDLEY.
 FREDERICK HENRY PAUL Lord METHUEN.
 HENRY EDWARD JOHN Lord STANLEY OF ALDERLEY.
 WILLIAM HENRY Lord LEIGH.
 BRILBY Lord WENLOCK.
 WILLIAM Lord LURGAN.
 THOMAS SPRING Lord MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON.
 JAMES Lord SEATON.
 JOHN MANLEY ARBUTHNOT Lord KRANE.
 JOHN Lord OXENFOORD. (Earl of Stair.)
 CHARLES CRESPIGNY Lord VIVIAN.
 HENRY WILLIAM Lord CONGLETON.
 DENIS ST. GEORGE Lord DUNSANDLE AND CLANCONAL. (Elected for Ireland.)
 VICTOR ALEXANDER Lord ELGIN. (Earl of Elgin and Kincardine.)
 WILLIAM HENRY FORESTER Lord LONDESBOROUGH.
 CHARLES ROBERT CLAUDE Lord TRURO.
 ARTHUR Lord DE FREYNE.
 EDWARD BURTENSHAW Lord SAINT LEONARDS.
 GEORGE FITZ-ROY HENRY Lord RAGLAN.
 GILBERT HENRY Lord AVELAND.
 VALENTINE AUGUSTUS Lord KENMARE. (Earl of Kenmare.)
 HENRY Lord BELPER.

ROLL OF THE LORDS

RICHARD WOGAN Lord TALBOT DE MALAHIDE.	BERNARD EDWARD BARNABY Lord CASTLETOWN.
ROBERT Lord ESBURY.	JOHN EMBERICH EDWARD Lord ACTON.
CHARLES COMPTON WILLIAM Lord CHESHAM.	THOMAS CHARLES Lord ROBARTES.
FREDERIC AUGUSTUS Lord CHELMSFORD.	GEORGE GRENFELL Lord WOLVERTON.
JOHN Lord CHURSTON.	ALGERNON WILLIAM FULKE Lord GREVILLE.
HENRY Lord LECONFIELD.	THOMAS TOWNELEY Lord O'HAGAN.
WILBRAHAM Lord EGERTON.	WILLIAM Lord SANDHURST.
GODFREY CHARLES Lord TREDEGAR.	FREDERIC Lord BLACHPORD
FITZ PATRICK HENRY Lord LYVEDEN.	FRANCIS Lord EITRICK. (<i>Lord Napier.</i>)
HENRY CHARLES Lord BROUGHAM AND VAUX.	JAMES CHARLES HERBERT WELBORE ELLIS Lord SOMERTON. (<i>Earl of Normanton.</i>)
ARTHUR FITZ-GERALD Lord KINNAIRD.	ROBERT ALEXANDER SHAFTO Lord WAVENEY.
RICHARD LUTTRELL PILKINGTON Lord WESTBURY.	HENRY AUSTIN Lord ABERDARE.
FRANCIS WILLIAM FITZHARDINGE Lord FITZHARDINGE.	JAMES Lord MONCREIFF.
LUKE GEORGE Lord ANNALY.	JOHN DUKE Lord COLERIDGE.
ROBERT OFFLEY ASHBURTON Lord HOUGHTON.	WILLIAM Lord EMLY.
WILLIAM Lord ROMILLY.	CHICHESTER SAMUEL Lord CARLINGFORD.
GEORGE PHILIPS ALEXANDER Lord BARROGILL. (<i>Earl of Caithness.</i>)	THOMAS FRANCIS Lord COTTESLOE.
THOMAS Lord CLERMONT.	EDMUND Lord HAMMOND.
JAMES HERBERT GUSTAVUS MEREDYTH Lord MEREDYTH. (<i>Lord Athlumney.</i>)	JOHN SLANEY Lord HAMPTON.
WINDHAM THOMAS Lord KENNY. (<i>Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl.</i>)	JOHN Lord WINMARLEIGH.
CHARLES STANLEY Lord MONCK. (<i>Viscount Monck.</i>)	CHARLES ALEXANDER Lord DOUGLAS. (<i>Earl of Home.</i>)
JOHN MAJOR Lord HARTISMERE. (<i>Lord Henniker.</i>)	JOHN WILLIAM Lord RAMSAY. (<i>Earl of Dalhousie.</i>)
HEDWORTH HYLTON Lord HYLTON.	JOHN HENRY Lord FERMANAGH. (<i>Earl of Erne.</i>)
EDWARD GORDON Lord PENRHYN.	WILLIAM RICHARD Lord HARLECH.
GUSTAVUS RUSSELL Lord BRANCEPETH. (<i>Viscount Boyne.</i>)	HENRY GERARD Lord ALINGTON.
JOHN HENRY Lord KESTEVEN.	JOHN Lord TOLLEMACHE.
ARTHUR Lord ORMATHEWAITE.	ROBERT TOLVER Lord GERARD.
EDWARD Lord O'NEILL.	MORTIMER Lord SACKVILLE.
ROBERT CORNELIS Lord NAPIER.	COLIN Lord BLACKBURN. (<i>A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.</i>)
JENICO WILLIAM JOSEPH Lord GORMANSTON. (<i>Viscount Gormanston.</i>)	CHARLES BOWYER Lord NORTON.
JOHN HAMILTON Lord LAWRENCE.	GEORGE WILLIAM Lord SHUTE. (<i>Viscount Barrington.</i>)
JAMES PLAISTED Lord PENZANCE.	WILLIAM Lord WATSON. (<i>A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.</i>)
JOHN Lord DUNNING. (<i>Lord Rollo.</i>)	LAWRENCE HESKETH Lord HALDON.
JAMES Lord BALINHARD. (<i>Earl of Southesk.</i>)	IVOR BERTIE Lord WIMBORNE.
WILLIAM Lord HARE. (<i>Earl of Listowel.</i>)	ARTHUR EDWARD Lord ARDILAUN.
FRANCIS EDWARD Lord HOWARD OF GLOSSOP.	ALEXANDER DUNDAS ROSS Lord LAMINGTON.
	CHARLES FREDERICK Lord DONINGTON.
	ARTHUR EDWIN Lord TREVOR.
	MONTAGU WILLIAM Lord ROWTON.
	WILLIAM FRANCIS Lord MOUNT-TEMPLE.
	EDWARD HUGESSEN Lord BRABOURNE.

SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL.

ARTHUR OLIVER VILLIERS Lord AMPT- HILL.	HARDINGE STANLEY Lord HALSBURY. (<i>In another Place as Lord High Chan- cellor.</i>)
WILLIAM MONTAGU Lord TWEEDDALE. (<i>Marquess of Tweeddale.</i>)	MERVYN EDWARD Lord POWERSCOURT (<i>In another Place as Viscount Powers- court.</i>)
WILLIAM ULICK TRISTRAM Lord HOWTH. (<i>Earl of Howth.</i>)	ANTHONY HENRY Lord NORTHINGTON. (<i>Lord Henley.</i>)
DONALD JAMES Lord REAY.	NATHANIEL MAYER Lord ROTHSCHILD.
HARCOURT Lord DERWENT.	EDWARD CHARLES Lord REVELSTOKE.
HENRY JAMES Lord HOTHFIELD.	ROBERT PORRETT Lord MONKSWELL.
DUDLEY COUTTS Lord TWEEDMOUTH.	ARTHUR Lord HOBHOUSE.
GEORGE WILLIAM WILSHERE Lord BRAM- WELL.	RALPH ROBERT WHEELER Lord LINGEN.
JOHN DAVID Lord FITZ GERALD. (<i>4</i> <i>Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.</i>)	EDWARD Lord ASHBOURNE.
FREDERICK BEAUCHAMP PAGET Lord AL- CESTER.	ROWLAND Lord SAINT OSWALD.
ALFRED Lord TENNYSON.	ROBERT JAMES Lord WANTAGE.
JAMES Lord STRATHPEY. (<i>Earl of Sea- field.</i>)	WILLIAM BALIOL Lord ESHER.
JOHN GEORGE Lord MONK BRETTON.	THOMAS Lord DERAMORE.
WALTER CHARLES Lord NORTHBOURNE.	HENRY JOHN Lord MONTAGU of BEAU- LIEU.
ARTHUR SAUNDERS WILLIAM CHARLES FOX Lord SUDLEY. (<i>Earl of Arran.</i>)	WILLIAM BULLER FULLERTON Lord EL- PHINSTONE.
JOHN ROBERT WILLIAM Lord DE VESCI. (<i>Viscount de Vesci.</i>)	CHARLES JOHN Lord COLVILLE of CUL- ROSS.
MARMADUKE FRANCIS Lord HERBES.	

There are two vacancies in the Representation of the Peers for Scotland caused by the deaths of the Viscount Strathallan and the Lord Borthwick.

LIST OF THE COMMONS.

THE NAMES OF MEMBERS

RETURNED TO SERVE IN THE TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, SUMMONED TO MEET AT WESTMINSTER THE TWELFTH DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND EIGHTY SIX, AS BY THE SEVERAL RETURNS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CROWN IN CHANCERY APPEARS.

BEDFORD.

NORTHERN, OF BIGGLESWADE DIVISION,
Charles Magniac.

SOUTHERN, OF LUTON DIVISION,
Cyril Flower.

BEDFORD BOROUGH.

Samuel Whitbread.

BERKS.

NORTHERN, OF ABINGDON DIVISION,
Philip Wroughton.

SOUTHERN, OF NEWBURY DIVISION,
William George Mount.

EASTERN, OF WOKINGHAM DIVISION,
Sir George Russell, bt.

READING BOROUGH.
Charles Townshend Murdoch.

WINDSOR (NEW) BOROUGH.
Robert Richardson-Gardner.

BUCKS.

NORTHERN, OF BUCKINGHAM DIVISION,
Captain Edmund Hope Verney.

MID, OF AYLESBURY DIVISION,
Baron Ferdinand James de Rothschild.

SOUTHERN, OF WYCOMBE DIVISION,
Viscount Curzon.

CAMBRIDGE.

NORTHERN, OF WISBECH DIVISION,
John Rigby.

WESTERN, OF CHESTERTON DIVISION,
Charles Hall.

EASTERN, OF NEWMARKET DIVISION,
George Newnes.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY.
Rt. Hon. Alexander James Beresford
Beresford-Hope, LL.D.,
Rt. Hon. Henry Cecil Raikes, M.A.

CAMBRIDGE BOROUGH.
Robert Uniacke Penrose Fitz Gerald.

CHESTER.

WIRRAL DIVISION,
Edward Thomas Davenant Cotton.

EDDISBURY DIVISION,
Henry James Tollemache.

MACCLESFIELD DIVISION,
William Coare Brocklehurst.

CREWE DIVISION,
George William Latham.

NORTHWICH DIVISION,
John Tomlinson Brunner.

ALTRINCHAM DIVISION,
John Brooks.

*List of***(COMMONS, 1886)***Members.***CHESTER—cont.**

HYDE DIVISION,
Thomas Gair Ashton.

KNUTSFORD DIVISION,
Hon. Alan de Tatton Egerton.

BIRKENHEAD BOROUGH.
Lieut.-General Sir Edward Bruce Ham-
ley, K.C.B.

CHESTER BOROUGH.
Balthazar Walter Foster.

STOCKPORT BOROUGH.
Louis John Jennings.
William Tipping.

CORNWALL.

WESTERN, or ST. IVES DIVISION,
Sir John St. Aubyn, bt.

NORTH-WESTERN, or CAMBORNE DIVISION,
Charles Augustus Vannittart Conybeare.

TRURO DIVISION,
William Bickford Smith.

MID, or ST. AUSTELL DIVISION,
William Copeland Borlase.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or BODMIN DIVISION,
Leonard Henry Courtney.

NORTH-EASTERN, or LAUNCESTON
DIVISION,
Charles Thomas Dyke Acland.

PENRYN AND PALMOUTH BOROUGH.
David James Jenkins.

CUMBERLAND

NORTHERN, or ESKDALE DIVISION,
Robert Andrew Allison.

MID, or PENRITH DIVISION,
Henry Charles Howard.

COCKERMOUTH DIVISION,
Charles James Valentine.

WESTERN, or ESKRIMONT DIVISION,
Lord Muncester.

CARLISLE BOROUGH.
Robert Ferguson,

WHITEHAVEN BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. George Augustus Frederick
Cavendish Bentinck.

DERBY.

HIGH PEAK DIVISION,
William Sidebottom.

NORTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Hon. Francis Egerton.

CHESTERFIELD DIVISION,
Alfred Barnes.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Lord Edward Cavendish.

MID DIVISION,
James Alfred Jacoby.

ILKESTON DIVISION,
Thomas Watson.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Henry Wardle.

DERBY BOROUGH.
Thomas Roe,
Rt. Hon. Sir William George Granville
Venables Vernon Harcourt, knt.

DEVON.

EASTERN, or HONITON DIVISION,
Sir John Henry Kennaway, bt.

NORTH-EASTERN, or TIVERTON DIVISION,
Lt.-Col. William Hood Walrond.

NORTHERN, or SOUTH MOLTON DIVISION,
Viscount Lymington.

NORTH-WESTERN, or BARNSTAPLE
DIVISION,
George Pitt Lewis.

WESTERN, or TAVISTOCK DIVISION,
Viscount Ebrington.

SOUTHERN, or TOTNES DIVISION,
Francis Bingham Mildmay.

TORQUAY DIVISION,
Lewis M'Iver.

MID, or ASHBURTON DIVISION,
Charles Seale-Hayne.

DEVONPORT BOROUGH.
George Edward Price.
John Henry Puleston,

EXETER BOROUGH.
Hon. Henry Stafford Northcote.

PLYMOUTH BOROUGH.
Sir Edward Bates, bt.
Edward George Clarke.

Last of

[COMMONS, 1886]

Members.

DORSET.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Hon. Edwin Berkeley Portman.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Francis Charles Glyn.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Henry Parkman Sturgis.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Henry Richard Parquharson.

DURHAM.

JARVIS DIVISION,
Charles Mark Palmer.

HOKTON-LE-SPRING DIVISION,
John Wilson.

CRISTIE-LE-STREET DIVISION,
James Jacey.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
Llewellyn Archer Atherley Jones.

MID DIVISION,
William Crawford.

NORTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Major General Sir Henry Marshall
Havelock-Allen, bt., V.O., O.B.

BISBOR ACKLAND DIVISION,
James Mallor Pankton.

BARNARD CASTLE DIVISION,
Sir Joseph Whitwell Pease, Bt.

DARLINGTON BOROUGH.
Theodore Fry.

DURHAM BOROUGH.
Thomas Milvain.

GATESHEAD BOROUGH.
Hon. Walter Henry James.

HARTLEPOOLS (TWE) BOROUGH.
Thomas Richardson.

SOUTH SHIELDS BOROUGH.
James Cochran Stevenson.

STOCKTON BOROUGH.
Joseph Dodds.

SUNDERLAND BOROUGH.
Edward Temperley Gourley,
Samuel Storey.

ESSEX.

**SOUTH-WESTERN, or WALTHAMSTOW
DIVISION,**
Edward North Buxton.

ESSEX—cont.

SOUTHERN, or ROMFORD DIVISION,
John Westlake.

WESTERN, or EPPING DIVISION,
Right Hon. Sir Henry John Selwin-
Ibbetson, bt.

**NORTHERN, or SAFFRON WALDEN
DIVISION,**
Herbert Colstoun Gardner.

NORTH-EASTERN, or HARWICH DIVISION,
James Round.

EASTERN, or MALDON DIVISION,
Albert George Kitching.

MID, or CHELMSFORD DIVISION,
William James Beadel.

SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
William Thomas Makins.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH.
Henry John Trotter.

WEST HAM BOROUGH.
North Division,

Edward Rider Cook.

South Division,
Joseph Leicester.

GLOUCESTER.

MID, or STROUD DIVISION,
Hon. Henry Robert Brand.

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John Reginald Yorke.

EASTERN, or CIRENCESTER DIVISION,
Arthur Brend Winterbotham.

FOREST OF DEAN DIVISION,
Thomas Blake.

SOUTHERN, or THORNBURY DIVISION,
Edward Stafford Howard.

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West Division,
Rt. hon. Sir Michael Edward Hicks-
Beach, bt.

North Division,
Lewis Fry.

East Division,
Handel Cosham.

South Division,
Joseph Dodge Weston.

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH.
James Tynte Agg-Gardner.

GLOUCESTER BOROUGH.
Thomas Robinson.

HANTS.

NORTHERN, or BASINGSTOKE DIVISION,
Rt. hon. George Selater-Booth.

WESTERN, or ANDOVER DIVISION,
William Wither Bramston Beach.

EASTERN, or PETERSFIELD DIVISION,
Viscount Wolmer.

SOUTHERN, or FAREHAM DIVISION,
Lieut.-Gen. Sir Frederick Wellington
John FitzWygram, bt.

NEW FOREST DIVISION,
Francis Compton.

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Charles Edward Baring Young.

PORTSMOUTH BOROUGH.
Sir William Crossman, K.C.M.G.
Philip Vanderbyl.

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Arthur Loftus Tottenham.

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Thomas Duckham.

SOUTHERN, or ROSS DIVISION,
Michael Biddulph.

HEREFORD BOROUGH.
Joseph Pulley.

HERTFORD.

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Robert Dimsdale (Baron of the Russian
Empire).

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EASTERN, or ST. AUGUSTINE'S DIVISION,
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HYTHE BOROUGH.
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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH.
Alexander Henry Ross.

ROCHESTER BOROUGH.
Francis Charles Hughes-Hallett.

WOOLWICH BOROUGH.
Edwin Hughes.

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North Lancashire,
NORTH LONSDALE DIVISION,
William George Ainslie.

LANCASTER DIVISION,
Major George Blucher Heneage Marton.

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Viscount Cranborne.

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Frederick William Grafton.

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Frank Hardcastle.

HEYWOOD DIVISION,
Isaac Hoyle.

MIDDLETON DIVISION,
Colonel George Salis-Schwabe.

RADCLIFFE-CUM-FARNWORTH DIVISION,
Robert Leake.

ECCLES DIVISION,
Alfred John Francis Egerton.

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GORTON DIVISION,
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ORMSKIRK DIVISION,
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Tom Cottingham Edwards-Moss.

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John Edmund Wentworth Addison.

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David Duncan.

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Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, bt.

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man.

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Peter Rylands.

BURY BOROUGH,
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Kirkdale Division,
George Smyth Baden-Powell, O. M. G.

Walton Division,
John George Gibson,

EVERTON Division,
Edward Whitley.

West Derby Division,
Lord Claud Hamilton.

Scotland Division,
Thomas Power O'Connor.

Exchange Division,
Laurence Richardson Bailly.

Abercromby Division,
William Frederick Lawrence.

East Toxteth Division,
Baron Henry de Worms.

West Toxteth Division,
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James Frederick Hutton.

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Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour.

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SALFORD BOROUGH.
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West Division,
Benjamin Armitage.

South Division,
William Mather.

STALYBRIDGE BOROUGH.
Tom Harrop Sidebottom.

ST. HELENS BOROUGH.
Henry Seton-Karr.

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Sir Gilbert Greenall, bt.

WIGAN BOROUGH.
Francis Sharp Powell.

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SOUTHERN, or HARBOROUGH DIVISION,
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LEICESTER BOROUGH.
James Allanson Picton.
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Joseph Bennett.

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EAST LINDSEY, or LOUTH DIVISION,
Francis Otter.

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NORTH KESTEVEN, or SLEAFORD DIVISION,
Right Hon. Henry Chaplin.

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Edward Heneage.

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bt., K.C.B.

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William Hayes Fisher.

List of

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Members.

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HACKNEY BOROUGH.

North Division,

Major-Gen. Sir Lewis Pelly, K.C.B.,
K.O.S.I.

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Surgeon-General Sir William Guyer
Hunter, K.O.M.G.

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Major-Gen. Walter Tuckfield Golds-
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Sir John Lubbock, bt.

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Frederick Seager-Hunt.

PADDINGTON BOROUGH.

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Lionel Louis Cohen.

South Division,

Rt. Hon. Lord Randolph Churchill.

ST. GEORGE, HANOVER SQUARE.

Lord Algernon Percy.

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East Division,

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Harry Lawson Webster Lawson.

South Division,

Sir Julian Goldsmid, bt.

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Hoxton Division,

James Stuart.

Haggerston Division,

William Randal Cremer.

STRAND BOROUGH.

Right Hon. William Henry Smith.

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Whitechapel Division,

Samuel Montagu.

St. George Division,

Charles Thomson Ritchie.

Limehouse Division,

Edward Samuel Norris.

Mile End Division,

Spencer Charrington.

Stepney Division,

John Charles Durant.

Bow and Bromley Division,

William Snowden Robson.

Poplar Division,

Henry Green.

WESTMINSTER BOROUGH.

William Lehman Ashmead-Bartlett

Burdett-Countts.

LONDON CITY.

Sir Robert Nicholas Fowler, bt.

Right Hon. John Gellibrand Hubbard.

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NORTHERN DIVISION,

Thomas Phillips Price.

WESTERN DIVISION,

Cornelius Marshall Warminster.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,

Col. Hon. Frederick Courtenay Morgan.

MONMOUTH BOROUGH.

Edward Hamer Carbutt.

NORFOLK.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,

Joseph Arch.

*List of***{ COMMONS, 1886 }***Members.***NORFOLK—*cont.***

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William Ambhurst Tyssen-Amherst

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Herbert Hardy Cozens-Hardy.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Edward Birkbeck.

MID DIVISION,
Robert Thornhagh Gurdon.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Francis Taylor.

GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH.
Sir Henry Whatley Tyler, *knt.*

KING'S LYNN BOROUGH.
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Harry Bullard.
Jeremiah James Colman.

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NORTHERN DIVISION,
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EASTERN DIVISION,
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MID DIVISION,
Hon. Charles Robert Spencer.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
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Henry Labouchere.
Charles Bradlaugh,

PETERBOROUGH BOROUGH.
Hon. William John Wentworth Fitzwilliam.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

WANSBECK DIVISION,
Charles Fenwick.

TYNESIDE DIVISION,
Albert Henry George Grey.

HEXHAM DIVISION,
Miles MacInnes.

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED DIVISION,
Sir Edward Grey, *bt.*

MORPETH BOROUGH.
Thomas Bart.

NORTHUMBERLAND—*cont.*

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Joseph Cowen,
John Morley.

TYNEMOUTH BOROUGH.
Richard Sims Donkin.

NOTTINGHAM.

BASSETLAW DIVISION,
William Beckett Denison.

NEWARK DIVISION,
Viscount Newark.

RUSHOLIFFE DIVISION,
John Edward Ellis.

MANSFIELD DIVISION,
Cecil George Savile Foljambe.

NOTTINGHAM BOROUGH.
West Division,
Charles Seely.

East Division,
Arnold Morley.

South Division,
John Carvell Williams.

OXFORD.

NORTHERN, or BANBURY DIVISION,
Sir Bernhard Samuelson, *bt.*

MID, or WOODSTOCK DIVISION,
Francis William Maclean.

SOUTHERN, or HENLEY DIVISION.
Edward William Harcourt.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY.
Rt. Hon. Sir John Robert Mowbray,
bt., D.O.L.
John Gilbert Talbot, D.O.L.

OXFORD BOROUGH.
Alexander William Hall.

RUTLAND.

George Henry Finch.

SALOP.

WESTERN, or OSWESTRY DIVISION,
Stanley Leighton.

NORTHERN, or NEWPORT DIVISION,
Robert Bickersteth.

MID, or WELLINGTON DIVISION,
Alexander Hargreaves Brown.

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*Members.***SALOP—cont.**

SOUTHERN, OF LUDLOW DIVISION,
Robert Jasper More.

SHREWSBURY BOROUGH.
James Watson.

SOMERSET.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Evan Henry Llewellyn.

WELLS DIVISION,
Richard Horner Paget.

FROME DIVISION,
Lawrence James Baker.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Henry Hobhouse.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Viscount Kilcourseie.

BRIDGWATER DIVISION,
Edward James Stanley.

WESTERN, OF WELLINGTON DIVISION,
Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, bt.

BATH BOROUGH.
Robert Stickney Blaine,
Edmond Robert Wodehouse.

TAUNTON BOROUGH.
Samuel Charles Allcopp.

STAFFORD.

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Charles Crompton.

BURTON DIVISION,
Sir Michael Arthur Bass, bt.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Hamar Alfred Bass.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
George Granville Leveson-Gower.

LICHFIELD DIVISION,
Sir John Swinburne, bt.

KINGSWINFORD DIVISION,
Alexander Staveley Hill.

HANDSWORTH DIVISION,
Henry Wiggin.

HANLEY BOROUGH.
William Woodall.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH.
William Shepherd Allen.

STAFFORD—cont.

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Charles Benjamin Bright McLaren.

STOKE-UPON-TRENT BOROUGH.
William Leatham Bright.

WALSALL BOROUGH.
Sir Charles Forster, bt.

WEDNESBURY BOROUGH.
Wilson Lloyd.

WEST BROMWICH BOROUGH.
John Horton Blades.

WOLVERHAMPTON BOROUGH.
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Alfred Hickman.

East Division,
Henry Hartley Fowler.

South Division,
Rt. hon. Charles Pelham Villiers.

SUFFOLK.

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Sir Savile Brinton Crossley, bt.

NORTH-EASTERN, OF EYE DIVISION,
Francis Seymour Stevenson.

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DIVISION,
Felix Thornley Cobbold.

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William Cuthbert Quilter.

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DIVISION,
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BURY ST. EDMUNDS BOROUGH.
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Henry Wyndham West.
Jesse Collings.

SURREY.

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Frederick Alers Hankey.

SOUTH-WESTERN, OF GUILFORD DIVISION,
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Brodrick.

SOUTH-EASTERN, OF REIGATE DIVISION,
Sir James John Trevor Lawrence, bt.

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{COMMONS, 1886}

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Sir John Whittaker Ellis, bt.

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DIVISION,
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BATTERSEA AND CLAPHAM BOROUGH.

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Octavius Vaughan Morgan.

Clapham Division.
John Fletcher Moulton.

CAMBERWELL BOROUGH.
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Richard Strong.

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Arthur Anthony Baumann.

Dulwich Division.
John Morgan Howard.

CROYDON BOROUGH.
William Grantham.

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North Division,
Major-Gen. Charles Crawford Fraser.

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Robert Gent-Davis.

Brixton Division.
Ernest Baggallay.

Norwood Division,
Thomas Lynn Bristowe.

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West Division,
Charles Wallwyn Radcliffe Cooke.

Walsworth Division,
Lewis Henry Isaacs.

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West Division,
Arthur Cohen.

Rotherhithe Division,
Lieut.-Col. Charles Edward Hamilton.

Bermudesey Division,
James Edwin Thorold Rogers.

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH.
Henry Kimber.

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NORTH-WESTERN, or HORSHAM DIVISION,
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DIVISION,
Earl of March.

NORTHERN, or EAST GRINGSTEAD DIVISION,
George Burrow Gregory.

MID, or LEWES DIVISION,
Sir Henry Fletcher, bt.

SOUTHERN, or EASTBOURNE DIVISION,
Captain Edward Field, R.N.

EASTERN, or RYE DIVISION,
Lieut.-Col. Arthur Montagu Brookfield.

BRIGHTON BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. William Thackeray Marriott.
David Smith.

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Sir Thomas Brassey, K.C.B.

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NORTHERN, or TAMWORTH DIVISION,
Philip Albert Muntz.

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Jasper Wilson Johns.

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AVON DIVISION,
Lord William Compton.

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Hugh Gilzean Reid.

BIRMINGHAM BOROUGH.
Edgbaston Division,
George Dixon.

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Rt. hon. Joseph Chamberlain.

Central Division.
Rt. hon. John Bright.

North Division,
William Kenrick.

East Division,
William Thomas Gustavus Cook.

Bordesley Division,
Henry Broadhurst.

South Division,
Joseph Powell Williams.

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Benjamin Hingley.**EASTERN DIVISION,**
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Joseph Craven.**SOWERBY DIVISION,**
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Benjamin Pickard.**COLNE VALLEY DIVISION,**
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Henry Joseph Wilson.**BARNSELY DIVISION,**
Courtney Stanhope Kenny.**HALLAMSHIRE DIVISION,**
Frederick Thorpe Mappin.**ROTTERHAM DIVISION,**
Arthur Herbert Dyke Acland.**DONCASTER DIVISION,**
Walter Shirley Shirley.

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Robert Gunter.

OSGOLDCROSS DIVISION,

Sir John William Ramsden, bt.

PUDSEY DIVISION,

Briggs Priestley.

SPEN VALLEY DIVISION,

Joseph Woodhead.

BRADFORD BOROUGH.

West Division,

Alfred Illingworth.

Central Division,

Right Hon. William Edward Forster.

East Division,

Angus Holden.

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John Simon, Serjeant-at-Law.

HALIFAX BOROUGH.

Thomas Shaw,

Rt. Hon. James Stansfeld.

HUDDERSFIELD BOROUGH.

Edward Aldam Leatham.

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL BOROUGH.

East Division,

William Saunders.

Central Division,

Henry Seymour King.

West Division,

Charles Henry Wilson.

LEEDS BOROUGH.

North Division,

William Lawies Jackson.

Central Division,

Gerald William Balfour.

East Division,

Richard Dawson.

West Division,

Herbert John Gladstone.

South Division,

Rt. Hon. Sir Lyon Playfair, K.O.B.

MIDDLESBOROUGH BOROUGH.

Isaac Wilson.

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Hon. Rowland Winn.

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Sir George Reresby Sitwell, bt.

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Attercliffe Division,

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Brightside Division,

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Central Division,

Charles Edward Howard Vincent.

Hallam Division,

Charles Beilby Stuart-Wortley.

Ecclesall Division,

Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett.

WAKEFIELD BOROUGH.

Edward Green.

YORK BOROUGH.

Alfred Edward Pease.

Frank Lockwood.

W A L E S .

ANGLESEA.

Richard Davies.

BRECKNOCK.

William Fuller Maitland.

CARDIGAN.

David Davies.

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WESTERN DIVISION,

Walter Rice Howell Powell.

CARMARTHEN BOROUGH.

Sir John Jones Jenkins, knt.

CARNARVON.

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John Bryn Roberts.

NORTHERN OR ARFON DIVISION,

William Rathbone.

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Thomas Love Duncombe Jones-Parry.

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William Cornwallis West.

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FLINT.
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FLINT BOROUGH.
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William Abraham.

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Frank Ash Yeo.

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Arthur John Williams.

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MERTHYR TYDVIL BOROUGH.
Henry Richard,
Charles Herbert James.

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Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn.

Swansea District,
Sir Henry Hussey Vivian, bt.

MERIONETH.
Henry Robertson.

MONTGOMERY.
Stuart Rendel.

MONTGOMERY BOROUGH.
Pryce Jones.

PEMBROKE.
William Davies.

PEMBROKE AND HAVERFORD WEST
BOROUGH.
Henry George Allen.

RADNOR.
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WESTERN DIVISION,
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William Alexander Hunter.

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ARGYLL.
Donald Horne Macfarlane.

AYR.
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Eugene Wason.

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Richard Frederick Fotheringham Campbell.

KILMARNOCK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Peter Sturrock.

BANFF.
Robert William Duff.

BERWICK.
Hon. Edward Marjoribanks.

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James Patrick Bannerman Robertson.

CAITHNESS.
Gavin Brown Clark.

WICK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
John Macdonald Cameron.

CLACKMANNAN AND KINROSS.
Rt. hon. John Blair Balfour.

DUMBARTON.
Archibald Orr Ewing.

DUMFRIES.
Sir Robert Jardine, bt.

DUMFRIES DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
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West Division,

Thomas Ryburn Buchanan.

Central Division,

John Wilson.

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Sir George Harrison, knt.

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William Jacks.

ELGIN AND NAIRN.

Sir George Macpherson Grant, bt.

ELGIN DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Alexander Asher.

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WESTERN DIVISION,

Hon. Robert Preston Bruce.

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Sir George Campbell, knt.

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Sir Robert Anstruther, bt., } equality of
Stephen Williamson. } votes.

FORFAR.

James William Barclay.

DUNDEE BURGHS.

Charles Carmichael Lacaita,
Edmund Robertson.

MONTROSE DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

John Shiress Will.

HADDINGTON.

Richard Burdon Haldane.

INVERNESS.

Charles Fraser-Mackintosh.

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Stephen Mason.

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John Glencairn Carter Hamilton.

GLASGOW BURGHS.

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Edward Richard Russell.

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Hugh Watt.

St. Rollox Division,

John McCulloch.

Central Division,

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Charles Cameron, M.D., LL.D.

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ROSS AND CROMARTY.
Roderick Macdonald.

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South Belfast Division,
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John Francis Small.

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Sir Thomas Henry Grattan Esmonde.

DUBLIN CITY.

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Mathew Harris.

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Joseph Nolan.

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Thomas Patrick Gill.

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Andrew Commins.

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Thomas Sexton.

TIPPERARY.

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Donal Sullivan.

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WICKLOW.

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Garrett Michael Byrne.

EAST WICKLOW DIVISION,
William Joseph Corbet.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

*FIRST SESSION OF THE TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
APPOINTED TO MEET 12 JANUARY, 1886, IN THE FORTY-NINTH
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF*

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1886.

THE TWENTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT of the United Kingdom—
which had met for the despatch of Business on Thursday, the
23rd day of October, 1884—was prorogued on the 14th day of August, 1885,
to Saturday, the 31st day of October, and from thence further prorogued to
Wednesday, the 18th day of November; and, on the same day, was dissolved
by Proclamation:—And Her Majesty thereon declaring Her pleasure to call a
new Parliament, directed Writs to be issued accordingly; which Writs were
made returnable on Tuesday, the 12th day of January.

The PARLIAMENT was opened by Commission.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 12th January, 1886.

THE HOUSE OF PEERS being met,

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House,

"That Her Majesty, not thinking fit to be personally present here this day, has been pleased to cause a Commission to be issued under the Great Seal, in order to the opening and holding of this Parliament."

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Then Five of the LORDS COMMISSIONERS—namely, The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury); The LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount Cranbrook); The EARL OF IDDESLEIGH (First Lord of the Treasury); The EARL OF COVENTRY (Captain of the Corps of Gentlemen at Arms); and The VISCOUNT BARRINGTON (Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard)—being in their Robes, and seated on a Form placed between the Throne and the Woolsack, commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to let the COMMONS know "The Lords Commis-

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sioners desire their immediate Attendance in this House, to hear the Commission read."

Who being come ;

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said—

" My Lords, and Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

"HER MAJESTY, not thinking fit to be present here to-day in Her Royal Person, hath been pleased, in order to the opening and holding of this Parliament, to cause Letters Patent to be issued under the Great Seal, constituting us and several other Lords therein named Her Commissioners, to do all things in Her Majesty's name, on Her part necessary to be performed in this Parliament, and this will more fully appear by the Letters Patent themselves, which will be now read.

Then the said Letters Patent were read by the Clerk. And then

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said—

" My Lords, and Gentlemen,

"We have it in command from Her Majesty to let you know, that Her Majesty will, as soon as the Members of your House shall be sworn, declare the causes of Her calling this Parliament; and it being necessary that a Speaker of the House of Commons shall be first chosen, it is Her Majesty's Pleasure that you, Gentlemen of the House of Commons, repair to the Place where you are to sit, and there proceed to the Choice of some proper Person to be your Speaker; and that you present such Person, whom you shall so choose, here, to-morrow, at Two o'clock, for Her Majesty's Royal approbation."

Then the Commons withdrew.

PRAYERS.

The Lord Chancellor—Singly, in the first place, took the Oath at the Table.

ROLL OF THE LORDS—Garter King of Arms attending, *delivered* at the Table (in the usual manner) a List of the Lords Temporal in the First Session of the Twenty-third Parliament of the United Kingdom : The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Certificate of the Election of Sixteen Representative Peers for Scotland — *Delivered*, and read as follows :—

Earl Mar and Kellie.

" Strathmore and Kinghorn.

" Haddington.

" Lindsay.

" Airlie.

" Leven and Melville.

" Northesk.

" Orkney.

Viscount Strathallan.

Lord Forbes.

" Saltoun.

" Sinclair.

" Bantyre.

" Balfour of Burleigh.

" Polwarth.

" Borthwick.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS — The Lord Chancellor informed the House that Her Majesty had been pleased to appoint, by Her Letters Patent dated the 26th day of December last, Henry Graham, Esquire, to the office of Clerk of the Parliaments, vacant by the death of Sir William Rose, K.C.B., the late Clerk of the Parliaments : Patents read; and the said Henry Graham then made the prescribed declaration (which declaration is set down in the Roll amongst the oaths of the great officers), and took his seat at the Table.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire—Sat first in Parliament after the death of his grandfather.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales—Singly took the Oath.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh—Singly took the Oath.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn—Singly took the Oath.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge—Singly took the Oath.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 12th January, 1886.

The House met at Two of the clock; and, it being the first day of the meeting of this Parliament, pursuant to Proclamation, the *Right honourable Sir Thomas Erskine May*, K.C.B., Clerk of the House of Commons, and *Reginald Francis Dence Palgrave*, and *Archibald John Scott Milman*, esquires, Clerks Assistant, attending in the House, and the other Clerks attending, according to their duty, *Kenneth Augustus Muir Macdonald*, esquire, Clerk of the Crown in Chancery in *Great Britain*, delivered to the said *Sir Thomas Erskine May* a Book, containing a List of the Names of the Members returned to serve in this Parliament.

Several of the Members repaired to their Seats.

A Message was delivered by *Admiral Hon. Sir James Drummond*, G.C.B., Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod:

"Gentlemen,

"The Lords, authorized by virtue of Her Majesty's Commission to open this Parliament, desire the immediate attendance of this Honourable House in the House of Peers, to hear the Commission read."

Accordingly, the House went up to the House of Peers;—And a Commission having been read for opening and holding the Parliament, the Lords Commissioners directed the House to proceed to the Election of a Speaker, and present him To-morrow, at Two of the clock, in the House of Peers for the Royal Approbation.

And the House being returned;—

ELECTION OF A SPEAKER.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY, addressing himself to the Clerk, who, standing up, pointed to him, and then sat down)—*Sir Thomas Erskine May*, in obedience to the gracious communication from Her Majesty, which we have just listened to in "another place," it now becomes the first duty of the House of Commons, as it is its ancient and undoubted Privilege, to proceed to the Election of a Speaker.

I feel it, *Sir Erskine May*, to be a high honour and a great gratification that I have been requested on this occasion to propose as a candidate the name of my right hon. Friend the Member for Warwick and Leamington (*Mr. Arthur Peel*), with the confident assurance that that name will be received with cordial approval, and will meet with universal assent. Two years ago the House of Commons sustained a serious and a signal loss by the retirement of so able and experienced a Speaker as *Sir Henry Brand*; and I do not think I shall be guilty of exaggeration if I say that at no period of our history, and under no circumstances, was the choice of a fit person to fill that Chair a matter of greater public interest and concern than it then was. The heated debates of 1881, the intervention of the Speaker, the extraordinary powers subsequently conferred upon *Sir Henry Brand*, the prolonged controversy over the New Rules in 1882, all were fresh in the recollection of the House. I believe the question we all anxiously asked was—who among the Members of the House could be found capable of sustaining the unremitting toil, of bearing the heavy burden, and the immense responsibility of so arduous a post? I think I may say that it was a matter of universal congratulation when the choice of those who were concerned in the original selection and nomination of a fit person to fill the Chair fell upon *Mr. Arthur Peel*. The son of a great Commoner, of a great Prime Minister, and a great Leader of this House, bearing the name of England's most illustrious hero—*Mr. Arthur Wellesley Peel* seemed to have double claim upon the confidence of this House and upon the respect and affection of the British nation. But he had other claims, and stronger claims—personal and individual claims—which recommended him to the notice of the House of Commons, and which were his real recommendation for the high post for which he was selected. He was known for his high and independent character, for his spotless integrity, for his unvarying courtesy. [*Loud cheers.* *Mr. BIGGAR*: No, no!] He was known to have had experience of official life; he was known to be thoroughly conversant with all the work of the House of Commons. His name was received

with acclamation. He was proposed by my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), in a speech which still lingers in our memories. His Proposer, on that occasion, in forcible, dignified, and eloquent language, enunciated those Constitutional doctrines which should guide the House of Commons in the selection of a Speaker, and then proceeded to make special application of them to Mr. Peel, grounded on long and intimate knowledge of his personal character. Mr. Peel was called to the Chair by the unanimous voice of the House. And we were at once assured of the wisdom of our choice, for as soon as he was elected the Speaker Elect, standing on those steps, before he proceeded to take his seat in the Chair, addressed the House in words so striking, so weighty, so dignified, and so becoming his high station, that I believe we felt, every one of us, that he had raised by that address the moral tone of the whole House. We were satisfied that we had found in Mr. Peel a worthy Successor of the most distinguished men who had preceded him in the Chair. It is not for me, on this occasion, to review his conduct in the Chair. I feel myself precluded, in his presence, from saying that which I should like to say both in a personal and public capacity. The whole House is, I believe, perfectly conscious of the high opinion entertained of Mr. Peel; but this much I may say—and no one will, I believe, deny it—that he has fulfilled, to the utmost, all the anticipations of his most sanguine supporters. He has conducted himself in the Chair with dignity. He has presided over our deliberations with ability and impartiality. He has exhibited clear apprehension, ready decision, sound judgment, self-possession, and resolution. He has proved himself well acquainted with the Rules and Orders of the House. He has shown himself capable of protecting all our Privileges. He has discharged, in an admirable manner, other duties, not less arduous, not less important, though less conspicuous. He has watched carefully over the course of our Private Business. He has been kind, courteous, and accessible to every individual who has ever sought his advice. He has enjoyed and retained the confidence of the House of Commons—a confidence which I boldly say neither rank, nor attainments, nor

inheritance of proud name, nor personal *prestige*, without high personal character, can ever command or insure. I propose, therefore, to this new House of Commons, composed to so large an extent of new Members, representing so many new constituencies, an old, an honoured Speaker, tried and approved by the last House of Commons. I propose him in accordance with all the best precedents which are to be found recorded in our Journals during the last two centuries—the best period of our Parliamentary history. I propose him especially in accordance with the precedents which regulated the re-election of Mr. Manners Sutton in 1833, of Mr. Shaw Lefevre in 1841, and of Mr. Brand in 1874. I cite these precedents because I think they prove the usage of continuity in the Chair, and the importance which the House has always attached to that continuity. Such continuity has long been recognized as adding weight and authority to the Speaker for the time being. But, besides and beyond this, I emphatically propose Mr. Peel on his own merits; because I feel assured that the House at large is well convinced that there is not at the present moment, within these walls, any other man so pre-eminently qualified to guide and direct our deliberations, to maintain our Privileges, and to hand down unsullied to remote posterity all those lofty traditions which have ever appertained to the unique position of Speaker of the House of Commons. I beg now, Sir Erskine May, to move—"That the Right honourable Arthur Wellesley Peel do take the Chair of this House as Speaker."

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: Sir Erskine May, I rise for the purpose of seconding the Motion submitted by the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for the University of Oxford (Sir John R. Mowbray). The House will feel, as I feel, that there is very little to be said after the admirable speech in which he has introduced this subject to the House. To hon. Members sitting in the Parliament now about to commence who had seats in the last Parliament, and in the last Session, it seems absolutely unnecessary to say a word in favour of the candidate before us. But to the new Members what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman is of importance. I know not that I ought to trouble the House with anything like a repetition

Sir John R. Mowbray

of it; but, at the same time, I feel disposed to add two or three sentences to those which he has offered. What qualities are required in the presiding officer of the House of Commons have been, to a certain extent, described. To new Members it must, I think, be clear, although they have no acquaintance with what has been done in this House heretofore, that it is absolutely necessary that the Speaker should have a very complete and minute knowledge of the proceedings of the House, and of its modes of transacting Business. That, I think, we have found in our late Speaker, as I doubt not we shall find in the Speaker who is to come after him, ample knowledge of that kind. At the same time, with regard to the question of courtesy, I have observed that the Speakers who have sat in that Chair during the 40 years that I have been in this House have been themselves marked for their courtesy to individual Members. There are abundant cases in which Members require to consult the Speaker on little difficulties that arise, or as to points in their own procedure; and I have looked sometimes almost with wonder, but always with great admiration, at the manner in which applications of this kind to the Speaker, from every part of the House, have been received by him. I have no doubt whatsoever that in the Speaker whom we are about to elect we shall find this courtesy as conspicuously displayed as it has been by those who have preceded him. Then there comes the question to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred, and to which I would refer in one sentence; and that is the idea, the opinion, and the faith we have that whosoever occupies that Chair should be a man of inflexible impartiality, that there should be no taint of Party feeling or of Party spirit to influence him, or attach to him, or be suspected of him, in any of the transactions with which he is connected. Then we have another quality to which also some reference has been made, and that is the quality of courage and firmness. In a House like this, composed of more than 600 Members, debating with a freedom not surpassed, I suppose, in any other Legislative Assembly, there occur cases in which I should say that excitement and passion take the place sometimes of calmness and of reason. The questions

discussed are so great, they interest so many, the feeling of Party sometimes is so strong, that it would be deplorable and a lamentable thing if we had, in the Chair of this House, a feeble man, wanting in courage and firmness on these occasions. Well, I think, judging by the past, that in placing Mr. Peel in that Chair we shall have the confidence that, while he will do justice to every Party and every section in the House, at least he will be certain to do this—to uphold the dignity of his own Office, and to support the authority of the House itself. I think I have said pretty nearly all that is necessary in regard to this matter. I believe that the House is disposed, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite has suggested, by a unanimous vote, to elect Mr. Peel to that Chair. If they do so they will confer upon him a signal honour, and they will do a signal service to the House itself, and to the millions whom we are supposed to represent within these walls. Of Mr. Peel I will say that he bears a name famous in the annals of Parliament; and I believe that if he is elected to that Chair, when the time shall come that his time of service shall be completed, it will be found that he has not lessened that fame, but has rather added to it. I beg, Sir, to second the Motion that Mr. Arthur Wellesley Peel be called to the Chair of this House.

MR. JUSTIN MCCARTHY: Sir Erskine May, in the absence of my hon. Friend (Mr. Parnell), the Leader of the Party with whom I have the honour to act, it is not my intention to offer any opposition to the Motion just submitted to the House, or to what seems to be the general decision of the House. It would have given me pleasure if I could have sincerely joined in all the commendations which have been passed on the Gentleman whose name has been proposed to-day. It would have given me pleasure even if I could have abstained on this occasion from saying a word or two on behalf of the Party with whom I act in this House. But, Sir Erskine May, it would be the merest affectation and something like hypocrisy on my part, and on the part of those on whose behalf I now speak, if I were to allow the language of unmitigated eulogy which has been poured out in regard to Mr. Peel to pass without some form of protest. I myself, Sir Erskine May, had on the Books of

this House, for a lengthened period of last Session, a Notice of Motion inviting the House to say that, on one occasion at least, Mr. Peel did not act in an equitable and impartial manner as regards one Party in this House. Several of my Colleagues also had on the Books of this House Notices of Motion of a similar kind referring to the same, or to some other and similar, transaction. The House, therefore, will understand that, without any wish to introduce debate on a question of this nature, it would not be possible for me or my Friends to allow it to go forth to the country—after having endeavoured as well as we could last Session to obtain a vote from this House finding fault with Mr. Peel's conduct for want of impartiality—it would not be possible for us to allow this Motion to pass without protest, and to allow it to go to the country that we admitted that Mr. Peel was right in his action towards us, and that we were wrong when we endeavoured to induce the House of Commons to censure him for that action. I have no wish to intrude longer on the attention of the House. So far as I am personally concerned, in my relations with Mr. Peel I have received nothing but kindness and courtesy at his hands. But I am not speaking now of Mr. Peel, the private Gentleman whom we all respect, nor even of him as Speaker of this House in his ordinary relations with Members; but I am speaking of him as an officer of this House, who, in my firm and sincere belief, acted on more than one occasion with a distinct want of that impartiality which is one of the noblest qualities in a Speaker, and for which he has received such high, and I might almost say such unmeasured, praise to-day. Beyond entering that protest, in order that it may not be supposed that I and my Friends concur in the compliments which have been paid, I shall not further detain the House.

The House then unanimously calling Mr. PEEL to the Chair,

MR. PEEL stood up in his place and said: Sir Thomas Erskine May, I respectfully thank the House for the manner in which they have received the mention of my name. I should be altogether wanting, Sir, in the discharge of the obligations of courtesy, and I hope I may add of friendship, too, if I failed to thank the right hon. Baronet the

Member for the University of Oxford (Sir John R. Mowbray) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) for the terms they have used towards me in respectively proposing and seconding my nomination to the Chair of this House. Two years ago, Sir, it was the pleasure of this House to elect me to fill that Chair. They have been two years of eventful history. I speak not of the mere personal considerations which arise in connection with them. No Speaker could have occupied that Chair for those two years without having the importance of that time pressed steadily upon him individually. But I may say that if I have learned, as I have learned, much during the occupation of that Chair for two years, I have above all things learnt this—more deeply to appreciate and more fully to estimate the difficulties and the delicacies which surround the occupant of that Chair. And I am more deeply conscious—I say it unaffectedly—I am more deeply conscious than I ever could have been before of my own shortcomings and failure to act up to the great traditions of that Office. Sir, these have been eventful years; they have resulted in a General Election, conducted, as it has been, under a Reform Bill and a Redistribution of Seats Bill. The result has been that we are now met together in this House with an infusion of new Members such as has never been paralleled for the last 50 years. As one who has sat in this House for 20 years, may I remind those hon. Gentlemen who, conversant as they are with business of great importance outside this House, are yet taking their places in this Assembly for the first time—may I remind them, as I wish to do without presumption, that the Rules and Forms and Proceedings of this House are wedded to remote antiquity; that many of them which seem to be new are developments of the old; and that, while we have adopted new Rules to suit the supposed requirements of the day, we have ever been influenced by a regard for precedent and old times. Many of our Forms and Rules are old; some are new; some are girt with the prescriptive dignity of immemorial custom. Sir, if I am elected—if it is the pleasure of the House to elect me to that Chair, I shall appeal with equal confidence to new Members as to old. I shall ask them to approach those

Mr. Justin M'Carthy

Rules, Forms, and Orders, with that generous and equitable spirit in which alone they ought to be approached, whether they have to be interpreted and administered on the one hand, or have to be complied with on the other. I shall, above all, Sir, ask for the forbearance of the House. No one knows better than I how much I shall stand in need of it. The position of a Speaker, the moral strain upon him, to say nothing of the physical tedium, are great calls and demands upon any individual. Whatever those burdens may be, Sir, whatever those difficulties may be, they are lightened if one can feel assured that one will have the co-operation and support of the House. Without that support the position of a Speaker is untenable and intolerable; but there is ample reward for anything that may be gone through in the discharge of that Office—I would say more, those difficulties, which I have alluded to, vanish altogether if one can be assured that in some small measure, at least, one has won the confidence of the House of Commons. Sir, I respectfully thank the House, and I very humbly place myself at its entire disposal.

The House then again unanimously calling Mr. PHEL to the Chair; he was taken out of his place by the said Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY, and the said Mr. DIGHT, and conducted to the Chair.

Then Mr. SPEAKER ELECT, standing on the upper step, said: Standing in this place, I beg again most respectfully to thank the Members of this House for the great honour they have done me, and for the dignified Office with which they have been pleased to invest me. I shall remember all I have said; and I beg to assure the House that I shall, above all, try to exercise that virtue of impartiality to which allusion has been made. I shall strive to know no distinction of Party, but to appeal, with the utmost confidence, not to one section of the House or another, not to one Party or another, but to the entire Assembly of this House of Commons.

And then the Mace, which before lay under the Table, was now laid upon the Table. Then—

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, rose and said: It is my agreeable duty, in the

name of this House, to tender to you, Sir, our hearty congratulations upon your unanimous election, for the second time, to the high and honourable Office of Speaker of the House of Commons. That Office, Sir, is, as you have already stated, one of great labour and great anxiety; but it is something more than that. It is an Office requiring the highest qualities in anyone who can successfully perform its duties. The highest sense of honour, the strictest impartiality, not only as between different Parties or sections, but as between all the Members of the House; the power to maintain with dignity and firmness, but also with temper and with tact, due order and liberty in our proceedings; a capacity for rapid and accurate judgment, by which alone the Speaker can deal with those many and difficult questions which so often occur, and which have to be decided in a moment under very unexpected circumstances—this, Sir, is a combination of qualities which very few individuals are fortunate enough to possess; and yet such qualities are essential to the successful performance of the duties of Speaker of this House. But, Sir, there is something more without which even those qualities cannot secure success, and that is the possession of the confidence of this House. That confidence, Sir, you have already won. When, nearly two years ago, you succeeded in that Chair a man whose long and admirable services had won for him the respect and the affection of the House of Commons, you stated, with becoming modesty, that in your judgment the choice then made was, at any rate to some extent, dictated by a recollection of your near connection with that great man whose name will always stand as one of the first in our Parliamentary history. Then, Sir, you were reminded by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone) that much was expected from you. That expectation has been more than fulfilled. If, at that time, the name of the father had any influence in determining the choice of the House, though that name can never be forgotten, yet, to-day, we choose you on account of the proved merits of the son. We congratulate you on your election to that Chair. We congratulate ourselves still more that we have been able to make such a choice. I have dwelt upon the qualities necessary for a

Speaker. You, Sir, have reminded this House that we owe to any Speaker our cordial support. I think, Sir, I may say that that support will be warmly and continuously accorded; for I believe that this House, which more fully and more completely represents the people than any previous House of Commons, will be mindful, with the best of its Predecessors, that the authority of the Chair must be supported in order to secure that order and regularity in our debates without which it is impossible for this House to maintain the character which it should enjoy of a working, business-like Assembly, fittingly representing the people of this great country.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir Erskine May, the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), in the excellent though brief address which he has delivered on the present occasion, has, I am quite certain, expressed the sense, not only of those who sit behind him and who may be considered as the supporters of his Government, but of the House at large. At the same time, Sir, I think it may not be out of place if, in conformity with the usage of at least some former periods, I venture more directly, on behalf of those with whom I am more closely associated in political opinion, to echo from this side of the House those assurances of support and confidence which the right hon. Gentleman has wisely and ably delivered. Sir, in the course of more than half-a-century I have witnessed changes in this House, among which, undoubtedly, none is more undeniable, none more conspicuous, than the very great change that has taken place in the character of the Office you have again been elected to fill. It is not, I think, saying too much if I affirm that, at the time when I entered Parliament, the choice of a Speaker was a matter comparatively easy; and the demands made upon him, though even then very great, yet were demands which might have been satisfied by not a very large proportion, perhaps, but yet by an appreciable proportion of the Members who sat on the Benches of the House. One historical incident which illustrates the change which I refer to is this—that within the last 100 years Members were chosen to the Speakership at a very early period of their life. It is now felt that, among the essential conditions of that Office, independently of all other gifts, a large experience—a

The Chancellor of the Exchequer

great Parliamentary knowledge, founded upon experience and even habit, are among the primary and indispensable qualifications for filling the Chair. In truth, Sir, the demands on our Speaker have reached a point at which I will venture to say they will admit of no further augmentation; for if it were to happen that changes in the habit of mind, of thought, and of speech, and of conduct in this House became less favourable than hitherto they have happily been to the authority of the Chair—if, also, there were to be any weakening of that strong and powerful alliance in which the mass of the House habitually stands with the occupant of the Chair—then I do believe that the strongest mind, that the firmest nerve, that the best intentions, that the most distinguished talents must necessarily fail under the burden that in such case would necessarily lie on the Speaker. But, Sir, I feel that, in this instance, that is not the case. In the few words that have been spoken to-day by way of protest on behalf of a particular Party—a third Party—in this House, I did not read any more than what was felt to be, by the person who spoke them, the reluctant fulfilment of what was to him a conscientious duty. I have no doubt that it may have occurred to that hon. Gentleman, as it will have occurred to others, that the relations in which he and his Party have stood to the Chair on some occasions have been strained relations, and relations in which it was hardly within the compass of human possibility that perfect satisfaction could be given to the individuals immediately concerned, and perfect satisfaction given to the general obligations of the Speaker. But, Sir, I wish to say that, in the speech of the hon. Member, I did not detect—I do not read in it—any indication of a disposition to relax the duties incumbent upon himself and upon other Members of this House towards the Chair; rather I recognize in it an acknowledgment of those duties; and I earnestly hope that the circumstances in which the hon. Gentleman now appears may render it, perhaps, more easy for him to conduct his relations with the Chair in future contingencies than it has been in the past. But, Sir, one thing I wish to say, and for the purpose of saying it I was especially desirous to rise. Allusion has been made, and has been very properly made, to the change in

the composition of this House brought about by the important Acts for the extension of the Franchise and for the Redistribution of Seats. I remember, Sir, very well, at the time of the first Reform Bill, there were great and perhaps not unreasonable apprehensions in the mind of the Government of the day—the Government of Lord Grey—as to the increased difficulties which the Speaker might find in controlling the debates and proceedings of the House of Commons, in consequence of the very large number of new Members elected, and to a certain amount of change in the circumstances and classes to which those new Members belonged. Happily, Sir, in effect, the practical result was entirely to dissipate those apprehensions. I have carefully watched, from time to time, what the effects have been of the successive widenings of the popular basis of this House; and I do not hesitate to say, as a matter of fact, that those classes of Members which have been introduced into the House in consequence of that widening of the basis have borne, and will bear, no disadvantageous comparison in respect of conduct, in respect of submission to the Chair, and in respect of disposition to support the Chair, and to observe in all particulars the order and the courtesies of this House—will bear no unfavourable comparison with the class who, up to the year 1832, had almost a monopoly of the House. Sir, it is not necessary to dwell upon the particular qualities which are now so urgently necessary in the Speaker, and which have been so admirably stated by those who have preceded me. I will only observe this—that it is quite conceivable that there might be in this House Gentlemen with qualifications not only good, not only high, but absolutely incomparable for many of the purposes which it is the business of the Speaker to serve, and yet who might be totally disqualified for the satisfactory discharge of the duties of that Office; because, Sir, it is in the combination of a great number of qualities, a number of qualities not easy to unite together, often apt to run in different directions—it is in that combination and in that happy balance that alone can be found that sum of qualifications according to which the Speaker in the Chair will give satisfaction or will not give

satisfaction. Sir, the House believed, when you were chosen, that we had found in you that happy balance and that combination which would enable you to deserve and to win their confidence. Your name gave you a favourable introduction to the notice of the House; but your name, at the same time, heightened the expectations and heightened the demands which were made upon your mind and your powers. You now, however, have no longer to rest upon your name, or to depend upon anticipations alone. In looking to your past, Sir, I feel the most confident expectations of your future. It is with these expectations that I venture to congratulate the House upon the thorough harmony of to-day's proceedings; and I venture to congratulate you, Sir, upon having again received, in so marked a manner, one of the highest honours that can be conferred upon a British citizen, in the ascription to you of the great Office you have again been elected to hold, and the conferring of which Office is, above all things, the note, the stamp, and the seal of your possessing the thorough and unbounded confidence of the House of Commons.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH): I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

Mr. SPEAKER ELECT put the Question, which, being agreed to,—

The House was adjourned accordingly, and Mr. SPEAKER ELECT went away with the Mace before him.

House adjourned at a quarter after
Three o'clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 13th January, 1886.

The House met at Two of the clock.

The Lords Commissioners—namely, The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury); The LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL Viscount Cranbrook; The EARL OF IDDESLEIGH (First Lord of the Treasury); The EARL OF COVENTRY (Captain of the

Corps of Gentlemen at Arms); and The Viscount BARRINGTON (Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard)—being in their Robes, and seated on a Form placed between the Throne and the Woolsack, commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to let the Commons know "The Lords Commissioners desire their immediate Attendance in this House."

And the Commons being at the Bar;

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PRESENTED AND APPROVED.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE ARTHUR WELLESLEY PEEL, Speaker Elect, said—

"MY LORDS,

"I have to acquaint your Lordships, that in obedience to Her Majesty's commands, Her Majesty's most faithful Commons have, in the exercise of their undoubted rights and privileges, proceeded to the Election of a Speaker, and that their choice has fallen upon myself, and I now present myself at your Lordships' Bar, and humbly submit myself for Her Majesty's gracious approbation."

Then THE LORD CHANCELLOR said—

"MR. PEEL,

"We are commanded to assure you that Her Majesty is so fully satisfied of your zeal for the public service, and of your ample sufficiency to discharge the arduous duties which Her faithful Commons have selected you to discharge, that She does most readily approve and confirm you as their Speaker."

Then MR. SPEAKER said—

"MY LORDS,

"I submit myself with all humility and gratitude to Her Majesty's gracious commands. It is now my duty, in the name and on behalf of the Commons of the United Kingdom, to lay claim by humble Petition to Her Majesty, to all their undoubted rights and privileges; especially to freedom of speech in debate; to freedom from arrest of their persons and servants; and, particularly, to free access to Her Majesty whenever occasion shall require, and that the most favourable construction shall be put upon all their proceedings. As for

myself, I pray that if any error shall be committed it may be imputed to myself, and not to Her Majesty's faithful Commons."

Then THE LORD CHANCELLOR said,

"MR. SPEAKER,

"We have it further in command to inform you that Her Majesty does most readily confirm all the rights and privileges which have ever been granted to or conferred upon the Commons by any of Her Royal Predecessors.

"With respect to yourself, Sir, though Her Majesty is sensible that you stand in no need of such assurance, Her Majesty will ever put the most favourable construction upon your words and actions."

Then the Commons withdrew.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR IRELAND.

Writs and Returns electing the Viscount Bangor a Representative Peer for Ireland in the room of the late Earl of Erne, deceased, with the Certificate of the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland annexed thereto: *Delivered* (on oath), and Certificate read.

Several Lords—took the Oath.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 13th January, 1886.

The House met at Two of the clock.

The House being met, and Mr. SPEAKER ELECT having taken the Chair, a Message was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod:

"MR. SPEAKER,

"The Lords, authorized by virtue of Her Majesty's Commission, desire the immediate attendance of this Honourable House in the House of Peers."

Accordingly, Mr. SPEAKER ELECT, with the House, went up to the House of Peers, where he was presented to the said Lords Commissioners for the Royal Approbation.

Then THE LORD CHANCELLOR, one of the said Lords Commissioners, signified Her Majesty's approbation of Mr. Speaker Elect.

The House being returned;—

Mr. SPEAKER said: I have to report to the House that, in the House of Peers, Her Majesty, by Her Royal Commissioners, has been pleased to approve the choice made of myself for the Office of your Speaker, and that I have, in your name and on your behalf, laid claim by humble Petition to Her Majesty to all your ancient Rights and Privileges—freedom of speech in debate, freedom from arrest of your person and servants, and, particularly, of free access to Her Majesty whenever occasion may require, and that the most favourable construction shall be placed upon all your proceedings. All these, Her Majesty, by Her Commissioners, has been pleased to grant and confirm, in as ample a manner as they have ever been granted and confirmed by Her Majesty, or by any of Her Royal Predecessors.

It is my duty again to thank the House for the high honour they have done me in electing me to the Chair of this House. I have now to remind the House that the first duty of its Members is to take the Oath according to the form prescribed by law.

And thereupon Mr. SPEAKER, first alone, standing upon the upper step of the Chair, took and subscribed the Oath.

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH).

Mr. SPEAKER, again rising, said: Before hon. Members come to the Table to take the Oaths it is my duty to inform the House that I have received a letter from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) in respect to the proceeding as affecting the hon. Gentleman the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). I have thought it my duty, under the very exceptional circumstances of the moment, and inasmuch as by the nature of the case there can be no do-

bate, to put the House in possession of the main facts of this letter; and also of another notice or letter which I have received from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), signed by himself and by another hon. Member of this House, the hon. Member for the Honiton Division of the County of Devon (Sir John Kennaway). The letter of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) contains an historical retrospect of the case which I do not propose to read to the House. It is, as far as I know, a statement of mere facts, and it is not necessary for me to put the House in possession of those facts. The letter concludes by putting an important question, which it is my duty, I think, to read in the very words the right hon. Gentleman has used. It is as follows:—

"It will thus be seen that the House of Commons consistently, and notwithstanding new writs and fresh elections of Mr. Bradlaugh, has refused to permit him to repeat words which in his case would be simply an act of profanation. The Court of Appeal has decided, by a judgment which the House of Commons could not but recognize, that Mr. Bradlaugh was incapable of taking an Oath. [*Cries of "No!"*] No one doubts his identity; and I am advised that, as a matter of law, a state of facts once established is presumed to exist until the contrary is proved. [*Cries of "No!"*] Until the House of Commons is fully constituted, any action by the House is difficult, if not impossible. I therefore respectfully submit for your consideration, in view of the facts to which I have deemed it my duty to direct your attention, that Mr. Bradlaugh should not be permitted to go through the form of taking the Oath without an opportunity being afforded to the House of expressing its opinion upon a proceeding which I believe, if fully constituted, it would decline to sanction.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. E. HICKS-BEACH."

The other notice to which I have referred as proceeding from the right hon. Member for Cambridge University and the hon. Member for the Honiton Division of the County of Devon, containing also an historical retrospect of the case, and differs very slightly indeed from the letter which I have just read, except in calling my attention to the fact of the appearance of a newspaper styled *The National Reformer* of January 10, 1886. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes) and his Colleague conclude with a pro-

test, and ask my opinion upon a point of Order. I have said that I deemed it my duty, under exceptional and extraordinary circumstances, to place these letters before the House; and I think it may be for the convenience of the House that I should, before the House is constituted and before hon. Members come to the Table to take their Oaths, state my view—a view arrived at after full consideration—of what ought to be my conduct in the course of these proceedings. It will be observed that the statements made by the Right honourable Gentlemen to whom I have referred allude to proceedings in a former Parliament, and that in no case cited does the Speaker take original and independent authority upon himself. It is always by the action of the House, in consequence of something that has occurred during that Parliament. We are assembled in a new Parliament. I know nothing of the Resolutions of the past. They have lapsed, they are void, they are of no effect in reference to this case. It is the right, the legal statutable obligation, of Members when returned to this House, to come to this Table, and take the Oath prescribed by Statute. I have no authority, I have no right, original or delegated, to interfere between an honourable Member and his taking of the Oath. I have been further asked whether, when the House is completed, and after a quorum has been constituted, it would be competent for a Motion to be made intervening between the honourable Member for Northampton and his taking of the Oath? I have come clearly, and without hesitation, to the conclusion that it would neither be my duty to prohibit the honourable Gentleman from coming nor to permit a Motion to be made standing between him and his taking of the Oath. The honourable Member takes that Oath under whatever risks may attach to him in a Court of Law. But it is not for me, I respectfully say it is not for the House, to enter into any inquisition as to what may be the opinions of a Member when he comes to the Table to take the Oath. I am bound, and the House is bound, by the forms of this House, and by the legal obligation and rights of Members. If a Member comes to this Table and offers to take the Oath, I know of no right whatever to intervene between him and the performance of a legal and statutable duty.

Mr. Speaker

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH): I ask, by the indulgence of the House, to be permitted to make one observation—[*Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that, if he has any objection to my decision, a debate cannot now be initiated. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman rises to a point of Order.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH): I understand, Sir, your answer to the question which I have ventured to put to you to be that you will neither intervene yourself in the matter, nor will you permit the intervention of any other hon. Member of this House with a Motion. However much I, Sir, or any other Member of this House—[*Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman of the distinction I wish to draw between calling my attention to a point of Order and making a speech. The right hon. Gentleman would not be in Order in making a speech, seeing that he has not yet, himself, taken the Oath.

The following is the Entry in Votes of the Letters referred to by the Speaker:—

January 12th 1886.

Sir,

I beg respectfully to place before you the following statement with regard to Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, one of the Burgesses elected to serve in Parliament for the Borough of Northampton.

On the 3rd of May 1880, Mr. Bradlaugh, having then been elected as Member for the same Borough, claimed to be allowed to affirm instead of taking the Oath, by virtue of an Act which gives that power to witnesses who have no religious belief. The question was referred to a Committee of the House of Commons: who reported, that the power claimed by Mr. Bradlaugh does not exist in respect of the Parliamentary Oath. On the 21st May, Mr. Bradlaugh claimed to take and subscribe the Oath, and was in the act of doing so, when Sir Henry Drummond Wolff interposed with a Motion that Mr. Bradlaugh should not be allowed to take the Oath. To this Motion an Amendment was moved and carried that it be referred to a Select Committee to inquire into the facts and circumstances, and as to the right of the House to refuse to allow the Oath to be administered to

Mr. Bradlaugh. On the 16th of June the Committee reported as to the right and jurisdiction of the House to refuse to allow the form of the Oath prescribed to be taken by duly elected Members to be taken by them, that there is and must be an inherent power in the House to require that the Law by which the Proceedings of the House and its Members in reference to the taking of the Parliamentary Oath is regulated, be duly observed; that, by making the claim to affirm, Mr. Bradlaugh voluntarily brought to the notice of the House that on several occasions he had been permitted to affirm in a Court of Justice, under the Evidence Act Amendment Act, 1869-70; in order to enable him to do which, a Judge of the Court must have been satisfied that an Oath was not binding upon Mr. Bradlaugh's conscience. The Committee further reported that, under the circumstances, the compliance by Mr. Bradlaugh would not be the taking of an Oath within the true meaning of the Statute, 29 Vict. sect. 19, and 31 and 32 Vi t. cap. 72, and that therefore the House can, and in the opinion of the Committee ought to, prevent Mr. Bradlaugh going through this form. On the 21st June it was moved by Mr. Labouchere that Mr. Bradlaugh be admitted to make an affirmation or declaration instead of the Oath. To this an Amendment was moved by Sir H. Giffard, which was carried, that Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to take the Oath or make the declaration. On the 31st March 1881, judgment was delivered by the Court of Appeal that Mr. Bradlaugh was a person who, by want of religious belief, was not entitled by the Parliamentary Oaths Act or the Promissory Oaths Act to make or subscribe an Affirmation. On the 26th April 1881, Mr. Bradlaugh again claimed to take and subscribe the Oath: and the House resolved that Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of repeating the words of the Oath. On the 7th Feb. 1882, Mr. Bradlaugh came to the Table to take and subscribe the Oath: the House again resolved that he be not permitted. On the 21st Feb. 1882, Mr. Bradlaugh advanced to the Table and read from a paper the words of the Oath, and having kissed a copy of the New Testament signed the paper. On the 22nd Feb. the House resolved that Mr. Bradlaugh having disobeyed the Orders of the House and having in contempt of the authority of the House irregularly and contumaciously pretended to take and subscribe the Oath, be expelled the House: and a new Writ was ordered to be issued for the Borough of Northampton. On the 6th of March the House reaffirmed the Resolution of the 7th February, and directed that Mr. Bradlaugh be not per-

mitted to go through the form of taking the Oath. On the 4th May 1883, the House resolved that Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of repeating the words of the Oath. On the 11th February 1884, Mr. Bradlaugh advanced to the Table, proceeded to read from a paper the words of the Oath, and having kissed a book, signed the paper and left the same on the Table. The House resolved that Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of taking the Oath. On the 21st February the same Resolution was reaffirmed. In the month of June 1884, the case *Att.-Gen. v. Bradlaugh* was tried at Bar, before Lord Coleridge C.J., Grove J., Huddleston B., and a Special Jury. The Jury find among other things that on the 11th February 1884, Mr. Bradlaugh had no belief in a Supreme Being, and was a person upon whose conscience an Oath, as an Oath, had no binding force; and that the House of Commons had full cognizance and notice of these matters, in consequence of the avowal of Mr. Bradlaugh. In December 1884, an application for a new trial, upon the ground that the verdict was against the evidence was refused, both in the Queen's Bench Division and in the Court of Appeal. In Jan. 1885 an appeal was heard, and judgment was given for the Attorney-Genl. on the merits, on the ground that a Member of Parliament who does not believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, and upon whom an Oath, as an Oath, has no binding effect, is, owing to his want of religious belief, incapable by Law of making and subscribing the Oath of Allegiance appointed by the Parliamentary Oaths Act as amended by the Promissory Oaths Act.

It will thus be seen that the House of Commons consistently, and notwithstanding new writs and fresh elections of Mr. Bradlaugh, has refused to permit him to repeat words which in his case would be simply an act of profanation. The Court of Appeal has decided, by a judgment which the House of Commons could not but recognize, that Mr. Bradlaugh was incapable of taking an Oath. No one doubts his identity; and I am advised that, as a matter of law, a state of facts once established is presumed to exist until the contrary is proved. Until the House of Commons is fully constituted, any action by the House is difficult, if not impossible. I therefore respectfully submit for your consideration, in view of the facts to which I have deemed it my duty to direct your attention, that Mr. Bradlaugh should not be permitted to go through the form of taking the Oath without an opportunity being afforded to the House of expressing its opinion upon a

proceeding which I believe, if fully constituted, it would decline to sanction.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. E. HICKS-BEACH.

The Right Honble.

The Speaker of

The House of Commons.

To the Speaker Elect.

House of Commons,

Jan. 12, 1886.

Sir,

We, the undersigned, being Members of the present House of Commons, direct your attention to the facts and circumstances following:—That Charles Bradlaugh, of 20, Circus Road, St. John's Wood, London, has been returned by the Borough of Northampton as one of the Members to represent the said Borough in the present Parliament.

That the said Charles Bradlaugh is the same person who was elected to serve in Parliament by the same constituency in the late Parliament.

That the said Charles Bradlaugh was then, and is now, avowedly an Atheist, and is thereby disqualified from taking the Oath of Allegiance, or making an Affirmation, in the form set forth in "The Parliamentary Oaths Act, 1866."

That, since the last General Election, and under date January 10th of this year, 1886, the said Charles Bradlaugh has caused to be printed and published in a Newspaper "printed and published by Charles Bradlaugh, of 20, Circus Road, London, N.W., and by Annie Besant, of 19, Avenue Road, London, N.W., at 69, Fleet Street, E.C., the following notice:—"The full legal responsibility for everything which appears in these columns rests on Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant as Editors and Publishers of the paper. For the opinions expressed in all signed articles the writers are morally responsible. The editorial policy of the paper is Republican, Atheistic, and Malthusian, but all opinions are freely admitted, provided only that they be expressed reasonably and in proper language." This notice appeared in "The National Reformer," January 10th, 1886. A copy of the Newspaper containing the notice above written is herewith enclosed.

We now state, for your information, that the late House of Commons repeatedly refused to allow the said Charles Bradlaugh to sit and vote therein, in consequence of his incapacity to take the Parliamentary Oath of Allegiance, or make an Affirmation. The Journals of this

House show that the said Charles Bradlaugh was not allowed to sit and vote in the House on the following dates: June 22, 1880; April 9, 1881; April 26, 1881; May 10, 1881; August 3, 1881; February 7, 1882; February 22, 1882; March 6, 1882; June 22, 1882; May 4, 1883; February 11, 1884; February 21, 1884; July 6, 1885. In the year 1884 the Attorney General filed an information under the Crown Suits Acts to recover penalties from Charles Bradlaugh for having sat and voted in the House of Commons without first having made and subscribed the Oath under the Parliamentary Oaths Act. After a trial by a jury, judgment was given against the Defendant. On appeal, a Divisional Court gave judgment against the Defendant. Subsequently, on the 28th of January 1885, the Court of Appeal, consisting of the Master of the Rolls and Lords Justices Cotton and Lindley after argument decided that the Defendant, Charles Bradlaugh, was liable to pay the said penalties. In giving judgment, the Master of the Rolls said, "that the Law on this point had been clearly settled for years, and it had been decided that any person whose mind was in that state could not be a witness in any case or under any circumstances because he could not take an Oath. Whatever words, or whatever forms a man might use or go through, if his conscience was not bound by them he was incapable by the Law of England of taking an Oath. In his opinion, the question of the belief of the Defendant was an issue of fact which must be decided by the Jury in precisely the same way as they decided other issues of fact, and any evidence relevant to that issue was admissible.

"It was said that the House of Commons must have a knowledge of the state of mind of the person pretending to take the Oath at the time he took it; but, in his opinion, if the House of Commons had no knowledge whatever that the person pretending to take the Oath had no belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, or that his conscience was not bound by the Oath, if it should subsequently come to the knowledge of the Attorney General that the Member having gone through the form of taking the Oath did not regard himself as bound by it, it would be his duty to commence proceedings against him under this statute.

"He hoped it would be thoroughly understood from the Judgment of that Court, that it was impossible by an artifice, by any subterfuge, by any daring, or by any force, for any Member of the House of Commons to avoid or evade the penal consequences of this statute, and that any such Member who should take

his seat without taking the Oath within the meaning of the Act would be liable to the penalties imposed by the statute, even if the House of Commons itself were not only to refuse him leave to be sworn but were actually to pass a Resolution permitting him to be sworn. As long as the Defendant remained in his present state of mind, he would be incapable of taking the Oath within the meaning of the Act; and, if he took his seat without taking the Oath, he would be liable to the penalties imposed." Against this decision the Defendant has appealed, and that Appeal is now pending in the House of Lords.

In the event of Charles Bradlaugh presenting himself to take the Oath of Allegiance, or to make an Affirmation, as prescribed by the Parliamentary Oaths Act, 1866, we submit that he is not entitled to take the said Oath or to Affirm; that he is disqualified because of the facts and circumstances hereinbefore stated, and which, as Members of the House of Commons, we now formally bring under your notice as Speaker thereof: and we protest against the said Oath being administered to the said Charles Bradlaugh, or his being allowed to make an Affirmation, pending judgment on his Appeal by the House of Lords, or until this House shall have had an opportunity of deliberating and resolving on the question raised herein.

HENRY CECIL RAIKES,
Member for Cambridge University.

JOHN H. KENNAWAY,
Member for the Honiton Division of
the County of Devon.

Then several other Members took and subscribed the Oath; and several other Members made and subscribed the Affirmation required by Law.

House adjourned at half after
Five o'clock till Two
o'clock To-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 14th January, 1886.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

The Lord Bishop of Chester—Took the Oath for the first time.

The Lord Bishop of Southwell—Took the Oath for the first time.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, to
Tuesday next, Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 14th January, 1886.

The House met at Two of the clock.

Several other Members took and subscribed the Oath, and one other Member made and subscribed the Affirmation according to Law.

Notice being taken that the Honourable Robert Torrens O'Neill, returned as Member for Mid-Antrim, was by a clerical error described in the Return as the Honourable Edward O'Neill, and Lord Arthur Hill, Member for West Down, having stated on his own knowledge that the names of the Member for Mid-Antrim were Robert Torrens O'Neill;

Ordered, That the Clerk of the Crown do attend the House forthwith with the Return for Mid-Antrim, and amend the same by striking out the word "Edward," and inserting the words "Robert Torrens."

And the Clerk of the Crown attended and amended the said Return accordingly.

House adjourned at half after
Three o'clock till Two
o'clock To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 15th January, 1886.

The House met at Two of the clock.

Several Members took and subscribed the Oath.

Resolved, That this House will, at the rising of the House this day, adjourn till *Wednesday* next, at Two of the clock.
—(*Mr. Akers-Douglas*.)

House adjourned at a quarter
after Three o'clock till
Wednesday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 19th January, 1886.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

SAT FIRST.

The Earl of Wilton—after the death of his brother.

The Duke of Newcastle—after the death of his father.

The Marquess of Abercorn—after the death of his father.

NEW PEERS.

Sir Thomas Bateson, Baronet, having been created Baron Deramore of Belvoir in the county of Down—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

Garnet Joseph Baron Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., General and General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the Forces in Egypt, having been created Viscount Wolseley of Wolseley in the county of Stafford—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

Henry John Montagu-Douglas-Scott, commonly called Lord Henry John Montagu-Douglas-Scott, having been created Baron Montagu of Beaulieu in the county of Southampton—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

The Right Honourable Charles John Baron Colville of Culross in that part of the United Kingdom called Scotland, K.T., having been created Baron Colville of Culross in the county of Perth—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

House adjourned at a quarter past
Four o'clock, to Thursday
next, One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 20th January, 1886.

The House met at Two of the clock.

Several other Members took and subscribed the Oath.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Four o'clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 21st January, 1886.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*First Reading*—
Parish Churches * (5).

PRAYERS.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

SAT FIRST.

The Viscount Halifax—after the death of his father.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

The QUEEN being seated on the Throne, and the Commons being at the Bar, with their Speaker, the Lord Chancellor, taking directions from Her Majesty, delivered Her Majesty's most gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, as follows:—

"My Lords, and Gentlemen,

"My relations with other Powers continue to be of a friendly character.

"The difference which existed, when I last addressed you, between my Government and that of Russia, on the subject of the boundaries of Afghanistan, has been satisfactorily adjusted. In pursuance of a Convention which will be laid before you, the English and Russian Commissioners, with the full concurrence of my ally, the Amir of Afghanistan, have been engaged in demarcating the frontier of that country. I trust that their work, which is already far advanced, may tend to secure the continuance of peace in Central Asia.

"A rising in Eastern Roumelia has given expression to the desire of the inhabitants for a change in the political arrangements under which they were placed by the Treaty of Berlin. My object, in the negotiations which have followed, has been to bring them, according to their wish, under the rule

of the Prince of Bulgaria, while maintaining unimpaired the essential rights of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan.

"Under a Convention which has been concluded with the Ottoman Porte, Commissioners have been appointed on behalf of England and Turkey to confer with His Highness the Khedive, and to report upon the measures required for securing the defence of Egypt and the stability and efficiency of the Government in that country.

"Greatly to my regret, I was compelled in the month of November to declare war against Theebaw, the King of Ava. Acts of hostility on his part against my subjects and the interests of my Empire had, since his accession, been deliberate and continuous. These had necessitated the withdrawal of my Representative from his Court; and my demands for redress were systematically evaded and disregarded. An attempt to confiscate the property of my subjects trading under agreement in his dominions, and a refusal to settle the dispute by arbitration, convinced me that the protection of British life and property, and the cessation of dangerous anarchy in Upper Burmah, could only be effected by force of arms. The gallantry of my European and Indian forces, under Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Prendergast, rapidly brought the country under my power, and I have decided that the most certain method of insuring peace and order in those regions is to be found in the permanent incorporation of the Kingdom of Ava with my Empire. Papers on this subject will be immediately laid before you.

"The time which has elapsed since I assumed the direct government of India makes it desirable that the op-

eration of the Statutes by which that change was effected should be carefully investigated. I commend this important matter to your earnest attention.

"A protracted negotiation respecting the rights of the Republic of France on the coasts of Newfoundland under the Treaty of Utrecht has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion by an Agreement, which will be laid before you and before the Legislature of Newfoundland as soon as it assembles. An Agreement has also been made with Spain, securing to this country all commercial rights granted to Germany in the Caroline Islands.

"Your consent will be asked to legislative measures rendered necessary by a Convention on the subject of International Copyright to which I have agreed.

"Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

"The Estimates for the expenditure of the ensuing year, which have been framed with a due regard to efficiency and economy, will be submitted to you.

"My Lords, and Gentlemen,

"I regret to say that no material improvement can be noted in the condition of trade or agriculture. I feel the deepest sympathy for the great number of persons, in many vocations of life, who are suffering under a pressure, which I trust will prove to be transient.

"I have seen with deep sorrow the renewal, since I last addressed you, of the attempt to excite the people of Ireland to hostility against the Legislative Union between that country and Great Britain. I am resolutely opposed to any disturbance of that fundamental

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law, and in resisting it I am convinced that I shall be heartily supported by my Parliament and my people.

"The social no less than the material condition of that country engages my anxious attention. Although there has been during the last year no marked increase of serious crime, there is in many places a concerted resistance to the enforcement of legal obligations; and I regret that the practice of organized intimidation continues to exist. I have caused every exertion to be used for the detection and punishment of these crimes: and no effort will be spared on the part of my Government to protect my Irish subjects in the exercise of their legal rights and the enjoyment of individual liberty. If, as my information leads me to apprehend, the existing provisions of the law should prove to be inadequate to cope with these growing evils, I look with confidence to your willingness to invest my Government with all necessary powers.

"Bills will be submitted to you for transferring to representative Councils in the counties of Great Britain local business which is now transacted by the Courts of Quarter Sessions and other authorities. A measure for the reform of county government in Ireland is also in preparation. These measures will involve the consideration of the present incidence of local burdens.

"A Bill for facilitating the sale of glebe lands, in a manner adapted to the wants of the rural population, will also be submitted to you; as also Bills for removing the difficulties which prevent the easy and cheap transfer of land; for mitigating the distressed condition of the poorer classes in the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland;

for the more effectual prevention of accidents in mines; for extending the powers of the Railway Commission in respect to the regulation of rates; and for the codification of the criminal law.

"I trust that results beneficial to the cause of education may issue from a Royal Commission, which I have appointed to inquire into the working of the Education Acts.

"The prompt and effective dispatch of the important business which, in an ever-growing proportion, falls to you to transact, will, I doubt not, occupy your attention.

"In these and in all other matters pertaining to your high functions, I earnestly commend you to the keeping and guidance of Almighty God."

Then Her Majesty retired.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

NEW PEER.

John Henry Lord Fermanagh—Was (in the usual manner) introduced by virtue of a Patent dated the thirteenth day of January 1876, his father, the first Baron (Earl of Erne in the Peerage of Ireland, a representative Peer for Ireland), who was created by such Patent, never having taken his seat as Lord Fermanagh.

SELECT VESTRIES.

Bill, *pro forma*, read 1^o.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH. ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

The QUEEN'S SPEECH reported by The LORD CHANCELLOR.

THE DUKE OF ABERCORN (who wore the uniform of Lord Lieutenant of Donegal) said: My Lords, I rise to propose that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty in reply to the Gracious Speech from the Throne, and in doing this I have to crave that indul-

gence from your Lordships which is always accorded to one who addresses your Lordships for the first time.

I am proud to be able to congratulate Parliament that Her Majesty has condescended to open it in person. The present Parliament opens with grave responsibilities upon those who have the administration of affairs in their hands. Questions of vital moment and importance affecting the safety of the Empire will have to be discussed, and the country will carefully scrutinize them; and the manner in which they are treated by a Parliament elected for the first time under household suffrage will be earnestly watched. There will no doubt be many difficulties to contend against; but I feel confident that the abilities of the noble Marquess and the Prime Minister, assisted by his Colleagues in the Cabinet, will be able to carry them through all the difficulties that surround them.

The country is to be congratulated on the friendly character of its relations with Foreign Powers, and I trust it will not be considered presumptuous in me if I say that much of that tranquillity is to be attributed to the sagacity and statesmanlike qualities of the noble Marquess at the head of the Government. The complications that lately existed between England and Russia with regard to the delimitation of the Afghan Frontier, and which some time since threatened to be of a serious character, are now about to be satisfactorily arranged, and the terms of the Convention on this very important subject will shortly be laid before your Lordships. Dangers in regard to this matter at one time were imminent; but owing to the ability shown by the Boundary Commissioners on both sides all fears on this ground have passed away. The rising in Eastern Roumelia having subsided, it is to be hoped that the present cessation of hostilities may result in a lasting peace, and it is also to be desired that the minor States in the East of Europe will not in any way endeavour to re-kindle a flame that has already been the cause of so great a sacrifice of life and limb. Everyone must regret a war, however small it may be, but the success of the small war that Her Majesty has lately been compelled to wage against the King of Ava cannot be denied by anybody; and the success of that war must in a great manner be

attributed to the prompt measures of the talented Viceroy of India supported by a united Cabinet at home, and to the energetic action of the Commander, Sir Harry Prendergast, who, with the small army under his command, so ably carried out his instructions. The incorporation of the Kingdom of Ava with Her Majesty's dominions and the consequent opening up of the country will give general satisfaction to the many merchants and traders, both at home and abroad, who are trading with the distant parts of the Empire.

But when we turn from the peaceful aspect of affairs abroad and cast our eyes nearer home we find a cloud of gloom hanging over a part of this Kingdom. I refer to Ireland. During the short time Her Majesty's present Government have been in Office the noble Earl the Viceroy of Ireland (the Earl of Carnarvon) has endeavoured to rule that country in a spirit of fairness and impartiality, and I feel certain that many noble Lords in the House will regret the cause that has deprived Ireland of the service of a Nobleman of such acknowledged learning, intellectual ability, and unvarying sympathy and courtesy. But those to whom the hand of conciliation has been extended have not responded. Those who might have been friends have declared themselves foes. Her Majesty, in Her Gracious Speech, has mentioned three points. She has alluded, in the first place, to the absolute necessity of the Union between Ireland and England. Secondly, she has alluded to the concerted resistance to legal obligations, and thirdly to the reinforcement of those obligations, if necessary, by additional powers. Her Majesty has in Her Gracious Speech expressed her determination to maintain the Legislative Union between Ireland and Great Britain, and that resolute sentiment will be received with joy throughout the land, especially by the Loyalists in Ireland, and it will give confidence and courage to them, and to those who are about to join in the coming struggle. There is no uncertainty in those tones, and I feel sure that the trust expressed by Her Majesty in her people to aid her in the present emergency will be reciprocated far and wide by them all. The country will rejoice to hear of the fixed determination of Her Majesty no longer to submit to a state of anarchy and re-

volt against the law, and to the cruelty and persecution practised in many parts of Ireland. I regret to say that capital is no longer being invested in that country, trade is at a standstill, property is without security, and in some parts of Ireland even life is insecure, and the country is gradually sinking into ruin. Her Majesty adds that although there has been during the past year no marked increase of serious crime, there is in many places a concerted resistance to the enforcement of legal obligations. The first part of this statement, my Lords, is satisfactory; but the latter part shows that the spirit of lawlessness and intimidation pervades the country. The unwritten law of the National League is often stronger than the law of the land. No one living out of Ireland can adequately realize the power and tyranny of the National League. New branches are being formed in all directions, and having originated in the South have now penetrated into Ulster. Like an octopus with its large out-spreading arms, it is drawing everything into its power. "Boycotting," which is the League's machinery, is the most cruel system of persecution that could be devised. Respectable merchants and tradesmen have been ruined by it; whole families have been nearly starved by it. I could mention a case where a National schoolmistress was "Boycotted" because her father, a postmaster, permitted letters containing writs to pass through his office; blacksmiths have been "Boycotted" for shoeing the horses of "Boycotted" persons. Commercial travellers are sometimes "Boycotted" for going to the wrong hotel. But, my Lords, if this practice of "Boycotting" is cruel to the living, what can be said of it when it is applied to the dead? There are even cases in which the friends of a dead man, who when alive had been "Boycotted," cannot procure a coffin in which to bury him, and where the parish priest, through fear, has declined to perform the burial rites. There are many courageous and brave men, chiefly Roman Catholics, who have resisted and are still resisting this outrageous persecution; but by the ignorant it is thought to be of no use resisting, since the Nationalist Party would be sure eventually to have their own way. It may be asked how it is that, in such a state of things, we do not

hear the appeals of the sufferers? But to whom could these appeals be made? The authorities when applied to in many cases reply that they have no power to interfere, as no breach of the law has taken place. If they write to the local Press of Ireland their appeals do not extend beyond the shores of that country. If they could appeal to the people of England, who are always sensible to injustice and to the wrongs of others, their appeal would, I feel sure, not be in vain. Her Majesty further declares that no effort will be spared on the part of her Government to protect her subjects in the enjoyment of their legal rights, and that if the existing provisions are not sufficient, further necessary powers will be applied for. I assume, though with much regret, that these powers will be necessary; and if enforced, many a man now a slave under the laws of the National League will become free under the law of the land. It is manifest that, although the extended franchise has conferred privileges and benefits upon tens of thousands in England and Scotland, it cannot be said to have conferred unmixed benefit upon the country at large; for it has given unlimited power to a large section of the people in Ireland who are hostile to the connection between the two countries. This Constitutional power, however, when supported by unconstitutional agencies, will have to be dealt with.

If not wearying your Lordships, I should like to refer to the paramount importance of that portion of Her Majesty's Gracious Speech which alludes to the Union between England and Ireland. For the first time in the history of the Empire a doubtful voice has been raised by a responsible statesman as to the advisability of maintaining the integrity of the Empire. Far better would it have been if that voice had never been raised, for it has only been echoed back in dismay and distrust by those whom it intended to persuade. In the history of a nation there are periods when a momentous question has to be considered; when the circumstances are such as call for a decision; and when upon that decision depends whether that nation is to survive in undiminished power or sink in disaster and disgrace. Such a time has now, I think, arrived, and such a question is now before the

The Duke of Abercorn

people of Great Britain. The question of the dismemberment of the Empire has been discussed by many from the point of view of English advantage alone, and by others from the point of view of the advantage of Ireland; but small weight has been given to the claims of the loyal minority in that country. Have the people of Scotland, who follow with affection their kith and kin to every distant quarter of the globe, realized the fact that within 20 or 30 miles of their own shore there is a loyal population—Irishmen, no doubt, but of Scottish descent—one with them in language, in customs, and in religion—a population which at the present moment is in serious peril, struggling for its very existence against those who regard them as enemies and aliens? Moreover, have the people of England realized that a large portion of the population of Ireland which is of their own race and creed has, through good and evil report, alike in weal and woe, for more than two centuries maintained their loyalty to England, has been a connecting link between England and Ireland, and has, no doubt, largely contributed to the well-being of both countries? There is again, in Ireland, a considerable Roman Catholic element, who have always clung to the Union as their only protection against the never-ending experiments of schemers and dreamers who in many ways endeavoured to upset the existing state of things. To sacrifice them would be even more disgraceful. I do not believe that we are doomed to witness such an act of treachery. Is Scotland, is England, prepared to abandon to the faction of treason and disloyalty those who so loyally and so devotedly have clung to them for so many years—those who for so long have been their staunchest friends and allies? I believe that such a thing is not possible. Such a proceeding would be contrary to all the traditions of British statesmanship, would shatter confidence in British honour, and would ultimately lead to the ignominious fall of the greatest Empire the world has ever seen. It would, indeed, be a dangerous thing to allow the formation of a hostile Government at England's very door; but it would be still more dangerous to show to the world that England has betrayed her staunchest friends, who put their confidence in her in vain.

I do not believe that any British statesman, whether he be Conservative, Liberal, or Radical, whether he holds the institutions and obligations of the past in high repute or low repute, would be tempted to sanction the dismemberment of the Empire for the sake of Party exigencies. Were he to do so, he would no longer deserve to be classed as a statesman or a leader of the people of this great country. Having the privilege of living in the North of Ireland, where at present there is peace and quietude, I sympathize with those in the South, though unable to help them without the authority and support of the law. Her Majesty has plainly indicated the course that will be pursued. The Loyalists will be supported, and those who are weak and trodden down by others. Lawlessness and intimidation will not be allowed to reign supreme. The issue must soon be decided, and the British nation must be at once awakened to the danger that threatens it. Then it will be seen whether England and Scotland are true to the past or false to the future. My Lords, I beg to move this humble Address in reply to Her Majesty's Gracious Speech from the Throne.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty's relations with other Powers continue to be of a friendly character.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the difference which existed, when Your Majesty last addressed us, between Your Majesty's Government and that of Russia, on the subject of the boundaries of Afghanistan, has been satisfactorily adjusted, and that, in pursuance of a Convention which will be laid before us, the English and Russian Commissioners, with the full concurrence of Your Majesty's ally, the Amir of Afghanistan, have been engaged in demarcating the frontier of that country. We learn with satisfaction that Your Majesty trusts that their work may tend to secure the continuance of peace in Central Asia.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that a rising in Eastern Roumelia

has given expression to the desire of the inhabitants for a change in the political arrangements under which they were placed by the Treaty of Berlin, and that Your Majesty's object, in the negotiations which have followed, has been to bring them, according to their wish, under the rule of the Prince of Bulgaria, while maintaining unimpaired the essential rights of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that under a Convention concluded with the Ottoman Porte, Commissioners have been appointed on behalf of England and Turkey to confer with His Highness the Khedive, and to report upon the measures required for securing the defence of Egypt and the stability and efficiency of the government in that country.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that, greatly to your regret, Your Majesty was compelled, in the month of November, to declare war against Theebaw, the King of Ava; that acts of hostility on his part against your subjects and the interests of your Empire had, since his accession, been deliberate and continuous; that these had necessitated the withdrawal of your Representative from his Court; and that your demands for redress were systematically evaded and disregarded. We thank Your Majesty for informing us that an attempt to confiscate the property of your subjects trading under agreement in his dominions, and a refusal to settle the dispute by arbitration, convinced Your Majesty that the protection of British life and property, and the cessation of dangerous anarchy in Upper Burmah, could only be effected by force of arms. We learn with satisfaction that the gallantry of Your Majesty's European and Indian forces, under Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Prendergast, rapidly brought the country under your power, and we humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty has decided that the most certain method of insuring peace and order in those regions is to be found in the permanent incorporation of the Kingdom of Ava with your Empire.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the time which has elapsed since Your Majesty assumed the direct government of India makes it desirable that the operation of the Statutes by which that change was effected should be carefully investigated, and for commending this important matter to our earnest attention.

"We learn with satisfaction that a protracted negotiation respecting the rights of the Republic of France on the coasts of Newfoundland

under the Treaty of Utrecht has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion by an Agreement which will be laid before us, and before the Legislature of Newfoundland as soon as it assembles; and that an Agreement has also been made with Spain, securing to this country all commercial rights granted to Germany in the Caroline Islands.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that our consent will be asked to legislative measures rendered necessary by a Convention on the subject of International Copyright to which Your Majesty has agreed.

"We learn with regret that no material improvement can be noted in the condition of trade or agriculture, and we thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty feels the deepest sympathy for the great number of persons, in many vocations of life, who are suffering under a pressure, which Your Majesty trusts will prove to be transient.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty has seen with deep sorrow the renewal, since Your Majesty last addressed us, of the attempt to excite the people of Ireland to hostility against the Legislative Union between that country and Great Britain; that Your Majesty is resolutely opposed to any disturbance of that fundamental law, and that, in resisting it, Your Majesty is convinced that Your Majesty will be heartily supported by your Parliament and your people.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the social no less than the material condition of that country engages your anxious attention; that although there has been during the last year no marked increase of serious crime, there is in many places a concerted resistance to the enforcement of legal obligations; and that Your Majesty regrets that the practice of organized intimidation continues to exist. We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty has caused every exertion to be used for the detection and punishment of the crimes; that no effort will be spared on the part of your Government to protect your Irish subjects in the exercise of their legal rights and the enjoyment of individual liberty; and that if, as your information leads Your Majesty to apprehend, the existing provisions of the law should prove to be inadequate to cope with these growing evils, Your Majesty looks with confidence to our willingness to invest your Government with all necessary powers.

"We join with Your Majesty in trusting that results beneficial to the cause of education may

issue from a Royal Commission which Your Majesty has appointed to inquire into the working of the Education Acts.

"We humbly assure your Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the subjects which Your Majesty has recommended to our attention, and to the measures which may be submitted to us; and we earnestly trust that, with regard to these and all other matters pertaining to our functions, the keeping and guidance of Almighty God may be vouchsafed to us."

THE EARL OF SCARBROUGH (who was attired in a Yeomanry uniform) said: My Lords, I beg to second the Motion of the noble Duke, and in the few remarks I have to make I must ask your Lordships to extend to me the indulgence usually granted to one in my position addressing your Lordships' House for the first time. In the first place, I humbly beg to give expression to the very great satisfaction which I feel, and which I am convinced is felt not merely by every Member of the House, but throughout the whole country, at the presence of Her Majesty at the ceremonial of to-day; and I venture to hope that on further occasions of the same nature Her Majesty may be enabled and may see fit to afford similar cause for congratulation, and so receive fresh proof of the feelings of loyalty and devotion to the Crown which are so deeply rooted in the hearts of Her Majesty's subjects, and which always find ready expression on the appearance of Her Majesty in person among her people.

Your Lordships will agree that the Speech from the Throne brings to the notice of Parliament questions of the utmost gravity and importance—questions the treatment and discussion of which I may say without exaggeration will be looked forward to by the whole country with the utmost anxiety; and this being the case, I think Her Majesty's Ministers are to be congratulated on the plain and bold statement of the general line of policy they intend to pursue. By so clearly foreshadowing their intentions, they enable the country the more readily and easily to comprehend the course they propose to take, and thus allay to a great extent all feelings of uncertainty which may have existed, and at the same time tend to

increase public confidence in their administration of affairs.

In reference to foreign affairs in Her Majesty's Speech, I cannot help noticing that Her Majesty's Ministers have one great advantage over the late Government in this respect. They can come and meet Parliament with, so to speak, a clean bill of health in respect to their management of affairs abroad. They have had dangers to encounter, and difficulties to avoid; but they have no long tale of disaster and defeat to account for—no disappointments resulting from an unfortunate foreign policy to explain away. In proof of this, your Lordships will observe the satisfactory reference to foreign affairs made in the Speech from the Throne, and the welcome statement that the relations of this country with Foreign Powers continue to be of a friendly character.

In respect to the definition of the Afghan Frontier, it seems to me, my Lords, that the grave cause for anxiety which existed last summer in reference to this question has entirely disappeared; and I look upon the statement that the settlement of the boundaries of the country are very far advanced towards completion as an assurance of the continuance of the peace in Central Asia.

In Eastern Europe Her Majesty's Government, in conjunction with the other Great Powers, have been successful in their endeavour to localize the disturbances which have broken out, and which were the outcome of a rising in Eastern Roumelia owing to the wish of the inhabitants to come under the rule of the Prince of Bulgaria. In connection with that question, I must say I think that, in coming to an agreement with Prince Alexander, the Porte is pursuing a very wise policy, for thereby the Sultan not only gains a very useful Ally, but there seems to be every reason to hope that it will have the effect of inducing the Government of Greece and Serbia to withdraw from the somewhat adventurous policy they have hitherto adopted.

The Convention which has been concluded between this country and the Porte in reference to Egypt is, I think, of more importance than at first sight appears; for it not only empowers Her Majesty's Government to assist the

Khedive in the establishment of a Government on a firm and satisfactory basis, but by obtaining the direct authority of the Sultan it appears to me to very materially lessen the difficulties we have hitherto had to contend with in dealing with a race of people who are so very largely influenced by a religion different from our own—the religion of which the Sultan, as we know, is acknowledged the head. I hope that the severe lesson administered to the Arabs in their advance northwards by our own troops on the frontier may give the Khedive's Government time and opportunity to so organize and develop their own resources as will enable them ultimately to cope by themselves with any dangers that may threaten them from without.

The reference in Her Majesty's Speech to recent events which have taken place in Burmah gives reason for the annexation of that country. It is most satisfactory to note that the restoration of order, and the gradual settlement of the country, is progressing smoothly and quietly, and that the loss of life incurred by our troops in the operations which took place has been extremely small. I believe that the Papers on this subject about to be laid before the House will show that in assuming control over that country the Government have only done what was wise and necessary under the circumstances, and that there is every reason to hope that one immediate result of that policy will be a very large increase to our trade in that part of the world, and also that security will soon be afforded to merchants and others who have dealings in that and adjoining countries—a security which did not exist while the country was under Native rule. It seems to me at the present time, when we hear so much of commercial depression, that the prospect of the opening up of new trade routes towards China and the consequent development of trade in that direction is cause for very great satisfaction.

The mention of trade brings me to a clause in Her Majesty's Speech which cannot be regarded as satisfactory—namely, the continued deplorable condition of trade and agriculture, and for which it seems there is no present remedy. But I think, by at once instituting an inquiry into the causes and origin of this depression, the Govern-

ment have given proof of their anxiety to grapple with the question, and, if possible, put an end to the present lamentable state of affairs. I have every confidence, my Lords, that the Government will do their utmost in this direction.

The measure which the Government intend to introduce to facilitate the sale of globe lands will, I think, if passed, prove a great boon to the clergy, for it will enable them, if they so wish, to get rid of land, which, instead of being a source of income, has, in many cases, become an encumbrance, and which, by reason of their position as clergymen, they may frequently be unable to turn to the best account. It will also encourage and give an opening to those of the population who wish to become possessors of allotments, for it will tend to develop the system by throwing land into the market which is, as a rule, peculiarly suitable for the purpose.

I am glad to see that the Government intend to ask that further powers shall be given to the Railway Commissioners to deal with the present system of railway rates. I hope some means may be found to reduce the great advantage which at present rests with the foreigner, and that in future the rating of goods may be regulated more on a scale in accordance with the distance the goods have travelled, and so far render the competition between ourselves and the foreigner fair and equal in this respect.

The noble Duke who moved the Address has drawn your Lordships' particular attention to the critical state of affairs in Ireland; and I will not, therefore, revert further to that subject, beyond merely expressing my earnest approval of the terms in which the Government have expressed their determination firmly and unflinchingly to uphold the law and protect life in that country; and it is most satisfactory to gather, as I do from the Speech from the Throne, that no amount of threats or pressure put upon them by the Separatist Party will induce the Government to alter in the slightest degree their resolution to set their faces resolutely against any line of action that may tend to weaken the foundation on which the Union of the two countries is based; and, further, that they will uphold that Union at whatever cost. My

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Lords, I heartily approve of that policy, and it is my firm belief that it expresses the general feeling and common sense of both countries.

It is apparent to me that it is impossible to forestall with any degree of certainty at all what course events may take politically during the next few months, or even weeks; but of this I think there is no doubt—that Her Majesty's Ministers have an undivided Party at their back. They are not harassed by divided counsels. They intend, I trust, to carry on the administration of affairs so long as they may be able, and so long as they deem it expedient for the good of the country that they should do so. I therefore think it is not unreasonable to hope that, with a display of moderation and forbearance on all sides, and an absence of all factious opposition, the Government may be enabled to carry out its policy, and, in spite of many difficulties, to accomplish much good and useful work during the Session. I venture further to hope that this the first Session of the new Parliament, which by reason of the great measure of Reform recently passed may be expected to express more accurately than ever before the feelings of the people of the country, may be characterized by a determination on all sides to deal with the questions of national and vital importance which will speedily come before them in the broadest possible spirit, irrespective of Party considerations, and having for their one aim and object, always before them, the welfare and prosperity of the country and the unity of the Empire. I beg to second the Motion that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty.—

[See page 42.]

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I beg to offer my congratulations to the noble Marquess opposite upon his having had the good fortune, of which I have had my share during the past five years, to secure two noble Peers to do what seems an easy, but which is really a difficult thing—namely, to move and second the Address in answer to the Speech from the Throne. Though, of course, I do not particularly like the criticisms which they pass on my conduct of foreign affairs during the last Administration, I am bound to say that the cordial reception given to their

served. I entirely agree with what the noble Earl who seconded the Address stated as to the satisfaction which we all feel that, notwithstanding the severe character of the weather, Her Majesty was able to open the new Parliament in person. I believe it was a most auspicious moment for Her Majesty to do so after the great Reform Bill joined in by both political Parties, which has extended, and I believe strengthened, the bases of our representative institutions. I own I am not a little surprised that in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech there is no allusion to the return by greatly enlarged constituencies of Members of the House of Commons. My Lords, short as the Recess was, grave events have occurred at home and abroad; and before I refer to them I am sure your Lordships will allow me to express my sorrow at the numerous losses which this House itself has sustained. I remember no time so short when the losses have been so numerous. It is impossible that a great Assembly like this should not feel the void created by the death of three public men of such high character as the Duke of Somerset, the Duke of Abercorn, and Lord Halifax; of an eminent and successful philanthropist, such as Lord Shaftesbury; of such a popular man of letters as Lord Houghton, and of such distinguished Prelates as those who have passed away from us, and also of two brothers, one a most brilliant soldier (Lord Strathnairn), and the other a valued and esteemed servant of this House (Sir William Rose). It may be convenient that I should repeat the statement which, as long as I can remember, has been made by the occupant of the seat from which I have risen—namely, that I have no intention of moving any Amendment on this occasion, and I think your Lordships will dispense with my giving the obvious reasons which have been so often given why I should not take that course. I sometimes felt that it was an act of some self-restraint on the part of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) to follow that custom; but I own that I feel it a great relief to be able to avail myself of it when I regard the immense majority arrayed against me. But even with this majority the noble Marquess does not seem to be perfectly satisfied, for he has added to it an average of one Peer and a third

per month; and if he remains in Office the 10 years which he once intimated, we shall have 100 excellent new Conservative Peers to help us in our work. I do not intend to delay your Lordships. As to the depression in trade and agriculture, I do not propose to say anything against the statement in the Royal Speech. It does not remove the melancholy fact that this depression seems common to all countries in the world. I read at the end of last Session a rather sanguine letter from the noble Marquess—which he had directed to be written—in which he assured his correspondent that there was every prospect under a Conservative Government that there would be a return of commercial prosperity before the end of the year. [The Marquess of SALISBURY dissented.] The noble Marquess shakes his head, and I think it is very possible indeed that he did not write the letter himself, but one of his numerous Private Secretaries. With regard to the measures promised in the Speech, I do not think it necessary to refer to their objects in detail. The value of these objects will entirely depend upon the way in which they are treated in the Bills, and we cannot judge of their merits until the measures are actually before us. I am anxious to refer to the numerous and lengthy paragraphs with regard to foreign affairs. I have seen what looks like a Foreign Office *communiqué* in *The Times* of this morning. I am sorry I have not had time to read it; but if I had, perhaps it would have prevented me committing some blunders in stating my views. There is one omission which I expected. It was rumoured the other day that Samoa had been annexed by the German Government. We all know the interest which Germany has in that island; but I felt sure when I saw the statement that it was not a fact, or that it had been done by an individual officer, and would be disowned by the German Chancellor. I am glad to learn that that is the case. The next point on which I wish to congratulate the noble Marquess is the arrangement between England, Germany, and Spain with regard to the Caroline Islands; I consider that a good, satisfactory, and sensible arrangement. I must also congratulate him as to the arrangement with France on the subject of the Newfoundland fisheries. I felt sure that a proper

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settlement would be arrived at under Sir Clare Ford and Mr. Pennell Ford, who have for nearly three years conducted the negotiations on the subject. The other question relates to Burmah. The reference in the Royal Speech to Burmah is the longest and most argumentative paragraph I have ever seen in a Speech from the Throne. I do not know whether it indicates that there are any doubts in the mind of the noble Marquess as to what has been done. There were good reasons why the Government should not have been precipitate; but the fact that the act was carried out by Lord Dufferin strengthens the Government very much in the course they have taken. Notwithstanding the length of the paragraph, it would be satisfactory if the noble Marquess would give us a few more details as to this business. As to what constituted the *casus belli*, and what have been the reasons for annexation and against a Protectorate, my noble Friend (the Marquess of Ripon) made some observations some time ago not approving the course taken; and during the last few days many persons of great experience and knowledge have expressed doubts whether the commercial advantages alluded to are likely to be as great as expected, and whether there will not be administrative and political disadvantages and a drain of money and men from India—a drain which is exactly what India should not be called upon at this time to undergo. I trust, however, these apprehensions will not be realized. Then, as to the position of Afghanistan, I am glad that Her Majesty's Government have been able to announce what appears to be a final settlement. Just before we left Office we had communications from the Russian Government stating the agreement and understanding at which we had arrived. This seemed to us to be a limited and restricted proposal; but I was assured by the Russian Ambassador that the answer was meant to be an agreement with us. The adverse vote in the House of Commons was taken the next day, our resignation was announced the day after, and a subsequent communication from the Russian Government, whether *post hoc* or *propter hoc*, arrived, declining to accept our interpretation. Since then both Governments have, by mutual concessions, arrived at an agreement at which I shall not cavil, if the Govern-

ment have been advised that it is a sufficient line, and if Lord Dufferin and the Ameer are of the same opinion. Next, with regard to the subject of Egypt, and the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff, I must be allowed to say that there were some obvious objections to that appointment. Sir H. Drummond Wolff is a very clever man; he is a man of the world; he has done good service in Roumelia in preparing the Constitution, which I believe is only too elaborate. Sir H. Drummond Wolff succeeded in negotiating an Anglo-Turkish Convention on the subject of Egypt. Now, we were always of opinion that it was desirable in the interests of Egypt to remain connected with the Turkish Empire, with the guarantee that that Empire enjoys from Europe. We always thought it right to pay every mark of respect and honour to the present Sultan as Sovereign of the country. We thought also that it was most desirable to come into communication with the Turkish Government with regard to the best mode of establishing an Army in Egypt, which should not affect the independence of Egypt, or the safety of the Khedive. What we were above all very shy of was to allow the Sultan to interfere with the administration of the finances of Egypt. Her Majesty's Government appear to have been more easy on these points, and by this means obtained the Convention; but I am afraid that, up to this time, the Anglo-Turkish Convention has not had much effect. There is another question alluded to in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech to which both the Mover and the Seconder of the Address have referred—I mean with regard to the Balkan Provinces. Four months ago the revolution at Philippopolis, conducted with skill and decision, astonished Europe; not that people were unprepared to believe that the fictitious separation of those Provinces by the Berlin Treaty was likely to come to a very early end, and there was subsequent evidence that that attempt would be made; still at the precise moment there can be no doubt that the revolution was a surprise. I have an idea that if the late Government had remained in power we should have heard a great many complaints. We should have been told that we were too late to prevent unnecessary effusion of Bulgarian and Servian blood, and

that we had not succeeded in obtaining the co-operation of European Powers in time. Since the noble Marquess made his declaration at Newport with reference to his policy in Bulgaria and Roumelia—I will not examine too closely into the consistency of some of the arguments he used—we have seen an official despatch to Rome on the subject, and I must point out that there is a great difference in the policy which was announced at Newport and the policy laid down in the despatch. The result, however, of the revolution and the subsequent war between Servia and Bulgaria has been to constitute a great military and political position for the Prince of Bulgaria and almost financial ruin to Greece, Turkey, Servia, and the Provinces themselves. Now, I hope that what can be done will be done to effect a satisfactory settlement, and that the noble Marquess may be able to assure us that peace may be assured at an early date. And now, my Lords, I come to that part of the Queen's Speech which was so ably dealt with by the noble Duke—I refer to the subject of Ireland. I do not know if the noble Marquess will excuse me if I say that the two paragraphs on this subject are drawn in somewhat vague and involved language. I do not believe that these are the words that were first drafted by so excellent a writer as the noble Marquess. To me the paragraph looks much more as if it were the combined literary effort of a Cabinet declared to be united, but possibly, on this occasion, not exactly of the same mind and view. I see in *The Times* of this morning references to the precedents of 1833 and 1834 in the time of Lord Grey. In 1833 Ireland was in the most fearful state—much more fearful than it has ever been since that time till the present moment. Lord Grey's policy in that crisis may have been good, or it may have been bad; but, at all events, it was a strong policy expressed in very clear and decisive language. He proposed the strongest Coercion Bill that has ever been applied to Ireland in modern years, accompanying that with a declaration as to the maintenance of the Union. In the Speech before us, however, we have an abstract opinion in favour of the Union; but there is not the slightest declaration as to how it is to be maintained. And with regard to precautionary measures to strengthen

the hands of the Government, that is put entirely in a conditional and hypothetical manner. As to any measures of a conciliatory character, it is put in this form—not that the Government have got a measure, but that they are preparing a measure which may come on after Procedure and after Local Government in England have been dealt with. Now, my Lords, to every one of your Lordships, I suppose, the state of Ireland has been a nightmare for some months past, if that term can be applied to a subject that has occupied our thoughts by day as well as by night. I have no official knowledge. All that I have gathered about Ireland is from private correspondence, from newspapers, and from private conversation. But I am bound to say that impression is completely confirmed by the statement made by the noble Duke when he moved the Address this evening. There is no doubt that the statement in the Queen's Speech is a gloomy description of Ireland. But if things in this world go by comparison, I say it is positively cheerful in comparison with the black descriptions we have had about that country from so many sources. I cannot help feeling grateful as an individual that I have no share in, or responsibility with, the Government at this moment. That responsibility was immensely increased by the policy which Her Majesty's present Advisers adopted when they formed a Government. Various reasons were given for that policy. It was announced by the noble Marquess that it was impossible to strengthen the hands of the Government for the purpose of maintaining order in Ireland, because you had lately extended the franchise in Ireland. Why, you might just as well say that, because the constituencies in England and Scotland had been largely increased, therefore you might do away with the laws against murder or arson. In the House of Commons the reason put forward was a very different one. The Leader of the House of Commons put it entirely on the responsibility of the Government, and said that, after careful deliberation and consideration of all the circumstances of the case, they had come to the conclusion that a renewal of exceptional powers was not required. Speaking, I think, at Sheffield, the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India (Lord

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Randolph Churchill) said that, before taking Office, a decision had been come to by the noble Marquess and a few of his political Friends, subject to any official information he might subsequently receive, to form a Government which would dispense with all repressive legislation for Ireland. That decision was very well received by all classes in this country; and such a decision was sure to be well received when a Government, on their own responsibility, state that they think such a course can be safely followed. The noble Lord added that the Irish Peers sitting in this House, when they heard that announcement of policy, were perfectly silent; and he mentioned the sources from which the information as to the condition of Ireland was received. I see the Lord Chancellor of Ireland taking notes. The noble Lord referred to him, in terms which I entirely endorse, as being the most experienced, wise, and cautious, of modern Irishmen. Well, the noble Marquess formed a Government, Parliament met, and day by day "Boycotting" increased, and still continued to increase. The noble Marquess said publicly at Newport that, in his opinion, there was no law which could be applied to that offence, and that it was a thing which would find its own level. That was an encouragement to "Boycotters" when they found that nothing could be done; and now the question is, What have the Government in view at the present moment? Are they able, or are they not able, to say whether, by enforcing the law, they can put an end to the state of things described by the noble Duke? They must have made up their minds by this time. I presume that during the past six months they have been exercising their powers to put an end to this state of things; and if they have not succeeded in putting an end to it, what possible good is there in saying that if they get certain information, and if certain circumstances arise, they have no doubt Parliament will be willing to give them the necessary powers? Is this the proper manner of dealing with a vital question? Sir Michael Hicks-Beach described the condition of Ireland when the late Government left Office, and I cannot conceive a greater compliment than he paid to my noble Friend near me (Earl Spencer). He described the

state of Ireland as excellent; he said that the diminution of crime was most gratifying, and that crime was decreasing every day, and he said, further, that Ireland was almost in a state of normal quiet. I do not know whether it was in a state of normal quiet; but, at all events, its condition was a very great contrast indeed to the state of Ireland as it is at the present moment. Since then we have heard of the resignation of Lord Carnarvon, who, I regret, is not here to-day. It appears that while the noble Marquess spoke cheerfully of a long tenure of Office the noble Earl seem to have calculated that six months would be sufficient to hold one of the most responsible positions under the Crown. Lord Carnarvon was to be exactly six months—and no longer—Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Well, then, why was his resignation announced only three or four days before the meeting of Parliament, and how was it that the Government had no plan for replacing him? And the difficulty became the greater to my mind when I saw the statement that the Chief Secretary also had resigned. That statement remained uncontradicted for a time, and then it was stated not that the right hon. Gentleman had not resigned, but that the report was premature. That does not enlighten us as to the means by which order and peace would be re-established in Ireland. The whole thing seems to be in a state of chaos. Then take another point. Great hopes were held out to Ireland of concessions. On the 9th of November the noble Marquess spoke of large organic changes. He did not refer to little questions, such as he is contemplating now—namely, the transfer of duties from one set of men to another—which, as I know, is entirely repudiated alike by Loyalists and Parnellites in Ireland; but he talked of great organic changes. He said—

“With regard to large organic questions I have nothing to add to what I have said. The traditions of our Party are known. The integrity of the Empire is more precious to us than any possession that we can have. We are bound by motives not only of expediency, not only of legal principle, but by motives of honour to protect the minority, if such exist, who have fallen into unpopularity and danger because they have followed, or been the instruments of, the policy England has deliberately elected to pursue; and within those lines every English Government, and I will say the present Govern-

ment, is bound to do all that it possibly can to give prosperity, contentment, and happiness to the Irish people.”

What was the effect of that declaration of the noble Marquess? The majority of the Irish electors voted for the Conservative Party, to whose principles they were opposed; and was it to be thought that they were not influenced by that declaration? It appears to me that the Government have no policy. They have put into the mouth of the Queen a statement that the Legislative Union is to be maintained; but they give us no inkling whatever how that Union is to be maintained. They leave us practically without any knowledge what they will do if things in Ireland go on as at present, or by what method they intend to conciliate the Irish people. Lord Carnarvon, speaking on the 30th December, 1880, said—

“I will not disguise my opinion that the first and paramount duty which a civilized Government owes to its people is the enforcement of law and order; for law and order are the first reasons for which Kings reign and Parliaments are assembled, and civilized communities exist; and when life and property are not safe I fail to see what useful purpose a Government fulfils.”

These are not my words, but with some addition I could readily adopt them. They are the words of Lord Carnarvon rebuking Mr. Bright for advising conciliation. What we want to know is, what is the policy of Her Majesty's Government?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, (PRIME MINISTER): My first duty, my Lords, before replying to the speech of the noble Earl (Earl Granville), is to express how heartily I feel with him in the happy and eloquent eulogy which he passed on the Members this House has lately lost. He is right in saying that we have never, as far as my memory serves, had to deplore so many losses, or to feel so great and so keen an interest in the rising talent in this House, which may be called upon to replace the gifts of those now unhappily absent. My Lords, the speeches which we have heard from my two noble Friends behind me encourages us in the hope that we shall not look in vain to that source of supply. The noble Earl the Seconder of the Address is absolutely new to Parliamentary life. I am sure those who heard him will feel that he brings

here talents of the highest order, and we must expect the very ablest service from him in the future. The noble Duke who spoke first is not so new to Parliamentary life, though he is new to the debates of this House. I will only say of him—and it is high praise—that his speech proves to me that we shall not look in vain to him for those words of weighty wisdom and energetic eloquence which we have been accustomed for many years to associate with the distinguished name he bears. My Lords, the noble Earl (Earl Granville) went through the foreign part and the Irish part of the Speech from the Throne; but he left untouched the question of the various measures which Her Majesty's Government propose to bring in, and I think I shall do wisely to follow his example, because the discussion is very difficult when the details are not before the House. With respect to foreign affairs, allow me in the first instance, in answer to the first question put by the noble Earl, to state that I think he is in error in supposing that there has been, in any hypothesis, any annexation of Samoa by Germany. There are recent events which are imperfectly reported by telegraph, but which, strange enough, have not reached the Court of Berlin at all, and we are at present unable to place an exact interpretation on the news which has come to us; but this, which is quite satisfactory, we have received—namely, the most positive assurance on the part of Germany that she will adhere to the Treaties in respect to Samoa which already exist. With respect to Burmah, I think the noble Earl himself indicated the belief that it would be better to wait for a discussion until Papers are before us; but there is another reason which induces me to suggest to him that such postponement would be desirable—namely, that, if I mistake not, under the Act of Parliament regulating the Government of India it will be necessary that this House should be invited to consider the operations in Burmah specially, and that then discussion should be taken at length with respect to the policy the Government have pursued in that country. I will only say that I have no ground for belief that the anticipations which the noble Earl has expressed have any foundation in fact. He is quite right, of course, in saying

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that it is to us, and not to the Earl of Dufferin, that the country must look for the responsibility for what has taken place. We have to express the very highest sense of the ability and promptitude with which the Earl of Dufferin carried out the orders which he received from the Imperial Government; but, of course, the policy pursued by the Earl of Dufferin rests upon the responsibility of the Government at home. But so far as our information reaches us, we do not think there will be any heavy burden upon the finances of India—even in the first few years—imposed by the measures that have taken place; and we believe that, in the long run, the addition that has been made to Her Majesty's Empire will furnish a very large increase to the resources of the Indian Treasury in the most healthy and desirable manner—namely, by opening out a large and prosperous trade, as we hope, with those vast districts of China which hitherto we have been unable to reach. It has been an object for many years with English merchants and manufacturers to find some mode of attaining to the markets of China in the West and North-West; but it has always been prevented by the terrible state of anarchy in which the upper valleys of the Irrawaddy have been placed. Now that that obstacle is removed, and that they will be governed as well as the rest of India, I have no doubt that new trade will ultimately be opened to the enterprise and energy of this country. My Lords, with respect to Eastern Roumelia, on which I think the noble Earl asked me some questions—he asked me whether I was prepared to explain a certain despatch which I had written to the Court of Rome. I do not recognize at all to what the noble Earl refers; and I am not aware of having written any despatch containing views of policy on this question to the Court of Rome. The noble Earl made a mistake in regard to that; but I have no difficulty in telling him what are the hopes we entertain. We believe that the course which this Roumelian affair has recently taken, of being subjected to the immediate negotiation between the Prince and the Sultan, is a course which we think will lead to a prosperous and peaceful conclusion. We have every ground for hope that, with the consent of the Great Powers, the Sultan and the Prince will

come to an agreement; and I am sure that if they do so it will not only be to the happiness of the people of Bulgaria, but will add no little strength to the power of the Turkish Empire. There are dangers, of course. There is the danger of disturbance on the part of some of the smaller States, who—to us, at least—it seems, are very little interested in the events that are going on within the borders of the Two Bulgarias. I regret very much the views that Servia and Greece have taken of their interests and their duties in this matter. I believe they are imperilling their own dearest interests, and that they are imperilling the peace of the Balkan Peninsula—possibly the peace of Europe—by the claims that they are setting up. All those claims, especially that on the part of Greece, to be indemnified at the expense of Turkey on account of a change which certainly Turkey did not initiate, and did not particularly welcome, is the most extraordinary introduction into International Law which has been attempted within my memory. Such claims will meet, I am convinced, with no sympathy on the part of the Powers; they will meet with no sympathy or support on the part of England. So far as the influence of England goes—so long as it is entrusted to our hands—it will be used to prevent any wanton breach of the peace in the East for objects and on pretexts which the conscience of mankind cannot justify. I earnestly hope the Greek Government may be persuaded to abstain from a venture which will compromise a future which, if they were only prudent, is brilliant enough; and we think there is no want of real sympathy on the part of the nations of Europe if they entreat them to allow that settlement which was come to a few years ago to last, without any disturbance on their part, and to believe that in the cultivation of their own internal resources, and in a strict regard for their International duties towards the nations that surround them, they will find true strength and support in carrying out all the promises which were then made. My Lords, I have spoken strongly on this matter, because reports have been spread that England has been encouraging the claims of Greece in this matter. I wish to give them the most absolute contradiction. We desire, above all things, to keep

peace in the East at this time. My Lords, the noble Earl rather accused me, I think, of inconsistency in respect to the line we have taken with regard to Eastern Roumelia. I cannot agree with him in the least. I cannot see any inconsistency in what we have done. The decisions which were come to at the Congress at Berlin were come to when Roumelia was occupied by foreign soldiers, and while there was every prospect and possibility that the sentiments and the institutions of that country might be moulded by foreign influence. We were obliged to take precautions against any dangers that might arise on that occasion. But if we are to treat this matter as a matter of consistency, and I am to be asked to reconcile my conduct of to-day with the conduct I pursued in bygone years, I ask that similar circumstances may be appealed to, and that our action now, if called in question, may be compared, not with the action which I recommended in 1878, when that country was full of foreign soldiers, but with the action I recommended in 1876 and 1877, when the state of things was more similar to what it was in September of last year, when the matter was again opened. If the noble Earl will refresh his memory, he will find that my recommendations were for a much larger Bulgaria than was ultimately approved by the Conference of Berlin. Before the war had begun, Her Majesty's Government of that day fully recognized the importance of bringing, so far as it was practically possible, the Bulgarian people under a single Government; and my belief is now—and every week that passes confirms me in it—that in the creation of a larger Bulgaria there would have been no danger to Turkey; but that there will be the creation of an allied Power, which, under conceivable circumstances, may be of great value in maintaining the independence of the Balkan Peninsula. My Lords, I think the rest of the speech of the noble Earl was devoted to the question of Ireland, and he denounced us for a great many varied and diverse offences. As I understood him, our language, he said, was ambiguous and unintelligible. We had no policy at all to pursue. We ought to have proposed a measure of very strong coercion immediately, and we ought, at the same time, to have proposed some large organic

reform, although the noble Earl went on to say that such reform would be welcomed neither by the Loyalists nor by the Separatists. As to the obscurity in the paragraph of the Speech to which the noble Earl has referred, I am very sorry that my powers of writing have not at all come up to the flattering description given of them by the noble Earl. But it seems to me that this language is as clear and precise as it is possible for language to be—

"I am resolutely opposed to any disturbance of that fundamental law, and in resisting it I am convinced that I shall be heartily supported by my Parliament and my people."

Is it possible to state in more distinct and absolute language our resolution to maintain the Legislative Union between England and Ireland? The noble Earl said we had no right to pretend that we followed exactly the Speeches that Lord Grey prepared in 1833 and 1834. We never pretended that we did follow them exactly. We have never mentioned the Speeches of 1833 and 1834. This is an expression, not in the mouth of King William IV., but in that of Queen Victoria. It is an expression of opinion which it seemed to us important to give in clear and unambiguous language in the year 1886, and not in the year 1833; and if the result, under the circumstances, is that our Speech is not a precise copy of the Speech delivered by King William IV., I should say that it was a natural result to predict from the circumstances of the case. The Speech of William IV., to which the noble Earl refers, no doubt, was dealing with a state of Ireland that, in one sense, was very formidable. Order was very much more broken up than it is now; but in another sense it was far less formidable. There was not a concurrence of 86 Members from Ireland in behalf of repeal of the Union; and it seems to me that every consideration which justified the Ministry of that day in recording in clear language their determination to uphold the foundation of our Constitutional system and the United Kingdom justifies us all the more in using similar language. And, may I be allowed to say that the circumstances of the time require such unambiguous language from us. But it has not been used by everybody; there are others who have allowed impressions of their opinions to go forth, fatal to the maintenance of the

Legislative Union, and they have met those impressions with no clear contradiction. They have practically given all the support that their authority could furnish to the belief cherished by the Separatist Party, that the hour of their triumph is at hand. It seemed to us very necessary to show that, at all events, we would have no share in the responsibility for that ambiguity, and that our opinions, such as they were, should be boldly stated and manfully maintained. My Lords, it has been no small addition to the responsibilities which this Government has had to face; it has been no small addition that from time to time we have had declarations of opinion—or indications, I should rather say, of opinion—from Mr. Gladstone, operating with fatal effect upon those with whom we were dealing. Doubtless, your Lordships will remember the elaborate statement just at the time when we were negotiating with the Sultan and trying to repair the chaos that had been created in Egypt. Your Lordships will remember the declaration that came from Mr. Gladstone, that we ought to escape from Egypt as rapidly as we could, and apparently by any means. What do you imagine the effect of that was in Egypt? The noble Earl has reproached me because the Convention of Sir H. Drummond Wolff did not convince the Soudanese that their enterprise was impossible. But the Soudanese were speculating on the possibilities of English politics. They were told that there was an English Minister who was prepared to give them whatever they liked, and from that moment right through Egypt there was a change of tone and a belief that the policy of England could not be relied on as stable and certain, and that they had only to wait in order to get the accomplishment of the dreams which they had hitherto entertained. The same thing has happened with respect to Ireland. The noble Earl spoke of the failure of the experiment which we made last summer. I am not prepared to admit the description of it which he gave. The problem which we had to decide was whether the Crimes Act was an Act which it was desirable for us, under the circumstances then existing, to renew. We came clearly to the conclusion that it was not desirable to renew it. Why? Partly be-

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cause by the accounts we received of the state of the country there seemed to be a state of returning order; and we entertained a hope that the necessity of having coercive legislation had passed away. But, much more than that, because the special provisions of the Crimes Act had ceased to be of any value for the purposes for which they were intended. The special provisions of the Act were of very great use at the time when they were enacted; but in the summer of 1884—though I do not say that the evils against which they were levelled had entirely disappeared—there was no doubt that there was a very great change in the character of those evils; and that the evils which the Crimes Act dealt with were no longer prominent or marked, while another class of evils which the Act was unable to repress appeared to be growing in importance. It was, indeed, generally admitted on the other side that the greater part of the Crimes Act had become superannuated; but great stress was laid on that set of provisions which provided for a fair jury trial. A fair jury trial could not be obtained two years before; but our impression was at the time when we had to deal with the matter that a fair trial could be obtained, and that impression has been justified by facts. If you turn to the records of the Munster Assizes you will see that there was a large number of convictions obtained without much difficulty; and I am assured by the Law Officers for Ireland that there was not, in their opinion, a failure of justice in any single case; but that does not diminish the evils under which Ireland is suffering. What I wish to impress upon your Lordships is that the character of those evils has changed, and that the particular provisions of the Crimes Act to which so much importance was attached with respect to jury trials had ceased to have the value which they formerly possessed. Then, as to "Boycotting." The noble Earl addresses us as if "Boycotting" had sprung up in our time; as if it was an invention of the last six months. Why, ever since the Crimes Act was passed I believe "Boycotting" has been steadily on the increase. No doubt it is increasing still; but it has been steadily on the increase since the passing of the Act, and the provisions of the Crimes Act, as a matter of fact, did not stop it; and I do not

believe myself that any very considerable difference is to be found in the progress of "Boycotting" before the Act lapsed, and since. Then, again, the real evil—the most formidable evil—is the growth of this illegal association. Was that an invention of ours? Did that begin after we had suffered the Act to lapse? I believe that before the Act lapsed the number of branch associations of the League had already reached the number of 1,000. The Act was powerless to stop it, and to revive the Act for that purpose would have been impossible and wholly valueless. No doubt you may say—"Then, why did not you bring in some other legislation?" But our judgment was—I do not deny that it was formed under circumstances of some difficulty—that with the state of Ireland then before us, the fact which the noble Earl despises—namely, that a vast amount of power had been given to the lowest classes in Ireland, and that any new device of coercive law just before the elections was very likely to be interpreted by them as intended to limit the power given to them by Parliament—with these facts before us, and with the knowledge that any such legislation, if proposed, could not be brought into existence except at the end of a long and exasperating campaign in the House of Commons, we came to the conclusion that the danger of exasperation attaching to such an experiment was larger than the danger of going on with the existing law in Ireland. Well, my Lords, to some extent, standing as we are now, you may say that the experiment has failed. It certainly has had every chance. It is impossible to exaggerate the care, benevolence, the tact, the skill, which my noble Friend (the Earl of Carnarvon) brought to bear on the task of executing the message of conciliation of which he announced in this House that he was the bearer. He did all that man could have done. He displayed very high qualities of statesmanship in the task which he had undertaken; and I still believe that the worst part of the failure, as we see it now, and the worst exaggeration of the symptoms which Ireland exhibits, is due to the declarations in favour of Home Rule which were believed to have been made by a leading statesman. ["Oh!"] Yes, I say the worst; I do not say all of them. I say that those declara-

tions have enormously added to our difficulties and increased the belief in the minds of certain men that they are going to win, and their resolution to take every means and to run every risk for the purpose of coercing the opinion of their fellow-countrymen to the same end.

EARL GRANVILLE: May I ask the noble Marquess to what declarations he refers?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: To the declarations of a distinguished statesman. They were declarations which appeared in the newspapers. They seemed to be authentic, and they were not distinctly contradicted. Do not tell me that when a man in the position of Mr. Gladstone has attributed to him opinions at variance with all the opinions of his life and fatal to the Constitution of this country—do not tell me that he is at liberty to skulk behind ambiguous denials, and not to say boldly before the country whether the opinions which, apparently with authority, are attributed to him are really his or not. If it be really true that he has carefully concealed what he really thought, and allowed the Separatist Party in Ireland to derive all the advantage that they have derived from the opinions attributed to him, he is scarcely less guilty of the result than as if the opinions circulated had actually been his own. I heard the other day of the effect which those opinions which the noble Earl affects to disbelieve have had in Ireland. A great town in the North of Ireland desired to borrow £100,000, and endeavoured to borrow it of some financial authorities in London. Then came—what shall I call it?—the kite that was flown, the pilot balloon that was sent up. Immediately the negotiations were broken off, and the refusal to lend any money to this great town was prompt and decisive. Men saw in the supposed opinions of a man like Mr. Gladstone, who has played such a splendid and enormous part in the history of the last half-century—they saw in the opinions attributed to him dangers that would make the investment of capital in Ireland insecure, and which business men, at all events, whether statesmanship did so or not, concluded was a sufficient ground for acting as if the opinions attributed to him had been really uttered by him. My Lords, the noble Earl says that our statement of policy is indistinct.

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Our statement of policy, I apprehend, is the usual statement that is put into a Queen's Speech on such an occasion. The government of Ireland has been changed. As the noble Earl probably knows, my distinguished Friend, Mr. Smith, undertakes the Chief Secretaryship of Ireland, which means practically that the government of Ireland will be committed to his care. Undoubtedly, we shall not have long to wait for his distinct opinion as to the precise details of the legislation which we shall have to recommend. I do not think that on the point of his going over to Ireland it would be fitting or wise to have laid a Bill on the Table; but I can assure the noble Earl that the language used in the Queen's Speech indicates no doubt, no faltering on our part, as to the necessity of action when we have received Mr. Smith's Report. I will not anticipate what that action must be. I know the subject is full of difficulty. The noble Earl has blamed me because in my speech at Newport I pointed out the singular difficulty attaching to all attempts to put down conspiracies of this kind, in regard to which evidence is so hard to obtain. I do not agree with him. I do not admit his censure. I do not think a public man does wrongly in pointing out to his fellow-countrymen the difficulties that lie in the way of any policy proposed to be adopted. Difficulties are made to be conquered; but they are not to be conquered by ignoring their existence. We wait until we hear from Mr. Smith his precise opinion as to the nature of the crisis with which we have to deal. We should be unworthy, I repeat, of the position which we hold, if we did not make the utmost effort that the confidence of Parliament will enable us to make in order to put a stop to a state of things perilous to this country and disgraceful to its reputation as a civilized Power. But, my Lords, do not imagine that the evil with which we have to deal is chiefly in Ireland. The disease is not in Ireland. The disease is here—in Westminster. If you had pursued—if you would now pursue—any steady, unvarying, and consistent policy with regard to Ireland, you would find that the problems that that country offered to you in respect of government are not greater than the problems of government which have been successively overcome by every Government in the world. There is

nothing in them of that extraordinary or extreme character that should set at defiance the resources of civilization. But it is necessary, above all things, that the play of our Party system shall not call into question the foundations upon which our polity rests. It is necessary that men should not be able to speculate on the change of Party to Party in the hope of altering the fundamental laws on which the union of the United Kingdom is based. If you have instability of purpose, if you have a policy shifting from five years to five years with each change in the wheel of political fortune, or the humour of political Parties in this country, you are drifting straight to a ruin which will engulf England and Ireland alike. Your hope is not so much in this or that particular plan or panacea for restoring order, or maintaining law, or reviving the conditions of civilized life in Ireland. Your hope is in this—that Parliament shall school itself to adopt a steady, consistent policy, and maintain it when it is once adopted. A resolution of that kind manfully carried out will restore that prosperity to which Ireland has for so long been a stranger.

EARL SPENCER: I do not intend to follow the speakers that have preceded me into the various topics on which they have addressed the House; but I think it is right that I should make some remarks upon what the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) has said with regard to my Administration in Ireland. The noble Marquess admitted that the state of Ireland was very grave; but he added that the gravity of affairs in Ireland had been largely increased by statements which appeared—unauthorized statements, as I maintain—in certain papers. It is not for me to defend my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone), to whom those statements were attributed. He will himself meet those statements if challenged; but I will point out that the lawlessness at present prevalent in that country could not have occurred in consequence of any statement my right hon. Friend has made, and I will ask the noble Marquess whether the state of things of which he speaks, and of which we have heard so much within the last few days, had not arisen long before those statements appeared? They appeared in the beginning of December; and if the reports current in the news-

papers were correct, Ireland was in a very dangerous condition long before then. I venture to think that the noble Marquess himself may have given some encouragement to "Boycotting" by the words in which he referred to it in his speech at Newport. No doubt, the noble Marquess has a right to point out difficulties; but there are certain things which it is not necessary for a person in his position to say, and the National League must have received considerable encouragement from the noble Marquess's statement that the offence would be likely to die from the Nemesis of its own action, and that it would be impossible, or at least extremely difficult, for any Government to deal with it. Having regard to the condition of Ireland when the present Government came into Office, I think that they took on themselves a serious responsibility in not renewing any portion of the Crimes Act. I do not say that they were wrong in not renewing the whole of the Crimes Act—there was no question of that—but certain important portions of it, which, in my opinion, and in that of the late Government, were essential for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, and particularly in relation to the change of venue and special juries. In wishing to retain those portions, we had no wish to interfere with liberty, simply wishing that the people should enjoy that liberty unmolested, of which, in England, we are so proud. At the time we left Office, outrages had fallen to a very low ebb indeed. But the fact remained that it was only recently that those organizations of crime had been broken up, and condign punishment had been meted out to the offenders. I never heard from any reports of the Law Officers before I left Ireland that the ordinary jurors were to be relied on; and I challenge the noble Marquess to produce any evidence that, on entering Office, his Government had received any such reports as would give them reason to believe they could rely on any ordinary jury in either Leinster, Munster, or Connaught. No doubt, the jurors have recently done well; but that is due to the fact that the trial of prisoners at the Winter Assizes is tantamount to a change of venue and special juries. Prisoners from Clare and Kerry, for instance, are brought to Cork, and instead of being tried by rural jurors of

their own county, who are subject to be intimidated, they are tried by juries composed of Cork citizens. I ask the noble Marquess whether he has considered this matter; and I would ask the noble and learned Lord the Lord Chancellor of Ireland whether he can now rely upon a jury in Ireland for convicting a man committed for agrarian crime, or crime connected with agrarian matters? Take the county of Kerry, where we have had the instance of a cruel murder—that of Mr. Curtin. What has occurred since? The very people who boldly and courageously came forward to give evidence of the murder have public opinion in that county raised against them so strongly that they have to be protected by police; and his daughters, who came forward to protect their father, and afterwards gave witness of the murder, have been “Boycotted” by the people around. If such was the case in these circumstances, what would be done to jurors and those who may have to come forward and vindicate the law? I believed that it was necessary to introduce this important alteration in the law; and I believe it was a most serious risk to attempt the government of the country without the power of changing the venue. The noble Marquess has referred to the decrease of ordinary crime. I admit—I am proud to admit—that, under the operation of the Crimes Act, it had decreased in the most remarkable way; but there is always a fear of its beginning again. In 1881 the number of cases of agrarian crime was 4,439; in 1882 the number was 3,433; while in 1884 the number was only 762; but should there be a fresh outbreak of agrarian crime, I believe we should not be able to depend on the ordinary law or ordinary juries. The noble Marquess has referred to the existence of the National League, and he said that it had increased to an enormous number of branches at the time when they took Office; but I do not think that they ever attacked the Irish Government for that. I admit the fact that the National League, which in its constitution was legal, had greatly increased in power; but during the time I was in Ireland there were no repeated acts of its leaders, or its committees, or of anyone of sufficient importance in it, which brought it under the ban of the law. There are, I admit, great difficulties in

proceeding against the members of an association such as this; and I believe that during the three years in which I held Office it would have been extremely hazardous to take any proceedings against the National League, because there is nothing more destructive to, and calculated to discredit, the maintenance of the law than the institution of a weak prosecution which breaks down. I am not, however, aware that there were any special provisions in the Crimes Act sufficient to put down such associations as the National League. What my Government attempted to do was this—we endeavoured to maintain the law throughout Ireland, and bring to justice all those who committed offences—whether of intimidation or otherwise—against the law, whether they were members of the National League or not. My belief is, that we did check to a great extent the influx of the National League, and that we did keep intimidation in check, though I admit that its existence caused anxiety. For that reason I strongly advocated the re-enactment of powers to keep it in check. If the clause against intimidation were allowed to drop I feared that the power of the National League and of intimidation would increase to an enormous extent, and that the liberty of Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland would be destroyed. We who are out of Office are not able to know the exact number of cases; but, from statements in the public Press and from the words of the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Abercorn) and of the noble Marquess, I greatly fear that the condition of Ireland with regard to intimidation and “Boycotting” is more serious than it has ever been before; and if this be so, I maintain that it has increased ten-fold or a hundred-fold since I had the responsibility of the Irish Government. With regard to “Boycotting” having arisen in connection with the Crimes Act, “Boycotting” was in full force when I went to Ireland. Take Wexford for an example; in that county “Boycotting,” which had been prevalent before, ceased entirely after the passing of the Act. At this moment is it free from it? I do not want to dwell too much on this painful subject of crime. It is a very serious thing that the law should not be maintained in that country, and it is essential that a policy should be pursued by which

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law and order should be restored and maintained in Ireland. The noble Marquess referred to the question of instability; but I would ask whether any greater sign of instability could be shown than that the Conservative Party, who have always stood up and said that law and order should be maintained, should have rejected the advice of those who were concerned in the government of Ireland, and should have upset the policy of maintaining law and order? What could have a greater effect upon the existence of stability than the policy which the Conservative Party, led by the noble Marquess, initiated last year? When I consider that want of stability, I almost despair of finding a remedy for the great evils we find in that country. I wish the noble Marquess, in the Queen's Speech, had been more explicit about what he is going to do. He said that the reason why the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War (Mr. W. H. Smith) was going over was that they might have the advantage of his advice. But I should like to know what has been the advice of the present Viceroy, and of the present Chief Secretary, and what has been the advice of the noble and learned Lord opposite the Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Lord Ashbourne)? Did they say that the law was respected, and that the Queen's writ ran throughout the country? I think that the policy of the Government in the matter is vague and undecided; but I also think it is absolutely essential that we should know precisely from the Government what the actual condition of the country is as to outrages and as to intimidation. They should either be able to say that special legislation was not necessary for Ireland, or be prepared with it at once if it is. I thank you, my Lords, for listening to these remarks, which I have thought it necessary to make since allusion was made to my administration in Ireland.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord Ashbourne): My Lords, it is not surprising, having regard to the statements made in the public Press and those made by the influential deputation from Ireland, composed of all Parties, that waited upon my noble Friend the Prime Minister, as well as those made in the course of this debate inaugurated by my noble Friend (the Duke of Abercorn), that that debate

should largely turn upon the condition of Ireland. They all lead to a view of Ireland which is not satisfactory, and which, indeed, has been described as very gloomy. I listened with earnest attention to the interesting speech of the noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition (Earl Granville), and especially to his references to Ireland; I listened with attention and respect to the speech of the noble Earl the late Viceroy (Earl Spencer). What the noble Earl said was interesting, and entitled to the closest attention; but I venture to think that what he did not say is not entirely unworthy of consideration. The general condition of Ireland is one with respect to which, though men may differ as to details, there is very little difference as to the way in which it is to be regarded. The Press practically regards it in only one way; and influential deputations of all Parties have endeavoured—not always with success—to address themselves to the Leaders of both Parties. Closely identified with Ireland as I am, I have always tried to avoid taking a desponding view of my country. I have always striven, in every debate in which I have had the honour to take part, to urge that the best possible way, no matter how dark may be the prospect at the present time—no matter how little room there may be for immediate hope—is to avoid the language of exaggeration and the language of panic. The condition of Ireland is grave, serious, and anxious; and I can use no words too strong to express the momentous gravity of the crisis. The real questions are—What is the present condition of Ireland, and what is the remedy for that condition? I wish Ireland could be put altogether outside the region of Party politics. Of course, I am a Party man; but I have used this language in Opposition, and no one knows that better than the late Viceroy. The present condition of Ireland is, as I have said, calculated to excite anxiety. Intimidation is considerable. It is not universal. In many parts of the country it is potent; in other parts it is growing. The National League has been referred to, and in a way which rightly indicates that it is a great factor in the present problem; but I would remind your Lordships that it is not the growth of yesterday—it is organization grew up in the time of the

noble Earl opposite the late Viceroy. It succeeded almost at once the Land League. I do not make these observations for the purpose of indulging in recrimination; but it is necessary to bear clearly in mind that it is not the growth of yesterday, and that it did not come into existence with the present Government. The Government found it in active operation when they came into power. In June last, when my noble Friend (the Earl of Carnarvon) succeeded the noble Earl, there were over 800 branches, and when the Crimes Act expired there were about 1,000. This greatly operates on the movement. I beg to tell your Lordships what also operates upon the strength of the movement—and it has been alluded to already by the Prime Minister, grappled with very feebly by those who have since spoken on the other side—and that is the statements of responsible English Ministers. I venture to think that there never was a statement more wild, more reckless, more mischievous, than the statement of Mr. Childers in reference to what would happen to the Royal Irish Constabulary. I am quite aware that he says he used the word "police;" but that was understood in Ireland as meaning the Constabulary and the Dublin Metropolitan Police—the only police there. I think that if the noble Earl the late Viceroy were speaking after me, he would find it absolutely impossible not to endorse, by his eloquent silence, every one of those adjectives. If there is any noble Lord on the Front Bench who is yet going to take part in this debate, I venture to think he will not use a word indicating concurrence in the suggestion that any Government, at any time, would be justified in handing over the control of the Irish Constabulary to any other control than that which exists. Mr. Childers is, of course, an eminent statesman; but there are other degrees of eminence. His words were comparatively mild side by side with the language attributed to the Prime Minister—*Laughter*.—I mean, of course, the late Prime Minister. As long as the Elections were going on, not a whisper could be gained from Mr. Gladstone as to what he thought; and when he was appealed to by Mr. Parnell, in respectful terms, to state what scheme he would like presented, Mr. Parnell was told, in

weighty and dignified language from Scotland, that Mr. Gladstone was not prepared to do anything of the kind. But, as if by magic, when the last poll of the General Election was over, the whole country was flooded by a statement, of considerable precision, that Mr. Gladstone would be prepared to discuss, examine, or present, or something of that kind, a scheme, if the opportunity were afforded him. I am told by the late Viceroy that Mr. Gladstone has denied, and is going to deny, that. I do not attribute to the right hon. Gentleman any attempt to spread these reports; but certainly, I must say, he was very unfortunate in the mode and method of his denial. If I were irreverent—which I am not—I would say that his language was involved; I might say that it was "characteristic," whatever that means. But I desire to contrast these earlier denials with the method of repudiation adopted by Mr. Gladstone within three days, when he refused to receive a deputation of Loyalists from Ireland. He alluded then to the charges which had been made as mischievous and groundless. What were these charges? If he was able so to describe them, three days before the opening of Parliament, what was to prevent him using these clear words, so emphatically contradicting them, a month or six weeks ago? However that may be, I think that good has come from the starting of the question; in whatever way it may have arisen, it has caused a preliminary discussion and examination of the question, powerful and exhaustive, in the Press, and thus it is that Parliament is now fairly able to understand this question. The paragraph in the Queen's Speech in reference to the Legislative Union is, I venture to say, about one of the clearest that ever was framed. It represents the views of the Government, and, I believe, of the country; and I call the attention of your Lordships to this—that not one syllable has been heard to indicate that it does not represent the unanimous opinion of this House. The paragraph is simple; but the noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition, a master of phrases, calls it "abstract." Is it meant to be suggested that the question has not become a living question now, with 86 men returned to Parliament to demand hardly anything else? What,

The Lord Chancellor of Ireland

then, is the meaning of this specious word "abstract?" It is a very good word, but it does not tell much. But is the paragraph true? That is the question. The noble Earl sat down without dissenting from a single word in that paragraph; and the noble Earl the late Viceroy, in his interesting speech, avoided absolutely even the smallest reference to the subject. Beyond that, none of the noble Lords who have spoken have offered any hostile criticism upon it. What is the meaning of that? Either the noble Earl agrees with the paragraph and of the way in which it presents the question, or else he is afraid to suggest to public opinion how it is. The only criticism which we have heard has been with reference to the intentions of the Government in the present state of the country. My Lords, I am not aware that there is any ground for hostile criticism in reference to the action of the Government on this point. The paragraph in reference to the condition of the country is, in my opinion, a true paragraph. It depicts in no roseate hue, and under no hopeful aspect, what is the position of affairs. It also indicates, I venture to think, with considerable clearness, what are the views of the Government as to the best way to cope with this matter. The intimidation which prevails in Ireland, wherever it does exist in all its vigour, is an intimidation which is not confined in its operations to one class or one creed, but goes equally against Catholics as against Protestants, against peer as against peasant, against merchant as against artisan. The agents which feed this organization are sympathy and terror. The Government have applied to the best of their ability, and with all the vigour they could, the powers of the ordinary law to put down this deplorable system. We have been taunted about the Crimes Act and the non-renewal of it. I think it is to be regretted that the late Government never stated, until they left Office, what particular paragraphs of the Crimes Act they had decided upon renewing, although they were asked over and over again, in my presence, in the House of Commons, to do so. The ordinary law—which I do not say is sufficient—has, however, under the wise and able guidance of my noble Friend (the Earl of Carnarvon), been administered with vigour and with

effect. Although some of the effects of the operation of the ordinary law have been extremely good, I do not say that all the results have been what we could desire. My noble Friend the Prime Minister was perfectly accurate when he referred to the results of the Winter Assizes, for the proceedings there were satisfactory. Now, it is obviously right, when there is a change in the *personnel* of the Irish Administration, and when my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) is, with great public spirit, about to apply his great and recognized powers to this difficult and somewhat thankless task, that he should be given an opportunity, in that great position of responsibility which he will fill, for considering closely and anxiously exactly what it is he would desire to have submitted to the consideration of Parliament. The Government are keenly, seriously conscious of their duty in reference to Ireland. It is their resolute purpose, to the best of their power, to fulfil it. Ireland must always be ruled, and should always be ruled, with kindly sympathy, impartial justice, and unflinching firmness; it should be ruled with an anxious desire to do justice to Ireland—that is, to all in Ireland, and life, property, and liberty must be preserved there. Those are the conditions of every civilized society. One of the first—indeed the very first—condition of liberty is that men shall be able to go about their ordinary avocations, and to discharge their duties honestly and fairly, without fear of having their lives placed in jeopardy or ruin brought upon their trade or businesses. The Government recognize their duty in these difficult and anxious circumstances; and I trust that your Lordships will give them credit for an earnest and resolute intention to spare no effort loyally to fulfil their duty to the very best of their ability.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, there was one observation made by the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Ashbourne) in which I thoroughly concur, and that was when he stated that the Irish Question had been discussed far too much from a Party point of view. I suppose all of us would desire, if it were possible, that our Party quarrels should not affect so strongly as they have done Irish policy.

But what did the noble and learned Lord proceed to do? He proceeded himself, in sentence after sentence, to make a vigorous Party attack on the Opposition, and so to bring into his discussion of Irish policy that which he, with singular inconsistency, said ought to be removed from Party warfare, and he contrived to bring into the matter as much Party animosity as could be expected from a Gentleman of his very amiable temper. That is not the spirit in which we should approach a crisis perhaps the most grave during this century in Irish affairs. If we do, I agree with the noble and learned Lord that we are likely to do very little for the good of the country. Now we are waiting to hear what is the policy which the Government recommends; and our complaint is that there is a want of precision in the statements of the Government. Before we can decide or agree about it we must know what that policy is. "Oh, but," said the noble and learned Lord, "look at our grand declaration about the Union"—which my noble Friend behind me (Earl Granville) called an abstract Resolution. And so I think it is, because the point is not to pass some high-sounding Resolution that we are all in favour of; the real point is how, in the present condition of Ireland, with 85 Parnellite Members returned, with "Boycotting" rife throughout the country, with the Crimes Act lapsed, the withdrawal suddenly of my noble Friend (the Earl of Carnarvon), and the advent to Ireland of a Gentleman very able and highly respectable, but knowing very little of Irish affairs, the Government are going to face the crisis. The noble Earl (the Earl of Carnarvon) certainly had a policy, and a very singular policy it was. I listened with astonishment to his most rash and unfortunate speech, in which, referring to the resolution of the Government not to renew any of the provisions of the Crimes Act, he said—"I believe, for my own part, that special legislation of this sort is inexpedient," and ventured upon the prophecy that "Ireland will justify the confidence which is shown her when this Act is allowed to lapse." There the noble Earl laid down the principle that special legislation was undesirable; and yet six months after, when the Elections are over, and the time being over when, perhaps, the old policy was not so con-

venient, and not so opportune, the Government turn round and indicate that the old form of action may have to be resorted to. But it is useless now to look back upon Irish affairs. What we want to know, as I have already said, is, what is to be done? I gathered from the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) that it is necessary to wait until Mr. Smith has examined the problem for himself. I should have thought that the Member of the Cabinet who is Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who has unrivalled experience of Ireland, might have been capable of advising the Government in this crisis. He has had six months of Office, and has a knowledge of Ireland that none of us Englishmen possess; and, under these circumstances, to be told that we are to wait until an Englishman, who knows practically nothing about Irish affairs, goes over to Ireland to make himself acquainted with Irish affairs, is nothing less than a confession of that weakness and indecision which Her Majesty's present Advisers were at one time so fond of denouncing. We ask, and ask in vain, what, after six months' incubation, is the policy of Her Majesty's Government in this great crisis? A more deplorable confession of weakness on the part of a Government in a great crisis I have never heard of before, and I hope I never shall again. The business of the Opposition will be, when the Government clearly show what their policy is, to give it fair and just consideration, and, as patriotic men, to throw no impediments in the way of its realization if we can approve of it; but if they have no steadfastness of purpose, and no clear aim or object, and if their remedy be such as we cannot approve, then it will be our duty, by every means in our power, to endeavour to replace them by a Government more worthy of the approval of the country.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CHAMBRICK): My Lords, the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Kimberley), first of all, asks what it is the Government are going to do when they are proposing exceptional legislation? Was there ever heard of such a thing—that in a Queen's Speech the form and character of legislation should be stated in detail? If not, then the attack of the noble Earl, as regards ambiguity of language as to repressive

The Earl of Kimberley

legislation, falls to the ground. The noble Earl also says that the Members of the Government and the Parnellites combined to obstruct the late Government in their efforts to maintain law and order in Ireland.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I never said anything of the kind.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: The noble Earl distinctly stated it, though he may not have meant it. I called the attention of my noble and learned Friend near me (Lord Ashbourne) to the words at the time, and I would not have risen only that he used them.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: If the noble Lord says distinctly that I used the words I will at once admit it. But what I thought I said, and what I intended to say, was that when the late Government were struggling to maintain law and order in Ireland they had to deal with a strong Opposition in conjunction with the Parnellites.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: Does the noble Earl think that on no conceivable occasion are men of different Parties to oppose a Government when they differ with it on any particular question? I wish to deny most emphatically that there has been any such alliance as the noble Earl imputes between the Parnellites and the late Opposition. I say that it was the alienation of the Parnellites from you in consequence of what you call your endeavour to support law and order, and not their affection for us, that made them oppose you. And as to how the Parnellites voted at the Elections, if the question came to be examined, it would be found that they voted in as many cases against us as for us. My Lords, it is a most remarkable thing that those who stand up so strongly for the secrecy of the ballot are always the first to cry out how persons voted; and yet, without a scrutiny, it is absolutely impossible to determine. The Government of this country admits its deep responsibility. It is, first of all, responsible for protecting men in the exercise of their rights; and I invite the criticism which the noble Earl has promised us on our policy if our measures are inadequate for that purpose. Should our measure be not a sufficient or good one, then let them dismiss us; but if it should prove to the contrary, and if we bring in measures adequate to the occasion, I hope we may

rely on you to support us in endeavouring to put down organized resistance to law and order.

THE EARL OF LEITRIM said, that the question of the maintenance of law and order in Ireland fully deserved the serious consideration it had received that evening from their Lordships. He thought, however, that a little more might have been said upon the good that was in the country, and that it was unfortunate Her Majesty's Speech had not contained a distinct accusation in that direction. The good in Ireland did not seem to him to be likely to be developed by Her Majesty's Government in the way it ought to be. For instance, the reference in Her Majesty's Speech to the question of Local Government in that country was in the most indistinct terms. The words were—

"A measure for the Reform of County Government in Ireland is also in preparation."

Now, that was in striking contrast to the preceding words of the same paragraph, which said—

"Bills will be submitted to you for transferring to Representative Councils in the Counties of Great Britain local business which is now transacted by the Courts of Quarter Sessions and other authorities."

So far as his knowledge of local government in Great Britain extended, his belief distinctly was that it was far better and far more thorough and fairer as regarded the taxpayer than local government in Ireland. The Grand Jury Laws in Ireland, for instance, were perfectly indefensible, and formed a standing danger to the country. These laws, as they now existed, merely represented the landowning classes. The fiscal powers exercised by the Grand Juries were enormous; while the cesspayer, who was really the occupier, was completely outnumbered at the Presentment Sessions. Various powers had been conferred on the Grand Juries since they were first established—such as the power to guarantee railways and tramways at Presentment Sessions. The powers exercised by the Presentment Sessions, under the Tramways Act of Lord Spencer, were exceedingly dangerous. The cesspayer was by no means represented, and yet the Grand Jury had the power, subject certainly to appeal, of taxing them, it might be in perpetuity, for a tramway which might be of no use to them at all. He be-

lieved that county government was much desired by a large and important class in Ireland, and that no time should be lost in introducing a measure for the purpose. A very remarkable letter appeared in *The Times* some time ago from Mr. Clifford Lloyd with regard to the remedies which should be adopted in Ireland. He contended, in that communication, that the grievances of the country were due—first, to the exclusion of the people from any share in the management of their affairs; and, secondly, to the continuation in Dublin of a centralized Government, alleged to be out of touch with the Imperial Parliament, the British Cabinet, and the Irish people alike. Mr. Lloyd went on to express an opinion that the creation of elective County Boards, with powers of taxation, would afford a basis giving ample scope for the growth of political life. He (the Earl of Leitrim) believed with the writer that in that direction it was possible to mitigate some of the evils that existed in Ireland; and, further, that it was quite within the natural aspirations of the Irish people that they should be able to control their local affairs in the counties, and manage that taxation which they were called upon to pay. In connection with that there must come, undoubtedly, the abolition of the Viceroyalty, which was quite out of date and out of consonance with the feelings of the country, both high and low. While ready to grant Her Majesty's Government any powers that might be necessary for repressing crime, and bringing Ireland to a better state, it was, to his mind, imperatively necessary that a measure of local government should be introduced.

LORD WAVENEY said, that there was no doubt that crime and outrage was increasing in Ireland at a rate of which few of their Lordships had any conception. He was accustomed to watch the rise and fall of the tide; and he asserted that in the past month the greater part of Ireland had gone back a whole year in its neglect of duty. It was for the Government to say whether that state of things should continue. They might judge how matters were when they found that in Ulster Liberals and Conservatives had been brought to act together; and in his opinion it would be well if this truce of Parties were not only maintained, but extended. Judging

The Earl of Leitrim

from these indications, he thought he was justified in complaining that there was in the Speech from the Throne the merest general indication on the part of the Government of their intention probably to deal with that serious state of affairs.

Address agreed to, *namine dissentiens*, and ordered to be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The Earl of RENESDALE appointed, *namine dissentiens*, to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for this Session.

COMMITTEE FOR PRIVILEGES—Appointed.

SUB-COMMITTEE FOR THE JOURNALS—Appointed.

APPEAL COMMITTEE—Appointed.

RECEIVERS AND TRYERS OF PETITIONS—Appointed.

SCOTLAND—ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVE PEERS.—MINUTES OF MEETING.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had received (by post) from the Lord Clerk Register of Scotland, the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th of December last of the Peers of Scotland for the election of their representatives to sit and vote in the ensuing Parliament of the United Kingdom; and also, Return by the Lord Clerk Register of Scotland concerning Titles of Peerages called at the said meeting, in right of which respectively no vote had been received and counted for fifty years last past as at the date of the said meeting: The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

PARISH CHURCHES BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to declare and enact the law as to the rights of parishioners in respect of their parish churches—Was presented by The Lord Bishop of PETERBOROUGH; read 1st. (No. 5.)

House adjourned at Eight o'clock,
till to-morrow, a quarter past
Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 21st January, 1886.

The House met at half after One of the clock.

Message to attend Her Majesty;—

The House went;—and having returned;—

Several Members took and subscribed the Oath.

PRIVILEGES.

Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed.

OUTLAWRIES BILL.

Bill "for the more effectual preventing Clandestine Outlawries," read the first time; to be read a second time.

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

For Croydon, *v.* Sir William Grantham, knight, one of the Justices of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice.

For Armagh County (Mid Division), *v.* John M'Kane, esquire, deceased.

For Edinburgh (South Division), *v.* Sir George Harriacn, knight, deceased.

DOUBLE RETURNS.

COUNTY OF MONAGHAN (NORTHERN DIVISION), AND COUNTY OF DERRY SOUTHERN DIVISION;.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received a Letter from Timothy M. Healy, esquire, returned as a Member for the County of Monaghan (Northern Division), and for the County of Derry (Southern Division), making his election to serve for South Derry; and the said Letter was read as followeth:—

21 Jan. 1886.

Sir,

Having been returned for North Monaghan and South Derry, I beg to say that I elect to sit for South Derry.

I am Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

The Right Honble.

T. M. HEALY.

The Speaker.

COUNTY OF CARLOW AND BOROUGH OF DUBLIN (ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN DIVISION).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received a Letter from E. Dwyer Gray, esquire, returned as a Member for the County of Carlow and for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division), making his election to serve for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division); and the said Letter was read as followeth:—

Jany. 21st, 1886.

Sir,

Having been returned for the St. Stephen's Green Division of the City of Dublin, and also for Carlow, I beg to say that I elect to sit for the former Constituency.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

The Right Hon.

E. DWYER GRAY.

The Speaker.

NOTICE OF RESOLUTIONS.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BRACH): I wish to give Notice that, on the conclusion of the debate on the Address in reply to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, I intend to propose certain Resolutions relating to the Procedure of the House; and, having regard to the nature of the subject and the precedent which was adopted in 1882, I propose to ask the House to afford to us facilities for the continued discussion and the determination of these Resolutions, subject, of course, to the intervention of any specially important or urgent Business. I intend to place a copy of the Resolutions which I propose to move on the Table this evening.

NOTICE OF AMENDMENTS.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH—ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS gave Notice that he would move the following Amendment to the Address:—

After the word "transient," in the 10th paragraph, add—"But this House humbly expresses its regret that no measures are announced

by Her Majesty for the present relief of these classes, and especially for affording facilities to the agricultural labourers and others in the rural districts to obtain allotments and small holdings on equitable terms as to rent and security of tenure."

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY gave Notice that he would move an Amendment to the Address—

To insert, after the word "Agriculture," in the 10th paragraph, the words "and humbly to represent the pressing necessity for securing without delay to the cultivators of the soil such conditions of tenure as will aid and encourage them to meet the new and trying circumstances in which the Agriculture of the Country is placed."

Mr. HUNTER gave Notice that he would move an Amendment to the Address—

At end of the 5th paragraph, add—"But this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty their regret that the Revenues of India have been applied to defray the expenses of the military operations carried on in the Kingdom of Ava, without the consent of Parliament as required by 'The Government of India Act, 1858.'"

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

For Carlow County, *v.* Edmond Dwyer Gray, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said County of Carlow, and also for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division), hath elected to sit for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division).

For Monaghan County (Northern Division), *v.* Timothy M. Healy, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said County of Monaghan (Northern Division), and also for the County of Derry (Southern Division), hath elected to sit for the County of Derry (Southern Division).

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER reported Her Majesty's Speech, made by Her Chancellor, and read it to the House.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[FIRST NIGHT.]

VICOUNT CURZON who wore the uniform of a Yeomany officer, said: Mr. Speaker, in rising to move the Address in reply to the Gracious Speech from the Throne, I trust that I may obtain the forbearance and the indulgence that are invariably granted to a new Member who endeavours to dis-

charge the honourable duty which has fallen to my lot this day.

In the course of the Speech which has just been read to the House, it will be noticed that the early paragraphs of it contain reference to foreign affairs. In the first place, I feel sure that hon. Members will be pleased to hear that the great differences which divided the Governments of England and Russia for some time have been settled, and that an adjustment of those differences has been arrived at, through the honourable concession by Russia of certain territory on the boundary of Afghanistan, important to the Ameer, but which was at that time in the occupation of Russian troops, and the possession of which had been guaranteed to the Ameer by the late Government. At the same time, I would draw attention to the firmness of the Marquess of Salisbury in pressing for what was right and fair, and for what he thought this country had a just claim to. The Marquess of Salisbury, when he took Office, was bound to recognize everything in regard to which the word of England was pledged. He loyally accepted the situation, and made the best out of it that he could. Since that time it is highly satisfactory to know that the demarcation of the frontier had been proceeded with in a friendly spirit until winter stopped all operations for a time. The most cordial relations have existed between the English and the Russian Commissioners, and I feel convinced that the House will willingly re-echo Her Majesty's hopes that the peace which has been established in Asia will be long continued.

Secondly, with regard to Eastern Roumelia, the features of the rising there, as hon. Members will recollect, were, primarily, its unanimity, and, secondly, that no bloodshed attended it. It appears to have been practically the unanimous expression of a desire on the part of the people of that country to incorporate their Kingdom with that of Bulgaria. I need not remind hon. Members that circumstances have very much changed since the Treaty of Berlin. There seems to have been a unanimous desire on the part of the inhabitants of Eastern Roumelia that the arrangements made by that Treaty affecting them should be re-opened. After the outbreak of last October, it will be

Mr. Jesse Collings

understood, I think, that it would have been perfectly impossible, even if anyone had desired it, to return to the *status quo ante* without the use of force, which must have led to great disturbance and bloodshed, and possibly to grave embarrassment. I think that we must all lament the attack—nay, more, the fratricidal struggle—initiated by Servia on Bulgaria, and I feel equally confident that we must deprecate any similar wanton proceeding on the part of Greece. The fate of the Servian attack will, I trust, act as a warning to that nationality, which has ever had a large share of English sympathy. May I also be permitted to add that I am glad Her Majesty's Government have recognized the necessity of maintaining the rights of the Sultan. So far from the integrity of the Ottoman Empire being an exploded doctrine, I very humbly submit to the House that there is a general and growing opinion amongst nearly all the Great Powers of Europe that on the maintenance of that integrity rests the best chance of the peace of Europe being secured.

The House will observe with satisfaction that a very considerable amount of success has attended the Mission of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff to Constantinople and Egypt. I feel sure it must be a matter of regret to many hon. Members on both sides that the House has not the advantage of his presence. It will, however, be no matter of surprise to those who are well acquainted with his intimate knowledge of the East, and his experience of diplomacy, to know that he has been able to secure the effective co-operation of the Sultan in the difficult task of restoring order in Egypt, where for the last four years there has been so much disorder and so much anxiety, financial and otherwise. In connection with this matter the House will probably be justified in commencing to entertain reasonable hopes that in the course of time England may look forward to being relieved of the burden and responsibility which are now entailed on her by her occupation of that country.

With regard to the paragraph in the Gracious Speech of Her Majesty announcing the Burmese War and the annexation of that country to the British Empire, I feel that very probably it would be well that the House should

defer any discussion upon the subject until hon. Members have had time to read the somewhat bulky Blue Book which has been placed on the Table of the House to-day. In parting with the subject I would merely draw attention to the fact that the conduct of Her Majesty's Government has been patient and tolerant to the last degree towards the King of Burmah ever since his accession. Although it cannot possibly be a matter for unmixed congratulation that the cares and anxieties of the Indian Government should be still further added to, nevertheless the duty of the Government in protecting the lives and property of British subjects and the honour and credit of the Empire, have been so systematically violated by the Burmese Government, that, in my opinion, Her Majesty's Government were left no choice other than the action which they have taken. I feel certain, Sir, that the House and the country generally will willingly and heartily re-echo the gracious sentiments expressed by Her Majesty the Queen with regard to the valour of the troops in Burmah. Once more the soldiers of the Queen have shown what they can do; and I feel that the gallantry and effectiveness displayed by all ranks of the Army in Burmah are worthy of the unanimous approbation of the House and the country.

Passing on to the consideration of Home affairs, it will be noticed that the reform of Local Government occupies a prominent place in the Royal Speech. Representing, as I do, one of the divisions of an ancient and historic county, I am the more sensible that the time has now come when considerable changes are desired in the method of transacting county business by a great majority of the people. I feel that until thoroughly representative Local Bodies are formed in the localities it will be useless to expect that any sound and satisfactory reforms can take place in the incidence of local taxation.

With regard to the announcement of the Government that it is their intention to deal with the system of the transfer of land, I am very glad indeed that Her Majesty's Ministers have fulfilled their promises; because I cannot but think that an easy and cheap transfer of land would largely increase the number of freeholders, and relieve the owners of land from many charges which now fall

[First Night.]

upon them for conveyancing. I have every confidence that the measure, when introduced, will be a sound and satisfactory one, imbued, as it probably will be, with the principles and ideas of the late Earl Cairns, who, among many distinguished lawyers, was the only conspicuous Land Law reformer of the present day.

Mention has been made of the intention of the Government to invite the House of Commons to reconsider its Procedure. I feel that it would, indeed, be presumptuous of me if I were to do more than offer a parting remark upon a question of so much difficulty.

In regard to the passages in Her Majesty's Speech which deal with the affairs and condition of Ireland, the Irish Question, naturally enough, excites at the present time a great deal of interest and attention in the minds of the inhabitants of Great Britain. Now, for myself, I think that a fair and a proper view to take of this matter is not to judge Ireland by any abstract standard of peace and order; but she must be judged by the various circumstances connected with her history and race, and the position of her inhabitants, and not judged too harshly. Although there is much going on in that country that we must all most sincerely deplore, I may add a very earnest hope that there will soon be a sound and a satisfactory change. There is nothing, so far as I know—at all events, until Her Majesty's Government have spoken—which can compare with the events that took place in 1881 and 1882, or which shows proof of a weaker administration on the part of the Irish Executive. That, however, is, of course, no justification for the present state of things. There is that going on in Ireland which must be put an end to. The preservation of life and property, a due regard for legal obligations, and the free exercise of private rights should be the primary considerations of the Government. In the determination to insure a proper regard for these considerations, I feel, from the prompt and effective language of the Royal Speech, that we may place every confidence in Her Majesty's present Government. May I venture to express a hope that the House will give to the state of things that may be laid before it a fair and impartial consideration. I feel that it is the unanimous

Viscount Curzon

desire of all Parties to promote in every way the happiness and the prosperity of Ireland. Equally convinced am I that there is a growing and overwhelming consensus of opinion in favour of the maintenance of the Parliamentary Union between Great Britain and Ireland; and I cannot help thinking that the House will hail with the very deepest satisfaction the clear and ringing terms of the Queen's Speech. I am convinced that it is only under the peaceful protection of the Union that the strength and safety of the Empire, the progress of the two peoples, and the real happiness of Ireland can be secured.

And now, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, while I beg leave to read the Address to the House, let me take this opportunity of thanking the House for the generous attention and kindness with which it has listened to the remarks I have felt it my duty to make—a kindness and an attention which I appreciate all the more as being one of the highest marks of regard the House of Commons can confer upon one of its Members. I now beg leave, Sir, to read the Address in answer to the Royal Speech. The noble Viscount then concluded by moving—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, to thank Her Majesty for the Most Gracious Speech which Her Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that Her Majesty's relations with other Powers continue to be of a friendly character:

"To thank Her Majesty for informing us that the difference which existed, when Her Majesty last addressed us, between Her Majesty's Government and that of Russia, on the subject of the boundaries of Afghanistan, has been satisfactorily adjusted, and that in pursuance of a Convention which will be laid before us, the English and Russian Commissioners, with the full concurrence of Her Majesty's ally, the Amir of Afghanistan, have been engaged in demarcating the frontier of that country. To assure Her Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that Her Majesty trusts that their work may tend to secure the continuance of peace in Central Asia:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that a rising in Eastern Roumelia has given expression to the desire of the inhabitants for a change in the political arrangements under which they were placed by the Treaty of Berlin, and that Her Majesty's object, in the

negotiations which have followed, has been to bring them, according to their wish, under the rule of the Prince of Bulgaria, while maintaining unimpaired the essential rights of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan :

"To thank Her Majesty for informing us that under a Convention, concluded with the Ottoman Porte, Commissioners have been appointed on behalf of England and Turkey to confer with His Highness the Khedive, and to report upon the measures required for securing the defence of Egypt and the stability and efficiency of the Government in that country :

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that greatly to Her regret, Her Majesty was compelled in the month of November to declare war against Theebaw the King of Ava ; that acts of hostility on his part against Her Majesty's subjects and the interests of Her Majesty's Empire had, since his accession, been deliberate and continuous ; that these had necessitated the withdrawal of Her Majesty's Representative from his Court ; and that Her Majesty's demands for redress were systematically evaded and disregarded. To thank Her Majesty for informing us that an attempt to confiscate the property of Her Majesty's subjects trading under agreement in his dominions, and a refusal to settle the dispute by arbitration, convinced Her Majesty that the protection of British life and property, and the cessation of dangerous anarchy in Upper Burmah, could only be effected by force of arms. To assure Her Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that the gallantry of Her Majesty's European and Indian Forces under Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Prendergast, rapidly brought the country under Her Majesty's power. And humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that Her Majesty has decided that the most certain method of ensuring peace and order in those regions is to be found in the permanent incorporation of the Kingdom of Ava with Her Majesty's Empire :

"To thank Her Majesty for informing us that the time which has elapsed since Her Majesty assumed the direct Government of India makes it desirable that the operation of the Statutes, by which that change was effected, should be carefully investigated, and for commending this important matter to our earnest attention :

"To assure Her Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that a protracted negotiation respecting the rights of the Republic of France on the coasts of Newfoundland under the Treaty of Utrecht has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion by an Agreement which will be laid

before us and before the Legislature of Newfoundland as soon as it assembles, and that an Agreement has also been made with Spain, securing to this Country all commercial rights granted to Germany in the Caroline Islands :

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that our consent will be asked to Legislative Measures rendered necessary by a Convention on the subject of International Copyright, to which Her Majesty has agreed :

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that the Estimates for the Expenditure of the ensuing year, which have been framed with a due regard of efficiency and economy, will be submitted to us :

"To assure Her Majesty that we learn with regret that no material improvement can be noted in the condition of Trade or Agriculture, and to thank Her Majesty for informing us that Her Majesty feels the deepest sympathy for the great number of persons, in many vocations of life, who are suffering under a pressure which Her Majesty trusts will prove to be transient :

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that Her Majesty has seen with deep sorrow the renewal, since Her Majesty last addressed us, of the attempt to excite the People of Ireland to hostility against the Legislative Union between that Country and Great Britain : that Her Majesty is resolutely opposed to any disturbance of that fundamental Law, and that in resisting it Her Majesty is convinced that Her Majesty will be heartily supported by Her Parliament and Her People :

"To thank Her Majesty for informing us that the social no less than the material condition of that Country engages Her anxious attention ; that, although there has been during the last year no marked increase of serious crime, there is in many places a concerted resistance to the enforcement of legal obligations ; and that Her Majesty regrets that the practice of organised intimidation continues to exist. Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that Her Majesty has caused every exertion to be used for the detection and punishment of these crimes ; that no effort will be spared on the part of Her Majesty's Government to protect Her Irish subjects in the exercise of their legal rights, and the enjoyment of individual liberty, and that if, as Her Majesty's information leads Her to apprehend, the existing provisions of the Law should prove to be inadequate to cope with these growing evils, Her Majesty looks with confidence to our willingness to invest Her Majesty's Government with all necessary powers :

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"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that Bills will be submitted for transferring to Representative Councils in the Counties of Great Britain local business which is now transacted by the Courts of Quarter Session and other authorities. That a measure for the Reform of County Government in Ireland is also in preparation. That these Measures will involve the consideration of the present incidence of local burdens:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty that a Bill for facilitating the sale of Glebe Lands, in a manner adapted to the wants of the rural population, will also be submitted to us; as also Bills for removing the difficulties which prevent the easy and cheap transfer of Land; for mitigating the distressed condition of the poorer classes in the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland; for the more effectual prevention of Accidents in Mines; for extending the powers of the Railway Commission in respect of the Regulation of Rates; and for the codification of the Criminal Law:

"To assure Her Majesty that we join with Her Majesty in trusting that results beneficial to the cause of education may issue from a Royal Commission which Her Majesty has appointed to inquire into the working of the Education Acts:

"Humbly to assure Her Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to our attention, and to the measures which may be submitted to us, and that we earnestly trust that with regard to these and all other matters pertaining to our functions the keeping and guidance of Almighty God may be vouchsafed to us."—(*Viscount Curzon*.)

Mr. HOULDSWORTH (who wore a Court dress) said: Mr. Speaker—I rise, Sir, to second the Motion which has been made by the noble Viscount who sits near me (*Viscount Curzon*); and, in attempting to discharge the honourable and, at the same time, responsible duty which has been imposed upon me, I feel very sincerely that I need, and I trust I may rely upon, the generous consideration of the House.

The circumstances under which we meet are in many respects peculiar; some of them I think I may venture to describe as grave. The new House of Commons not only contains a greater number of Members than any of its Predecessors; but, what is more important, it represents a larger proportion of the nation than it has ever before done—in fact, I may

say that, practically, it represents the whole of the nation. The basis of political power has thus been considerably broadened; while, at the same time, by the sub-divisions which have taken place in counties, and in the larger boroughs, the responsibility of each elector has been intensified, or, at any rate, it has been brought closer home to him. It is, I think, a matter of sincere congratulation that though there has never, perhaps, been an Election so exciting as that which we have just passed through, or one in which the excitement has been so wide-spread, there has never probably been one in which bitter partizan spirit has been less exhibited, in which there has been a greater maintenance of law and order, and in which the results have been received with more equanimity, or treated as more conclusive.

I shall not venture to trouble the House by referring to the whole of the diverse subjects which are mentioned in Her Majesty's Speech—most of them, if not all, having been already referred to by the noble Viscount. I may, however, be allowed in one sentence to say with regard to that subject which appears most prominently in Her Majesty's Speech—namely, that of Ireland, that I thoroughly agree with the noble Viscount who has just spoken. It is a subject which is causing at the present moment considerable pain to the people throughout the country generally. I believe that there is no class of politicians and no class of people in the country who do not sincerely wish to see Ireland both prosperous and contented. At the same time, I believe that there is a very general, if not an universal, conviction, in the United Kingdom at any rate, that that prosperity and contentment can only be attained by the preservation of the connection between this country and Ireland, and the maintenance of law and order.

There is a subject which has not been referred to by the noble Viscount, on which I would ask the House to permit me to say a word. I am very glad indeed to see that a Commission is to be issued for an examination into the operation of the Education Acts, and especially of the Education Act of 1870. I do not exaggerate when I say that there is in many parts of the country, especially in the Metropolis and in the larger Northern towns, a very profound

dissatisfaction, not with the Education Act of 1870 itself, but with the way in which that Act has been worked. There are those upon the school boards, especially in the larger towns, who openly and ostentatiously tell us that they seek not to supplement, but to supplant, the voluntary schools; and the Act as it stands at present is such that they are only too well able to carry out their intention. A process of crushing and starving out the voluntary schools has been going on to a very great extent even by those school boards where the majority are not of the character I have described. The fact is that those Acts, as they stand at present, do give an immense power to the school boards, which has worked very prejudicially towards the voluntary schools; and I feel very strongly indeed that if the Acts in question are allowed to be worked and used as they have been, our voluntary system will in a very short time be destroyed—a great injury being thereby inflicted on the ratepayers, and a great injustice done to the people of this country.

Sir, I would very respectfully congratulate Her Majesty's Government upon having effected a settlement of some important questions which were pending when the last Parliament closed. I congratulate them upon what they have been able to do in Egypt. A loan has been effected which is of very great importance, financially speaking, to the country; and I think we may hope that in the Convention which has been made with Turkey as the Suzerain there is every prospect of a permanent Government being established in Egypt, and that trade will prosper there to the benefit of the people of both countries. I may say that we have very great interests in Egypt; probably more than many hon. Members suppose. Especially I speak of the interests which Lancashire has in Egypt, drawing as it does from her a great part of its supply of raw materials in the shape of cotton. It is of the utmost importance that that country should have, if possible, a good and settled Government, that it may be enabled to develop its resources by the assistance of British capital and British energy.

I also congratulate Her Majesty's Government upon having settled a difficulty which I believe has existed for 150 years

connected with the French right of fishing on the Coast of Newfoundland, as well as another important matter connected with commerce—we having had secured for us all the commercial rights granted to Germany in the Caroline Islands.

I now come to what I feel is the most important question I shall touch upon. It is one in which the constituency I represent takes the greatest interest. I refer to the annexation of Burmah. I believe this is an act which, under the circumstances, has received already the approval and the support of all commercial and industrial communities in the country. There are those, I am aware, who deprecate annexations of this kind because they entail fresh responsibilities; but I do not believe that the industrial and commercial classes will be found to be of that number. They are not opposed to the extension of responsibility when justice, the interests of trade, and the advancement of civilization seem to demand it; and it very often happens, in matters of this kind, that a forward step courageously taken in the interests of right and justice, instead of increasing, really lessens, responsibility. I would venture to urge upon the Government that the responsibilities which they have in connection with trade are very great. I do not want it to be supposed that I advocate annexations simply from a desire of conquest, or for the purpose of enriching ourselves at the expense of others. I would not defend them either on the lower ground of commercial advantage, or on the higher ground of the extension of civilization, unless there were other grounds on which they were found to be justifiable and necessary. But the extension of commerce is a legitimate object; and in the pursuit of that object, if injustice is perpetrated, if the rights of British traders are interfered with, and if contracts solemnly entered into are broken, then, I hold, the Government of the day are bound to interfere, and if they interfere at all they ought to do so effectively. I am quite aware that that is not a doctrine universally accepted. A distinguished Member of this House—the right hon. Gentleman whom I see opposite, the Member for the East Division of Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen)—said the other day that Government Departments in this country were apt to look upon the

commercial classes as only a set of troublesome traders who went about the world creating diplomatic difficulties, whom it was a duty rather to repress than encourage. But I am glad that the present Government have not adopted that view in respect of Burmah. The facts of the case are very simple. A most unjust demand was made by the Government of Burmah on a British trading company which held leases under a solemn contract from that Government; that demand was supported, to some extent, by a Foreign Power; arbitration was proposed by our Viceroy in India; that was rejected, and it appears to me that no other course remained to the Government but to defend the rights of British subjects that had been so seriously infringed. Now, what are the probable results which will take place in consequence of this act of annexation, which may be criticized, but which I think is thoroughly defensible? I think we may gather some idea of what the probable results will be if we look at the progress which British Burmah has made. It is practically the same country, a line only dividing it on the map. There is no more prosperous Province under British rule than British Burmah. I will in a few words indicate what its progress has been during the last 30 years. The richest part of it was annexed in 1852. Since 1856 the population has increased four-fold—from 1,000,000 to 4,000,000—principally by emigration from Independent Burmah, which has now been annexed. Since 1861 the imports into British Burmah have increased eight-fold—from £550,000 to £4,000,000. The exports have increased more than four-fold, being now £1,500,000, whereas, in 1854, they were only £450,000. The Revenue, which was in 1854 £250,000, had increased in 1884 to nearly £3,000,000; and the total surplus Revenue which has been paid into the Indian Treasury in eight years from this Province has been, after paying all the expenses of administration, no less than £6,000,000, or at the rate of nearly £1,000,000 per annum. Now I believe similar results will follow in Upper Burmah from the action of Her Majesty's Government in that country, while the possibilities of trade with the Shan States and Siam and China are simply enormous.

Mr. Houldsworth

And I must tell the House it is of the utmost importance that there should be an extension of the area of British trade. Whatever may be the results of the Commission which is now sitting to consider the Depression of Trade, one fact will be abundantly proved, and that is that the productive power of the world is in excess of its consumptive power, and that in this country the producing power is in advance of the distributing power. There is an immense increase of capital in this country derived, to a great extent, from the working classes who have been enjoying good wages, and whose increased thrift and temperance have, I am glad to say, enabled them to put by considerable savings. On the other hand, we have an increasing population. Our old markets are becoming closed to us. Our merchants, therefore, have to go forward to new fields of enterprise, and these new fields have to be found amongst barbarous or semi-civilized people. Now, the very first essentials of trade, protection of life and property, and the establishment of some kind of law and order, have to be set up in these places. Barbarism resents the inroads of civilization; consequently a civilized system of Government, to some extent at any rate, is required. We are then face to face with these alternatives—either the Government of this country must support British trade in its development throughout the world, or the extension and development of trade which is so necessary for the prosperity of the country and its increasing population will have to be abandoned.

I must apologize to the House for having devoted so much time to one special subject. But my position as the Representative of a large commercial city, itself the centre of a large industrial district, is my excuse. At the same time, I feel that in saying what I have said I have not been speaking wholly or mainly in the interest of a class; I have been speaking on behalf of the interests of the nation. Sir, I beg to second the Motion of the noble Viscount.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, &c."—[See page 92.]

MR. GLADSTONE: Mr. Speaker, I rise, Sir, in conformity with the usage that I have invariably observed when

occupying the seat in this House that I have now the honour to do; for it has been not only my opinion, but I think I may say the traditional opinion of this House, that the convenience of this House was best promoted, and the despatch of Business was likewise best served, by the practice under which the person occupying the place of the Leader of the Opposition rises immediately after the Mover and Seconder of the Address to make such observations as it may appear the Speech from the Throne and the Address called for. There are, Sir, two views of a Speech and an Address which are in conflict with one another, and to one of which I very decidedly adhere. For, I think, not less than 40 years it has been the object of successive Governments—almost, I believe invariably almost, without exception—to present the Speech and the Address to the House as a kind of mapping-out of the Business of the Session, which collects the principal parts of it in one view, and which it is eminently advantageous to the House to have presented to them at once. Governments have felt that, from the very nature and magnitude and multitude of the matters thus presented to the House, it is almost impossible to have, in a debate upon the Address, a satisfactory discussion of the particular questions that are raised. That I think, Sir, to be a sound view of the Queen's Speech and of the Address; and, with that view, it has been the custom to draw the Address in such a manner as not to commit the House on the particular questions that are contained in the Speech. As far as I have been able to observe, I believe that the Address which we are now asked to adopt has been drawn in strict conformity with the custom which has been established upon that view of the case. On the other hand, we cannot be surprised that Gentlemen who are deeply and conscientiously interested in many of these subjects—knowing how difficult it is to find an opportunity of bringing them forward, and having offered to them upon the Address some peg upon which they can hang a discussion of a particular matter in which they are specially interested—that they should have a leaning contrary to that view of the Address in reply to the Speech, and a disposition to raise debates of very con-

siderable length in the form either of simple speeches or of Amendments to the Address. In consequence, Sir, it has happened for several years past that either a fortnight or more has been occupied in disposing of the Address. I must draw a distinction here. In certain cases where there is a very important question raised—such, I may say, as that important Maamtrasna case—in a case of that kind I do not complain; although the intervention is inconvenient, I do not complain; but I wish to say that, so far as is possible, and so far as I may venture to recommend a practice which I believe to be to the advantage of the House, I do believe it is best, as far as we can, that we should be content to recognize the Speech from the Throne, and the Address moved in consequence of it, as presenting to us an outline of what we have to do, rather than a convenient occasion for the discussion of the several parts of it in detail. Therefore, Sir, I confine myself to such parts of it as appear to me to be important. First, it is a duty, which I think is always performed with satisfaction where it can be conscientiously performed, to acknowledge the manner in which the duty—the difficult duty—of the Mover and the Seconder of the Address has been performed. The Seconder of the Address is an old Member, with whose capacity and competency in such matters we are already well acquainted. The Mover of the Address has informed us that he has made this day the first presentation of himself to the House; and without professing to adopt absolutely every opinion in his speech, yet I do venture to offer him very heartily my congratulations in general, both upon the manner and matter of his speech. I will say, in particular, that it gave me great satisfaction to hear the noble Viscount state, in one of his references to Ireland, that, in his view, it was not possible to judge of the case of Ireland simply by an abstract standard; but that careful regard should be had to the circumstances and the history of the country, and to the race and the religion of the people. Now, Sir, I will make some remarks upon the principal matters of foreign policy to which allusion is made in the Speech. These remarks will be made briefly, and made with reserve; because in all these cases it is well

understood that at the commencement of a Session we have not usually the means of any thorough discussion of these points, and that we await the presentation of Papers which have been promised in one or more cases—and which, I have no doubt, will be made—with regard to all, or nearly all, the principal subjects of foreign policy. Subject, Sir, to that general observation, I cordially join in the congratulations which are offered to the Government, and offered to the country, upon the adjustment of the question with regard to the Zulfikar Pass—the remaining question of difficulty, as it was six months ago, in respect to the border of Afghanistan. I, upon quitting Office, took the very earliest opportunity of endeavouring to give such support as it was in my power to Her Majesty's Government in the prosecution of those negotiations. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!] I must own I cannot look back with satisfaction upon some part of the proceedings of the Russian Government during the course of last year with reference to this subject; but it would be invidious to enter upon that topic now, when they have freely arrived at a conclusion satisfactory to us. I heartily hope, both that the particular measure may tend to the maintenance of a lasting peace in Central Asia, and that, by removing out of the way a possible cause of disagreement between England and Russia, it may conduce to good, and heartily good, relations between two great Empires—both of them Empires likely to have an enormous influence upon the future both of the civilized and the uncivilized world. In the same way, and in the same spirit, I can refer to the case of Eastern Roumelia; nor will I mix with that reference a single remark that could in any manner tend to introduce disagreeable or hurtful recollections. I have not, of course, been minutely informed of the transactions of the Prime Minister and of the Government; but so far as I have been informed of them, and with regard to the principal outline of those transactions, so far as I have been able to understand them, I have pleasure in repeating here, what I have more than once stated elsewhere—that the conduct of the Marquess of Salisbury appears to me to have done him honour, and to be worthy of the name and the credit of

Mr. Gladstone

this country. I entertain a hope on this subject, and I give an assurance. The hope I entertain is that he may be enabled, and that Her Majesty's Government may be enabled, to work through this important question to its conclusion in a manner thoroughly congenial to British feeling; and I give them the assurance that—aware as I am of the great difficulties under which he has to labour for this end in the Councils of Europe, with much variety necessarily of interest, of view, and of purpose—so far as I am concerned—and I believe I may say so far as those around me are concerned—he will have every fair and favourable consideration. There will be no disposition to precipitate demands upon him, as it may be most injurious that they should be prematurely answered, but every disposition to give a favourable construction to his acts and words. Nor do I give this grudgingly; but, on the contrary, I yield a free and willing assent to the judicious language in which it is stated that, while endeavouring to meet the desires of the population, there will also be a maintenance unimpaired of the essential rights of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan. I believe that these essential rights may be, so far as I comprehend the matter, perfectly well maintained without in any way interfering with those views which we may, I think, most justly express on the part of the population of Eastern Roumelia; nor can I think that the security of the Turkish Empire—which was supposed at one time to be so essentially connected with the division of Eastern Roumelia from Bulgaria—I cannot think, and I do not think, that security will suffer in consequence of the adoption of measures which may do much to reconcile the population of the two Provinces, when united, to endure with patience and without dissatisfaction a sovereignty which will have ceased, as I hope, to press upon them in the direction of any particular difficulty or grievance. I must be a little more reserved in regard to the next two subjects which I have to mention. Reference is made to the Convention with Turkey, under which a Turkish Commissioner is now placed in Egypt to assist in the consideration of the measures which may be requisite for the welfare of that country in connection with the occupation by

British troops, and in connection with the termination of that occupation. I cannot say with a good conscience that I am as yet aware of any proof of evidence which has been afforded to us—though I will not state any adverse conclusion—I am not aware of any evidence or indication which has yet been afforded to us that the presence of a Turkish Commissioner in Egypt—in Cairo—amidst all the circumstances of Cairo, is likely to diminish the difficulties of Her Majesty's Government, or to advance the true interests of Egypt, and the termination of the present anomalous state of things. I will not go any further into that matter, having satisfied myself, if I may so speak, with the reservations I have made. With regard to Burmah, I am bound to say I must hold similar language, and make a similar reservation. I cannot profess myself altogether satisfied with the argument of the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Address. It is very possible that I may not have interpreted him correctly. I do not question his great knowledge and competency to deal with this subject; but I thought the doctrine he laid down came rather too near a doctrine which, if it were applied as he stated, I should conceive to be both dangerous in point of policy and questionable in point of morality—the doctrine, namely, that extension of trade is, in the main, to be hoped for in the future that lies before us through the application from time to time of physical force. I must say in this instance there is a reason why we must specially reserve our opinions upon the subject of the war with and the annexation of Burmah; for the hon. Gentleman might freely admit that the prospects of commercial advantage and the prospects of the extension of civilization did not of themselves avail to justify the proceedings unless we had other legitimate causes for going to war. Now, I do not pronounce any final interpretation on this passage in the Speech—

“An attempt to confiscate the property of my subjects trading under agreement in his [that is, the King of Burmah's] dominions, and a refusal to settle the dispute by arbitration, convinced me that the protection of British life and property, and the cessation of dangerous anarchy in Upper Burmah, could only be effected by force of arms.”

The inference which may be conveyed

by that sentence is, that wherever a civil wrong has been done to a British subject by a foreign Government, that civil wrong may legitimately and wisely be made the ground of a demand for arbitration, with a resort to arms as the alternative in the case of a refusal. That is a proposition of very great importance and gravity, and one regarding which, undoubtedly, we ought to exercise much circumspection and much jealousy before accepting it. Upon this ground, Sir, there are many Powers in the world with respect to whom we should have had the most undoubted right to place before them this alternative of arbitration or war. Do not let it be supposed that I object to the interpolation of arbitration. The objection I take—because I am really only suggesting the matter for consideration when the time comes—my doubt is, whether the general principle justifying a resort to war in such cases can safely be adopted. Of course, we must bear in mind that cases of repudiation of public debt, partial or total, have abounded over the surface of the globe. It is impossible to conceive a more distinct case of civil wrong done to those who are interested than the violation of public and solemn contracts, originally formed under a sovereign authority. But Lord Palmerston, who was not supposed to be slow in vindicating the rights of British subjects, invariably declined to recognize a title on the part of British subjects to call on him to hold language to Foreign Powers who were in that unfortunate position, contemplating or involving the alternative of war. I pass on from this matter. I do not intend to give any positive opinion about it; but when I see anything that has an apparent relationship to a principle that I think unsafe, I wish to indicate the ground as dangerous ground, and to say that we should consider carefully and deeply before we commit ourselves to it. The next word I wish to say is a word of unmixed pleasure; it has relation to the Committee about to be appointed as to the working of the Indian Government Act. I think the only question is whether that Committee has not been too long delayed. I am of opinion that Her Majesty's Government are eminently right in asking the House to appoint this Committee. I trust that it will be a carefully-selected Committee;

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that it will be efficient in proportion to the greatness of the subject; and that it will devote itself to that subject with a zeal and a diligence such as we have known in former years and former generations; but such as undoubtedly it has become more difficult to secure in our Select Committees since the general Business of the House of Commons has so enormously increased. In passing, I will say also that I do not see anything to object to in the Commission to examine into the working of the Education Acts, which have now been in operation for 14 or 15 years; and there, again, I hope the Commission will be made a strong Commission, and that the competing—I will not say conflicting—interests of the various descriptions of schools and superintending authorities will all of them be carefully and efficiently represented in the choice of the Commission. One word only I wish to say on the subject of the Treaty on International Copyright. I was in my youth a zealous follower of Mr. Serjeant Talfourd in his attempts to extend the range of copyright privilege. I must own, however, that reflection and experience in some degree as an author of a very humble character have led me to entertain serious doubts as to the particular form in which an author is to be secured that to which he has the best possible claim—namely, a reasonable share of the fruits of his intellectual labours. All I have to say at present is that the question is of enormous importance, especially in consequence of the almost immeasurable market which America offers for the sale of English books, and the rapid extension of that market through the growth of population, and of the importance of having our Copyright Law on such a basis as to make it possible for the American Government to give us the benefit of something like a community of market in that vast country for our literary productions. My only reason for referring to this subject at the present moment is to express the hope that when the International Copyright Treaty is concluded it may not be in any manner bound down to one particular form of Copyright Law now existing in this country; but that it may be left free, as far as possible, for Parliament to consider, when the proper time and opportunity arrive, the basis of that Copyright Law, and whether the nature of the protection and benefit given to

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the author can with advantage be modified. I now pass to the paragraph which relates to the condition of trade and agriculture. We are assured of Her Majesty's sympathy with the classes especially connected with those industries. It is gracious on the part of Her Majesty to express that sympathy; but the danger of its expression is that vigilant critics begin to desire still further particularity; and it not unnaturally occurs to many Gentlemen on the present occasion, when for the first time the agricultural labourers of this country have so large a share in determining the composition of the present House of Commons, and are so directly represented in it, it will not unnaturally occur to many to regret that there should not have been some more distinct and considerable reference to them and their interests, and to the possibility of promoting them, than the very limited one contained in the mention of a Bill for selling glebe lands. At the same time, without raising any question as to the particular provisions of that Bill, I am bound to say that, from my own experience in connection with ecclesiastical patronage, nothing can be stronger than the case for enabling the rural clergy, and those under whose superintendence they act, to take some measures for relieving them of the burden of landed property under which they labour. I do not think I need detain the House upon the particular propositions in the Address with respect to Bills which it is proposed to introduce. Others, no doubt, will make commentaries upon them; and, for my own part, I do not feel called upon to enter on the subject, excepting to observe that I do not think that the description of the crofter question is a very happy one, so far as the language is concerned. It is something more than the mitigation of distress; it is not entirely an eleemosynary task we are asked to undertake. There are in it some elements of a vindication of forgotten and neglected rights. I do hope that that Bill is prepared, and that it will be proceeded with as early as Her Majesty's Government can practically make arrangements for it. When I come to the subject of Ireland I feel bound, after all that has been said and written during the last three or four weeks—and I hope the House will excuse me—to preface my comments upon

the paragraph in the Speech by a few words descriptive of my own position with regard to the very great questions of Irish interests, Irish happiness, and Irish peace that are now impending over us. At the time when I, although naturally desirous of yielding to a long-cherished intention of repose, determined to become a candidate for Mid Lothian, and to ask, after 53 years of public service, again to enter Parliament, I was governed by a few important considerations. The main one among them undoubtedly was a slight, but yet a real hope that it might be possible—I hardly thought it probable—that I might be able to make some peaceful contribution towards dealing with the legislative case as well as the social condition of Ireland. I felt very strongly that a new situation had arisen; and in consequence of that sentiment, exercising in a great degree my own private judgment, and necessarily, from the nature of the case, not possessing all those opportunities of communication which we have when we are concentrated together in London, I entered rather largely upon this subject at the date of September 17, in an Address to my constituents, which perhaps I, having recently been at the head of the Government, may say without vanity was, in some degree, an address to the country. I will venture to read one passage only of that address, which sums up the main features of the position as I viewed them. I said—

"In my opinion, not now for the first time delivered, the limit is clear within which any desire of Ireland constitutionally ascertained may, and beyond which they cannot, receive the assent of Parliament. To maintain the supremacy of the Crown, the unity of the Empire, and all the authority of Parliament necessary for the conservation of that unity, is the first duty of every Representative of the people, subject to this governing principle—every grant to portions of the Empire of enlarged powers for the management of their own affairs is, in my view, not a source of danger, but a means of averting it, and is in the nature of a new guarantee for increased cohesion, happiness, and strength."

This was not my view only in September last, but it was one which, on various occasions during the last 14 or 15 years, I have expressed both in this House and in other places, without exciting general alarm, though undoubtedly laying myself open to more or less of animadversion from particular critics. Well, Sir, I maintain that, rightly or wrongly,

I experienced some satisfaction, after having made that declaration, in observing that it was nowhere made, so far as I know, the subject of animadversion by the leading Members of the Party opposite. I speak subject to correction, to which I would submit readily if it be afforded me; but, so far as my observation went, that is the case. Indeed, perhaps under the influence of a sanguine mind, I was even led to think from the speeches of the Marquess of Salisbury, to which I gave the attention due to his eminent position, that he was not very far from being of the same opinion as myself. In speaking at Newport I think he used the expression that he had not up to the present seen his way to a measure—I do not think he gave a distinct expression to it—of any considerable legislative measure in the direction of Home Rule. On Lord Mayor's Day, on the very eve of the elections, on an occasion when, as is well known, the utterances of the Prime Minister are most deliberate, and are as public and official, I will venture to say, as when they are delivered from his place in either House of Parliament—I find a passage, which I quote from an excellent *verbatim* report in *The Scotsman*. It contains these words, to which I think I can give my unreserved adhesion—

"The integrity of the Empire is more precious to us than any possession we can have. We are bound by motives, not only of expediency, not only by legal principle, but by motives of honour, to protect the minority, if such exists, who have fallen into unpopularity and danger because they have followed, or been the instruments of, the policy which England has deliberately elected to pursue; but within these lines every English Government—and I would say the present Government—is bound to do all that it possibly can to give prosperity, contentment, and happiness to the Irish people."

Within the lines of the unity and the integrity of the Empire and the obligations of honour to the minority in Ireland. I am not referring to this passage for a controversial purpose; but precisely the reverse. I am referring to it to justify the remark I made that it was a great consolation to me to be able to cherish the hope that there was some sympathy between the Marquess of Salisbury in his distinguished position and myself upon this great and vital question. For, Sir, I am under the deep and solemn conviction that nothing but the gentle and conciliatory handling

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of this matter by all persons concerned, be they who they may, can by any possibility neutralize the dangers, or give the hope of attaining the benefits that may be in store for us, in the prosecution of the questions relating to the condition and the government of Ireland. And, therefore, from the first my highest ambition has been, and it continues to be—and I rebuke myself by anticipation if I deviate by a hairbreadth from the principle—not to say one word of any man mingling in this question that can bring the elements of wrath and passion into a debate and a consideration which nothing but patience, nothing but self-restraint, nothing but the casting aside of much prejudice and prepossession, and nothing but a determined disposition to look alone at what candour and justice demand will afford us the smallest hope of solving. I wish to assure the House that since the declaration of the 17th of September I have not said one word or done one act in extension of that declaration. What I have said and what I have done, little as it is, except as to private study—and I do not deny that the subject has been my daily and my nightly thought—has been, in the first place, to show where responsibility lay. Responsibility lies where the means of action lie. In my opinion, there could be no greater public calamity then to bring this question within the lines of Party conflict; and if, unhappily, that shall be done—I trust it will not be done of determined purpose by anyone—but if, unhappily, that shall be done, I will, so far as in me lies, take care I will not be the doer. It is the Government alone who can act in such a matter. In my opinion, the action of a person in the position I have the honour to hold not only is unnecessary, but would not be warrantable, and would be in the highest degree injurious and mischievous; and I will do nothing, as I have said, that can tend, by making proposals—if I were prepared with proposals—from this Bench, to be a challenge to others to bring this question into the category of Party controversies. I am bound to say, without expressing a final opinion, that the little I have said has not only been to show how entirely I was separated from all ideas of personal action or Party action in the matter; but I have also felt, as the season passed on, that a new difficulty might be coming into view.

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I have no means of knowing what the social state of Ireland really is. Even as regards crime, I am without particular information. So, also, I am without information as to the important questions of the fulfilment of contracts and the enjoyment of personal liberty in all transactions to which reference has been made in the Speech from the Throne. But I admit I have felt that topics and considerations of that kind might yet come to have importance such as to require that they should be taken into view, either in connection with, or prior to—I will not venture to say which, for I have no knowledge to justify me in the assertion—either in connection with, or prior to, any consideration of the question of what measures were to be taken for the extension of local government in Ireland. That, Sir, I have said, and the consequence is necessarily this. My duty was to await the plans of the Government; and, having awaited those plans, I am bound to say that, though I shall listen with great attention to all they propose, I intend to reserve my own freedom of action. And I do not intend, so far as lies within my power, to have it determined for me by others at what time and in what manner I shall make any addition to the declaration I laid before the country in the month of September last. I stand here as a Member of a House where there are many who have taken their seats for the first time upon these Benches, and where there may be some to whom, possibly, I may avail myself of the privilege of old age to offer a recommendation. I would tell them of my own intention to keep my counsel, and reserve my own freedom, until I see the moment and the occasion when there may be a prospect of public benefit in endeavouring to make a movement forward, and I will venture to recommend them, as an old Parliamentary hand, to do the same. Now, Sir, I have said so much on my own position. I think the House will feel that it was right that I should endeavour to remove misunderstanding by most explicit statements, for which, of course, I am liable to be called to account if they be inaccurate. They will forgive me—under the circumstances of a certain amount of misapprehension which has gone abroad—they will forgive me if I have endeavoured to clear my own position before I presume to take upon me to act

as a critic upon the action of Her Majesty's Government. Sir, there are in the Speech two paragraphs relating to Ireland, and likewise a reference to the measures which are in preparation. The first paragraph is that which refers to the Legislative Union as a fundamental law, and in which Her Majesty's Government have expressed, undoubtedly very strongly, the view they take of that important Act of Parliament. I am not here to find fault with Her Majesty's Government for having so done. They feel, evidently, that it would not be right without notice—and the terms of the Address very often cannot be heard by all the Members of the House—to ask the opinion of Parliament. They have given a strong opinion themselves, a strong opinion in certain terms. If I am to consider that opinion as a declaration on their part to maintain at all hazards, and under all circumstances, and at all costs, the unity and the integrity of the British Empire, there is no man who sits behind them who will more cordially applaud their intentions and support their action. I venture still to express the hope that there is not a man in this House who will rise in his place and disavow that sentiment. With respect to the particular terms in which they have conveyed it, I own that it appears to me that criticism might be made upon them in certain respects. The Queen's Speech is a very formal document, and I do not hold that the phrase "fundamental law" is known to the British Constitution. I understand that law is of the greatest moment and importance. I am not disparaging that law; but the importation of the phrase, I think for the first time, is a matter upon which there might be either a legal or another argument; and it is also, of course, open to remark that it is stated there can be no change of that law; whereas the fact of the case really is that Her Majesty's Government mean to make this a strong declaration of their determination to maintain our unity rather than they wish to be judged by a minute criticism. Of course, it is obvious that fundamental law is not infrequently altered in minor points, and has been altered, mainly in 1869, in the case then of the Established Protestant Church in Ireland, when the Act of Union declared that it was essential and fundamental to the Union. I do not enter upon those minute criticisms.

I look upon it as a declaration by Her Majesty's Government in favour of Imperial unity and integrity; and I will only make two very brief observations. I have disclaimed Party feeling in this speech, and I hope thus far I have kept tolerably close to my promise at the outset. I cannot help saying that, looking at the exact terms of this paragraph as compared with the terms of the Ministerial speeches made before the elections, I see a considerable difference, and cannot help asking whether it is intended or not to make that difference the subject of Ministerial exposition? Sir, one other remark I have to make which is not contentious at all. I hope and I feel assured that there is no intention at all on the part of Her Majesty's Government, or, I hope, of any person in this House, whatever his political opinions may be, to interpose any obstacle in the way of preliminary judgment as a bar to the fullest exposition by Irish Members of whatever they may think it right to urge on behalf of their countrymen. It would be a sad error in point of prudence, it would be a violation, in my opinion, of Parliamentary and public decency, were we not, at any rate, to admit this fact—that though we know nothing of what is going to be asked—and certainly we know nothing that would justify us in saying that it will be easily conceded—yet, whatever it is, if it be true that five-sixths of the Irish Representatives—claiming, of course, the same liberty for the other sixth—have come here to make representations and pleas in the name of their country, armed with the authority that their constituents have been legally empowered to give them—our duty is to accord to them freely a patient, a respectful, and a candid hearing. I think, Sir, I may only say this by way of reserve. I feel sure that that sentiment will receive the universal assent of the House. Well, Sir, I go on to the second paragraph, which I confess has very considerably disappointed me. It is the paragraph with regard to the social state of Ireland. I had hoped that we should obtain from Her Majesty's Government, after the experience they have had, some more conclusive statement of their views upon that subject. There is a difference in the situation in which Members of the House are placed with regard to a sub-

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ject of this kind from the position they occupy with regard to matters of legislation or matters of public principle. On matters of legislation and on matters of public principle the Party in Opposition are generally of opinion that they can judge quite as well as, and perhaps a little better than, the Party in power; but with regard to the social state of Ireland, it is impossible, in my opinion, for us to form a conclusive judgment. The information in our possession is not sufficient. It requires an outlook so large, and, at the same time, so minute and particular, that we are dependent entirely upon the judgment delivered to us by Her Majesty's Government; and certainly, Sir, if we form our impressions from what takes place at meetings, and at deputations, and from the articles of journals supposed to be more or less in the confidence of Her Majesty's Government, I believe that the whole House, so far as I know, have expected that the language of the Speech with regard to the social state of Ireland would be clear and intelligible. Well, Sir, what does this paragraph tell us? It tells us that Her Majesty has used every exertion to maintain the law. It tells us that she has failed in maintaining it, because the information she receives leads her to apprehend that she may hereafter have proposals to make. It tells us that she has more than failed, because the evils with which she is endeavouring to deal are, in the language of the Speech, "these growing evils." Well, Sir, I certainly had hoped that we should have received more light on this question of the state of Ireland from the Queen's Speech than is actually before us. In the summer we had reached a certain condition of things. Many Gentlemen who sit here condemned the administration of Earl Spencer as warmly as—I trust they will forgive me for saying it—I from my heart, with all the knowledge I possess, support it. At that period there was a certain state of things in Ireland with regard to the critical subjects—first of crime, and secondly of contracts. It was a state of things which led us then in the Government to think that we could part at once with what we considered to be the stringent and coercive clauses of the Crimes Act; and that all that remained for us to do was to maintain, either in the shape of a positive

enactment, or in the shape of discretionary powers under proclamation, district by district, certain of its provisions, which provisions we did not consider to involve interference with liberty. Had the Government so clear a view of the condition of Ireland? Although they were completely new to Office, with a decision which they described as most formal and most deliberate, made upon due examination of the case, they arrived at the conclusion that the Act might be allowed to lapse. I think they are aware that the news of the lapsing of that Act was not received on this side of the House in a grudging spirit. It was our desire, our hearty desire, that the boldness then shown—boldness exhibited by their being willing to incur a very great responsibility, a great and heavy stake upon their success or failure in Ireland—we heartily desired the success of their experiment, and did not interject so much as an observation to detract from the grace which, undoubtedly, in the face of the people of Ireland, had surrounded their proceedings. They must feel it is right that at the earliest moment they should give us their impressions of that experiment, and whether that experiment, in their judgment, has succeeded, or has failed. For a long time—I refer again to the speeches of the Marquess of Salisbury—undoubtedly the impression was that, upon the whole, it was a success. As to crime, there was a decided decrease; and as to "Boycotting," I think it was described as the result of action essentially feverish and temporary, and likely to pass away, and almost certain to disappear. That came down to the month of November. Is the position to be reversed, or is it not? I am sure that when the Government remember that we are looking out for means and material for judgment in regard to Ireland, and in this particular are entirely dependent upon what they can tell us, yet not able to cast aside altogether the intelligence that reaches us from this quarter and from that, it will be felt that it would be cruel to withhold from us distinct information, and a distinct announcement of their intention any longer than is absolutely necessary. Having said that, I will only add that I do not wish to use any strong language, or to make any severe charge upon the

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conduct of Her Majesty's Government; but I wish to say that a great obligation rests upon them, and strong expectations may be reasonably entertained as to their conduct in Ireland. Then, thirdly, with respect to Ireland, we are told that a County Government Bill—not so described, but a Bill rather for transferring to other hands the functions which now belong to county government—is about to be introduced. "It will be submitted to you;" and then comes this sentence—

"A measure for the reform of county government in Ireland is also in preparation." It appears to me that, all circumstances considered, it is evident that the Government have received a severe shock on the subject of this measure of county government in Ireland. It is right to state that not only the intention to have a plan, but the main particulars of that plan, were made known to the Irish public some weeks ago. I am not sure how long ago—perhaps a fortnight or three weeks—but it appeared in a newspaper, known to be of great weight and importance in Ireland. [*Ironical Parnellite cheers.*] Is there any question that *The Dublin Express* is a most important newspaper?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: It is not the organ of the Irish Government.

MR. GLADSTONE: I did not say the organ of the Government. I may have said it was an organ, but not that it was the organ of the Government. In this newspaper, to which it would appear that communications are sometimes made, there is a communication which I will not read to the House—first of all, that a Committee of the Cabinet had, with great care, prepared a plan of local government for Ireland; secondly, that this plan, having gone through the ordeal of the Committee, passed on to that which may be considered the final ordeal—namely, examination by the Cabinet itself, and that by the Cabinet itself it had been very considerably altered, showing it had been the subject of most important and definite consideration, and it sets out what were to be the principal conditions of this plan. It set out, on the one hand, that there were to be circles of Governments—wheels within wheels—and that while those county governments were to be behind county governments in England

in respect of not having control of police, they were to be before them in regard to their having apparently the supreme control of the great and vital, and, for Ireland, most important subject of primary education. I do not complain of Her Majesty's Government at this moment because their plans for Ireland may not happen to be precisely those which I should think ample and adequate for their purpose; but what I complain of is that I consider this plan to be a move backwards instead of forwards. There appears, from a source to which we have a right to ascribe importance, that early in January a plan is substantially prepared. ["No, no!"] If hon. Gentlemen would like to read this article, by all means let them do so. But I must say that, reading it and putting upon it the best interpretation I can, what I cannot but infer from it is this—that although the intention of bringing in a plan of local government, small or great, for Ireland has existed, yet it has receded into the shade. Using a phrase that has of late been rather popular, it has been gradually moving towards "the dim and distant future." What I would venture to say, and to press upon Her Majesty's Government, is this—that whatever is to be done for Ireland, whether you take Conservative organs, or whether you take Liberal or Nationalist organs—whatever is to be done for Ireland should be done with all the promptitude that the nature of the case demands. Besides the fact that the County Government Bill for Ireland is in the rear of the Representative Councils Bill for England, the right hon. Gentleman opposite has also informed us to-night that he proposes to proceed at once with the question of procedure. I myself have a very deep sense of the importance of the question; and I am almost prepared to say that I think considerable sacrifices might properly be made by this House for the purpose of dealing with procedure as a claim anterior to that of ordinary legislation. There remains behind the question whether the case of Ireland, as it now exists, is a question of ordinary legislation. The right hon. Gentleman will recollect, no doubt, that it cost us from 30 to 40 days of hard work to obtain the limited amount of reform in our procedure that we obtained in 1882. Is the right hon. Gen-

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tleman sanguine as to the prospect of making more rapid progress with that question than we made? One conclusion I most deliberately arrived at, and I give it him for what it may be worth. That was, that it is almost vain to hope to make serious progress, except with the command of the whole time of the House. We got command of the whole time of the House; but we got it in the month of October, and a pretty severe penalty we paid for it. I myself felt the fruits of it in the necessity for going abroad a couple of months after. But it is one thing to ask for the whole time of the House after the regular Business of the Session; it is another thing to ask for it when the Business of the Session is commencing. Do what he will, the right hon. Gentleman must make frequent interruptions of procedure in order to bring on his Estimates; and, above all, in order to get through the Supplementary Estimates, that portentous labour which of late years has added to the burdens of the House. All, however, that I now wish to say on the matter is, that I am afraid this is a further serious postponement of all attempts at legislation for Ireland. I do not ask the Government to study in my sense what the legislation for Ireland may be, or ought to be, even if my mind were made up on the subject; but I do not possess the means of making the inquiries that are necessary to any sound legislation. But I do ask Her Majesty's Government if they intend to give to Ireland the benefit of legislation, to let it be promptly known, and to give effect to it at the earliest possible moment. I wish I could have dealt with this question exactly as with the question of foreign policy, and have congratulated the Government on the discharge of its arduous duties. I am compelled, however, to say that I am unable, regarding these paragraphs as a whole, to say that they are so entirely sufficient and satisfactory. It is an excellent thing to say that you will maintain the unity of the Empire. In Heaven's name do maintain it with all your might! But we have been maintaining it for 85 years; and not only for 85 years since the Union, but for 660 years before. Something more is requisite. Whatever you think is adequate to the case, be it for social order, be it for local government, let us know, and let us know promptly,

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what it is. The obligations which I have described as incumbent on every Member in this great cause would compel us, even if we were more reluctant than we are, to entertain favourably the proposals which you may conscientiously recommend. What is here you cannot yourselves pretend to be altogether satisfactory. Our duty will not allow us to proceed to deal in any circumstances with the case of Ireland. It still remains our duty to listen to what others have to say, and to judge and to try it under the strictest and heaviest responsibility that ever lay on a Representative Assembly. You have most properly wound up your Speech by advising the Queen to express her confidence in a protection and a guidance for our acts better than any which our own unassisted faculties can supply. Let us remember the high and solemn appeal we have made to that guidance, and as in the face of Almighty God, to whose keeping we have been commended, so by taking care to observe all the laws and all the qualities by which, in any difficult and controverted matter, truth may sometimes be attained and benefits sometimes realized. Let us not deviate from that path of temper and self-command; but, forgetful of every prejudice, let us strive to do justice to the great, the varied, and the gigantic interests committed to our care.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BRACH): Sir, I desire, as my first duty, to congratulate my noble Friend (Viscount Curzon) the Mover and my hon. Friend (Mr. Houldsworth) the Seconder of the Address in reply to the Most Gracious Speech from the Throne, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, for the manner in which they have both fulfilled the task entrusted to them to-night. I was glad to hear those encouraging words which fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone) on this matter. I feel sure by what he has done to-night my noble Friend the Member for Southern Buckinghamshire has earned the right not only to rely on the indulgence, but on the desire of the House to hear him whenever he may take part in our debates; and my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Manchester, who is a comparatively old and tried Member among us, has, with his usual good sense and practical know-

ledge, placed before the House to-night the wants and wishes of the great commercial community which he represents. I wish, in the next place, to express our gratitude to the right hon. Gentleman opposite for the manner in which he has referred to the leading paragraphs of Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech. We acknowledged last summer the assistance which he rendered to the Government of the day by his remarks on the negotiations with Russia on the subject of the Zulfikar Pass; and I would venture again to thank him to-night for his reference to that matter, and to the action of Lord Salisbury in regard to the negotiations respecting Eastern Roumelia. I have no cause to complain either of the reference which the right hon. Gentleman made to the position of affairs in Egypt. He certainly expressed some doubt whether there was any evidence that the presence of a Turkish Commissioner in Cairo was likely to advance the interests of the country, or the settlement of the great questions pending there. Well, Sir, it is premature to discuss that subject in the absence of fuller information; but I think that we shall be able to show, not only that the association with us of the Suzerain Power of Egypt in the work to be done there, and the full recognition afforded by the presence of the Commissioner of the Porte of the right of England to do that work, is having a material effect for good, but also that, by the concerted action of the two Commissioners, matters of the greatest importance with reference to the frontier defences of that country are in active process of settlement. The right hon. Gentleman referred shortly to the paragraph in the Speech dealing with Burmah, and he questioned some general principles which he appeared to find in that paragraph. I can only say that, in framing that paragraph, it was not our object to lay down any general principle at all. It has reference simply to the circumstances of that particular case; and when, not long hence, my noble Friend fulfils the duty incumbent upon him of proposing, within a month of the meeting of Parliament, a Resolution authorizing the payment out of the Indian Revenues of the expenses of the Burmese War, and when the Papers on this subject are fully in the possession of the House, I think these two things will

be clear—first, that we had absolutely no choice as to the annexation of Upper Burmah; and, secondly, that if that annexation had been delayed, there would have been the gravest risk of serious injury to the political and commercial interests of this country in the East. The right hon. Gentleman further complained of the absence of special reference to any measure, except in the paragraph relating to the Glebe Lands Bill, for promoting the interests of the agricultural labourer, and also found some fault with the sentence relating to the Crofters Bill. I will only say, in reply to those remarks, that it is absolutely impossible to place before the House, in the compass of a paragraph in the Queen's Speech, any real information as to the contents of any Bills which it is our intention to introduce. If the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Jesse Collings), who has given Notice this evening of his intention to move an Amendment to the Address upon the subject of agricultural allotments, will wait for the measures which we have promised, I think he will find that if his wishes are not met, that will, at any rate, be a more convenient opportunity for raising this question than can be afforded by a discussion upon a paragraph in the Queen's Speech. The most important part of the speech, however, which the right hon. Gentleman has just delivered, is unquestionably that relating to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman referred to a sentence in the Address which he put forth to his constituents in September last, as expressing his opinion upon this great question. He reminded the House that he had, in that Address, dwelt strongly upon the necessity of granting enlarged powers of self-government to Ireland, but subject to the maintenance of the supremacy of the Crown, the unity of the Empire, and all the authority of Parliament necessary for the conservation of that unity; and he rather complained that this part of his address had not been animadverted upon by any of the principal speakers on our side.

MR. GLADSTONE: No; I was delighted, and expressed my satisfaction.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The right hon. Gentleman expressed satisfaction that this part of his address had not been unfavourably

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commented upon by any leading supporters of Her Majesty's Government. If I may speak for myself on that matter, I will frankly say that I abstained from commenting upon that part of the right hon. Gentleman's address, because I could not understand precisely what it was that the right hon. Gentleman meant by it. He has talked again to-night of the unity of the Empire; but evidently, in his mind, the "unity of the Empire" is consistent with the existence of a Parliament here and of another Parliament in Dublin; because he reminded us that the unity of the Empire had existed, not only for the last 85 years, but for 600 years before. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to refer to the speeches made by Lord Salisbury. I think that it was scarcely fair, when Lord Salisbury at Newport distinctly stated his own opinion that no scheme of federation of which he had ever heard was applicable to the circumstances of England and Ireland—I think it was hardly fair to suggest that Lord Salisbury referred to that proposal as a possible solution of the matter. The right hon. Gentleman quoted from the speech made by Lord Salisbury at the Mansion House; and he referred to the opinion then expressed by his Lordship on the importance of preserving the integrity of the Empire, and of protecting the rights of minorities in Ireland. But the right hon. Gentleman, in the address which he quotes to this House to-night as the definite expression of his opinion on that subject, said nothing about protecting the rights of the minorities in Ireland. I welcome his adhesion to that doctrine to-night; but I should have welcomed it more if he had agreed with us in believing that for the due preservation of the integrity of the Empire, and for the protection of the rights of the minority in Ireland, it is essential that the fundamental law of the Legislative Union between the two countries should be maintained. The right hon. Gentleman deprecated any further declaration with regard to this subject on his own part—he even said that any such declaration would be injurious. Sir, it seems to me that in this matter there is something more to be considered than the tactics of an old Parliamentary hand. I could not overrate the value to those persons in England, and much

more in Ireland, who are in favour of maintaining the Legislative Union between the two countries, of an outspoken and a frank declaration by the right hon. Gentleman, similar to that which has fallen from the noble Marquess the Member for North-East Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington), of his intention to maintain that Legislative Union, about which the right hon. Gentleman turned and twisted to-night, but with regard to which he said no definite word. We have thought it not only right, but necessary, in this most formal and solemn way, to express our determination as a Government upon this great question. That determination will not be welcome to hon. Members who follow the lead of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). They have a perfect right and sufficient ability to bring before this House their opinions with relation to this subject; and when the right hon. Gentleman suggested that, by advising the introduction of this paragraph in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, we were attempting to preclude the fair consideration of it by the House of Commons, he made a suggestion which is absolutely without foundation. We have thought it right to say what we think—it is for others, if they disagree with us, to bring forward their views here in that definite state which hitherto they have never assumed, and then we shall say what we think of them. The right hon. Gentleman must have had some trouble to convince himself that there was no necessity for a declaration from him on this question. I have referred to the greatest necessity of all; but was there no necessity for such a declaration, even from an old Parliamentary hand, for the guidance and comfort of his own Party? We all know to what the right hon. Gentleman referred to-night—to those rumours which have been in the air, those "unauthorized communications" made by unknown persons to irresponsible newspapers. What was it that induced the noble Marquess the Member for North-East Lancashire, in concert with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen), who sits near him, to write a formal letter to the public Press, to the effect that the noble Marquess saw no reason to depart in any degree from the declarations which he had made upon

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this subject? Why have we seen those impassioned utterances from pillars of the Liberal Party in the persons of two noble Dukes? Why was it necessary for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), when addressing a meeting the other evening, to go out of his way to say that, although no one was willing to make greater sacrifices than he was to secure the unity of the Liberal Party, there was one thing that he would not sacrifice, and that was the unity and the integrity of the Empire. I want to know what is to be the policy of the great Party opposite upon this important question? We have raised this matter plainly before the House and the country, in advising this paragraph in the Speech from the Throne; if they do not agree with us, let them move an Amendment to that effect. If they do agree with us, let them, through the mouth of someone who is authorized to speak on their behalf—if the right hon. Gentleman with all his authority will not do it—let them make a declaration of assent to our views. The right hon. Gentleman has charged us with hesitation in producing a measure dealing with county government in Ireland, and he referred to the most extraordinary myth which I think could ever have deceived any hon. Member of this House. The right hon. Gentleman really seems to believe that a statement of the kind which he quoted from *The Dublin Express* appearing in a newspaper of these days, especially in Ireland, was likely to be based upon the authority of Her Majesty's Government. Well, Sir, I have characterized that statement as a myth, and I can find no other description for it. If hon. Members agree with us in believing that it is necessary to maintain the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland, I think they will also be of opinion that no enlargement of the powers of local government in Ireland should be given which could be used as a lever to weaken and destroy that Legislative Union, or which would enable a majority—a political or social majority—to tyrannize over the minority of the people. If this be so, surely they will feel that the extent to which the reform of local government in Ireland should be granted, and the time at which it could be undertaken, must depend very largely indeed upon the con-

dition of Ireland and the feeling of the people. Now, what is the present condition of Ireland? I do not wish to give to the House an alarmist view of the matter. Experience has taught me that, in describing the condition of Ireland, Irishmen are apt to exaggerate and Englishmen to generalize very hastily from particular circumstances. But when the right hon. Gentleman charges us with having changed our policy towards Ireland since November last, I would venture to remind him of a speech of my own which I know he did me the honour to read, because he wrote to me upon it, in which, on September 30, I distinctly stated that it would be necessary for Her Majesty's Government, if the powers of the ordinary law were not sufficient to cope with the crime of "Boycotting," to apply to Parliament for further powers. Well, after that statement I think the right hon. Gentleman will feel that it is hardly fair to taunt us with having held our tongues for the sake of securing the support of the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his Friends until the General Election, which did not take place till the end of November, and then changing our policy to that indicated in this paragraph. The tone of the right hon. Gentleman, when referring to the failure of our attempt to dispense with exceptional powers, was, I thought, somewhat ungenerous. He spoke very differently when he addressed the House on this subject in July last. I acknowledged then the manner in which he referred to this important matter. If that attempt had failed, I, for one, should still be glad we had made it; because I feel strongly, as I then stated to the House, that the Government should do its best with the powers of the ordinary law, and should never resort to exceptional legislation without being abundantly satisfied of its necessity. But I contest the assertion that the course which we took in July last has been a complete failure.

MR. GLADSTONE: I did not say so.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: It has been asserted, and I thought the right hon. Gentleman said so.

MR. GLADSTONE: No; I did not say so. I derived it from the newspapers, and I believed it to be the common impression.

[First Night.]

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: There are two points which I feel bound to bring under the notice of the House. In the first place, we have advised Her Majesty to state, in this Speech, that there has been during the last year no marked increase of serious crime. That, Sir, is the case, in spite of the cessation of the Crimes Act during the last six months of the year, and in spite, also, of exceptional commercial and agricultural depression in Ireland. The facts with regard to agrarian crime and outrage are these:—In the last six months of 1885 there were 543 cases of agrarian crime and outrage in Ireland, as against 374 in the corresponding six months of 1884. But of those 543 cases, as many as 270 were cases of threatening letters and notices, which, as the right hon. Gentleman knows very well, have not hitherto been considered of great importance, and many others were by no means cases of serious crime. There was, taking the whole number of cases, a greater proportion of minor crime in the last six months of last year than in the last six months of 1884. But another very important fact, which is not mentioned in the Speech, ought to be stated, that the House may have the statistics of crime fairly before it. Offenders have been punished in Ireland during the last six months even in cases of "Moonlighting," and cases of the sort in which it has always been difficult to secure convictions in Ireland—even in these cases convictions have been obtained: and at the Winter Assizes there was not, so far as I know, a single important case in which there was a failure of justice; and these convictions were obtained through ordinary juries, although one of the proposals of the Crimes Act, which I believe it had been intended to renew, was the power to obtain special juries in these cases. I have felt it right to put these points fairly before the House, as affecting the social and material condition of Ireland; but I am bound to say that this is by no means—I wish it were—a complete picture of the state of the country. As we have advised Her Majesty to state in Her Speech—

"There is in many places a concerted resistance to the enforcement of legal obligations," by no means confined to matters affecting landlords and tenants, and—

"The practice of organized intimidation continues to exist."

I have always believed that neither of these could have been stopped, or would have been materially diminished, by the mere renewal of any parts of the Crimes Act, and for this simple reason—that both had grown up while the Crimes Act was in operation. We may be asked—and fairly asked—what measures have been taken by Her Majesty's Government in Ireland to deal with these serious offences? Well, Sir, where intimidation has manifested itself in language, action, or in any form of turbulence, prosecutions have been instituted. In the nine weeks ending January 2, 408 individuals were proceeded against at Petty Sessions for offences not amounting to actual outrage connected with "Boycotting." Of these 139 were summarily convicted, 110 were returned for trial, and 76 were adjourned for lengthened periods to test the promises of good behaviour in the future made by the persons charged. Therefore, the House will see that Her Majesty's Government have not been slack to enforce the ordinary law as far as it is possible against crimes of this description; but, notwithstanding this, as we are compelled to state in this paragraph, these evils are growing—and seriously growing—and, in our judgment, it is a matter of primary and urgent necessity for the welfare of Ireland that they should be put down. Whether it is possible to deal with them by any further application of the powers of the ordinary law, or whether it is necessary for the Government to ask Parliament to confer upon the Executive additional powers, are questions which will receive the immediate and earnest attention of my right hon. Friend the Member for the Strand Division of Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), who has, I think, with great patriotism and self-sacrifice, accepted a difficult and an anxious task at a very dangerous time. The right hon. Gentleman opposite twitted us with what he calls the "inconsequent conclusion" of the last sentence of this paragraph. I was surprised at such a taunt from the right hon. Gentleman; because, in 1870, when he was himself Prime Minister, he advised Her Majesty to express herself in similar language. He advised her to inform Parliament that the recent extension of agrarian crimes in several

parts of Ireland had filled Her Majesty with painful concern; that although the number of offences within that class of crimes had been by no means so great as at some former periods, the indisposition to give evidence in the administration of justice had been alike remarkable and injurious; and then he concluded by advising Her Majesty to state that she would not hesitate to recommend the adoption of special provisions should such a policy appear during the course of the Session to be required in the permanent interests of peace and order. The right hon. Gentleman at that time was accused of ambiguity of utterance and of postponing the protection of life and property to an attempt to deal with the law of land tenure, and what was his reply? His reply was, I think, not only sufficient, but complete. The right hon. Gentleman said—

"In the intension announced by the Government. . . . so far as that intension imposes a careful daily regard to the condition of Ireland, and their duty to propose everything which that condition requires, there is nothing ambiguous or contingent."—(3 *Hansard*, [199] 93.)

Well, Sir, that is my answer now. That is the duty which Her Majesty's Government feel it incumbent upon them to perform; but it is a duty which I will venture to remind the House we are called upon to perform in the face of no common difficulties. If it be true, as the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) some time ago pithily stated, that the result of the General Election has not been to place the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in the position that he desired, it is no less true that the result of the General Election was not satisfactory to Her Majesty's present Advisers. Sir, the verdict of the nation was uncertain. ["No, no!" and "Yes, yes!"] If it was not uncertain, move a Vote of Want of Confidence as an Amendment to the Address. I repeat, that the verdict of the nation was uncertain; and so we were compelled, not merely by a feeling of duty, but by Constitutional usage, to remain at our posts in a crisis of the gravest difficulty to the Empire. Well, Sir, we may not be strong in our own strength; but there is one opinion which I believe will receive the assent of every hon. Member of this House

—that nothing could be worse for our common country than that her affairs should be administered by a Government which is daily struggling for a precarious and doubtful existence. If the majority of this House dislikes our policy, if it distrusts our actions, let it say so as soon as may be, not for our sakes, but for the sake of the country. We shall know how to act. But if, on the other hand, it be the will of the majority of this House that we should remain in Office, then I would venture humbly, but most earnestly, to ask hon. Members, irrespective of Party divisions, whether, having come to that decision, they ought not to give to us that priceless strength which alone, by the sense of a free and independent support in the House of Commons, can enable any Ministers successfully to carry on the affairs of our country.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY said, it was well, at the outset of the debate, that they should reflect that the present Parliament was the consummation of one of the greatest revolutions which the Constitution had witnessed. It was a revolution brought about by the action of both political Parties. He was within the bounds of moderation when he held that scarcely ever in the history of Parliament had a Session been opened which excited more interest than the present. Having listened to the Speech from the Throne, and to those of the Leader of the Opposition and of the Leader of the House, he thought they must all come to the conclusion that the attitude of the two Parties in the State towards the great question of the hour showed that they were, as yet, only on the threshold of the Irish Question; and they had learned little of what would be the policy to which Her Majesty's Government had made up their minds, or that to which the Leader of the Opposition was coming, and to which he would direct his Party. They lived under a Constitution for which they had shed their blood, and to which they might look back with satisfaction. The revolution which had taken place now had been a silent and quiet one, there had been no tearing down of park railings, and yet nearly 3,000,000 voters had been added to the electoral roll of the country. The Reform Bill of 1832 had transferred political power from the aristocracy to the middle class; and a

further change had been made in 1886 in the direction of giving a vote to the working classes. Now, although he might deplore that many parts of his own county had departed from the old Constitutional attitude which they had maintained under a more restricted franchise, at the same time many on the other side of the House would regret that a large amount of the new voters in the South-East of England had proclaimed their adherence to Constitutional principles. They did not know what would be the definite result of the revolution in the future; but one thing had been satisfactorily proved—namely, that the agricultural labourer was not the degraded and unhappy being whom hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House had been so fond of depicting. He thought that they might congratulate themselves that there had been so few spoilt papers in the elections. A time would come when the agricultural labourer would find out that the Government of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone) had not been altogether perfect, or altogether successful, and would find out that the interests of employer and employed were more closely united than they now considered. The result of the late change had been that they had broadened the basis on which the Constitution rested. With regard to education, much would be done by the fact of the labourer being entrusted with a vote, and being called upon to discriminate between the two Parties in the State, and by feeling that he was no longer outside the pale of the Constitution. The result of this change, if it was to be worth anything, must be that fuller expression would be given to the general feeling of the country. In the present, the labourer had, at all events, exercised his vote independently, and he hoped that the labourers' wants and desires would receive careful consideration at the hands of the House. No one, however, would say that the Parliaments of the last 50 years had done nothing for the benefit of the working classes. They had passed Factory Acts, Acts for the better Housing of the Working Classes, and for removing the disabilities under which working men laboured. The relation of labour to capital had been greatly improved, and the late Sir Robert Peel

had greatly benefited the working classes by removing taxes on industry and by freeing the importation of corn. Still, there was no doubt that the effect of the recent change would be that the wishes of this class would be more closely attended to. It was, perhaps, difficult to ascertain the precise wishes of the rural population; but the three acres and a cow, of which they had heard so much, were really the expression of a desire on the part of the agricultural labourer to have more share in the land on which he lived. There could be no doubt that the consolidation of farms had divorced the labourer from the soil to a very large extent; but by the action of individual proprietors, and of local authorities, he hoped that allotments might be more easily granted than before. With regard to education, he hoped that nothing would be done which would tend to diminish the self-reliance of the labourer, and that the Commission would look carefully into this matter before they gave him free education. As to local taxation, the producer should have that relief given to him which Parliament had again and again said it was right that he should have. He was glad to see that the Procedure of the House had been put in the forefront of matters to be dealt with, since great impatience had lately been shown at the inability of Parliament to deal with the questions submitted to it. He trusted the result of the proposals of the Government with regard to Procedure would be to increase the efficiency and popularity of the House of Commons. In this connection they had to look to the change in the composition of Parties of the House of Commons, and especially to the growth and policy of the Irish Party, whose aim it was to gain entire control for Irishmen over Irish affairs, and practically to loosen all connection of Ireland with England. ["No, no!"] The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had, at all events, avowed such a programme. ["Never!"] It was something to get that denial; because such a programme would mean a hostile country at our doors and the reduction of England to the position of a second or third-rate Power. They had certainly heard with dismay that the hon. Member for Leeds, a relative of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid

Sir John Kennerley

Lothian, had openly announced that if five-sixths of the Members for Ireland desired a local Parliament they certainly ought to have one. Then it was announced, with the semblance of authority, that the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to endorse the sentiments of his son on this subject. ["No, no!"] It certainly was announced with the semblance of authority. ["No, no!"] He must say, from what they had seen and heard of the sentiments of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to other matters, it was not very difficult for them to believe that he was prepared to take this step; and in saying that he did not at all accuse the right hon. Gentleman of sympathy with revolution. He (Sir John Kennaway) hoped the two great Parties in the State would put away recrimination and mutual charges of misgovernment of Ireland, and that they would rather admit that they had both committed inconceivable folly in allowing Ireland to be the battle-field of Party politics. Let whichever Party could best carry out what was right in this matter carry it out, and receive the support of both sides of the House, recognising, in view of a crisis like the present, that however good and useful service Party government had done, there were occasions when duty to the country rose above Party. He trusted they would endeavour to do what was right in dealing with Ireland. They should carry out the spirit of the motto, "Be just and fear not." Let them be just to the minority of the Irish people, who needed the protection of the Government. Let them be just to the landlords, who had purchased their lands under the sanction of Imperial title. If the law was not strong enough for that purpose, it might be strengthened; only if it was to be strengthened, let it become more general in its application, so as to reflect as little as possible upon the Irish people. Let them give to Ireland, as they had given to Scotland, control over educational questions. Let them make effective the Land Purchase Act of last year, and let them not hesitate to make use of Imperial resources to enable tenants to become owners of the land. If they approached the subject with an earnest desire to do what was right they might leave the result to a higher power.

MR. T. O. HARRINGTON said, that the last speaker had not done anything to meet the objection taken that the House had not sufficient information to deal with the questions raised. Special prominence had been given in the Speech of Her Majesty to the change that had taken place in Ireland recently with regard to crime. It was a very strange fact that every Government which undertook the control of Ireland was able at any time it suited them to make the statistics of crime suit the policy it wished to adopt. When it suited the Government to represent to the English and Irish people that exceptional powers of legislation outside the ordinary law were not necessary the statistics of crime in the country were regulated accordingly, and it was represented that there was a diminution of crime, and that Ireland was progressing in peace if not in prosperity; but so soon as the General Election was over, and so soon as the party of prejudice and disorder, and the party which had encouraged and sown the seeds of crime in Ireland, found it necessary, not in defence of good government or the integrity of the Empire as they pretended, but to defend their own narrow interests, they had endeavoured to prejudice the Government by lies and misrepresentation of the foulest character. He was not going to deny that there was a certain amount of turbulence and crime in some parts of the country, which must be deplored by every man who loved his country; but he maintained that during the past five or six months there had been less crime in Ireland than there had been at any period during the last five or six years. Even the most disordered portions of Ireland would compare favourably with the best and most moral portions of England or Scotland. It was true that attention had been directed to the relations of landlord and tenant; but it was not because of "Boycotting," but rather on account of the conspiracy got up by the advisers of the Government, who did not hesitate, for the sake of their own selfish interests, to endanger the safety of the Empire and the welfare of both countries. When they asked Englishmen to support the integrity of the Empire they aimed at the continuance of a system which would place a whip in the hands of Irish landlords. In England and Scotland enormous reductions of rent had

been assented to, and there was nothing in Ireland that would enable the tenant farmer to meet his obligations more easily than the English farmer. The House was asked to lend its sanction to a conspiracy got up by the Irish landlords to turn the people of Ireland out of their homes, and to cast them adrift on the world. In support of the alleged divisions in the Liberal Party the noble Marquess, one of the Leaders of the Opposition, was pointed to as having made a speech in favour of what was called the unity and integrity of the Empire in opposition to the demand for Home Rule; but it was well-known that a relation of the noble Marquess was a President of a so-called Loyal and Patriotic Union which was one of the conspiracies got up for the purpose of driving the Irish people from their homes. The Marquess of Salisbury had declared that the ordinary law was unable to cope with "Boycotting," and it had grown up under the Crimes Act. It was not unknown in London—in the City of London—in connection with the Primrose League. But none of the specific cases of alleged "Boycotting" in Ireland which had been mentioned by the recent deputations to the Marquess of Salisbury would bear the test of examination; one by one every statement made had been flatly contradicted. Lawlessness and disorder were to be found in the Loyalist Unions and Emergency Associations, whose object was to drive people from their homes; and a noble Lord who stood high in the estimation of Ministers, who thought it his special rôle to patronize them and suggest their Irish policy, had declared that it was the duty of himself and of his followers not to leave a Roman Catholic in the Province of Ulster. [Mr. Johnston: Name, name! *Cries of "Order!" and "Cole!"*] He (Mr. Harrington) was utterly surprised to find hon. Gentlemen opposite interrupt him by calling out "Name!" Those Gentlemen, who so carefully read the speeches of the various National League meetings, seemed not to pay any attention whatever to the observations of men like Lord Cole. If, therefore, hon. Gentlemen were ignorant on the subject of such speeches having been made he would read the speech of Lord Cole, made in Fermanagh. In that speech he said—

Mr. T. C. Harrington

"It is not the Roman Catholic himself that I object to as a neighbour or friend, but it is to the Roman Catholics as a body."

That was certainly very gratifying—his Lordship did not care about the extermination of one Roman Catholic, for it would not effect his purpose.

MR. JOHNSTON: Will the hon. Gentleman kindly—[*Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is entitled to proceed without interruption.

MR. T. C. HARRINGTON: This noble Lord did not object to one Roman Catholic; but if all Roman Catholics had only one head his Lordship would be glad to cut it off and dispose of them all. His Lordship continued—

"Because when a body of men deliver themselves over to one man, and show themselves to be so mean-spirited, low-minded, and weak, that they have no opinions of their own, but rely on the opinion of one man, and that man their priest, it is my opinion that they ought not to be allowed to have the power in their own hands in this great country."

The noble Lord had also made other similar observations, and proceeded to say—

"For that reason do I preach this crusade against Catholics;"

and further,

"I say, therefore, to you farmers, employ more Protestants, and don't employ Roman Catholics."

They had heard a great deal about "Boycotting." The Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of the growth and extent of "Boycotting." If exceptional powers were given to the Government, would they use them impartially, and would they prosecute Lord Cole for this inflammatory speech? He challenged the Government to show on the popular side during recent agitation any speech approaching to that of Lord Cole in cowardliness, violence, meanness, and lawlessness. They had no objection that the best safeguards should be devised for the protection of the minority; but he was of opinion that if it were not for their own selfish class interests, for the belief that their privileges might be curtailed, and that the patronage they enjoyed as the humble followers of one Government or another in this country might be taken away, gentlemen of the character of Lord Cole would rather trust themselves to a Government of the

majority of their fellow-countrymen than to a Government of this country. The language which had been used by Lord Cole was only the plain expression of a feeling which had been entertained by the landlords of Ireland during the past six months. They had seen an organized system of eviction going on throughout the country; but instead of attention being directed to the landlords, the poor peasantry had received the exclusive attention of the Government, notwithstanding the fact that in these hard times it was impossible for the tenants to pay the rents which they had hitherto paid. That fact had been forced on the attention of the landlords in England; but the landlords of Ireland, instead of meeting the tenants in the same spirit as the English landlords, had been allowed to form themselves into a conspiracy to evict the people from their holdings. The landlord, of course, in pursuing such a policy was held to be carrying out the law; but the unfortunate people who found themselves totally unable to meet their obligations were described in the English journals as lawless mobs. He contended that the unfortunate people of Ireland were as ready now as they had been in the past to fulfil their engagements if they had an opportunity of doing so. He regretted to say that so far from there being any doubt about this the misfortunes of the people had been brought about, to a great extent, by their readiness to meet the demands of the landlords. While it was possible to borrow money from the money-lender or banker, or while their credit lasted, they had been giving their all to the most unjust and most merciless class on God's earth. If the House thought that exceptional powers given to the Government would wring out of the life-blood of the unfortunate peasantry of Ireland more than they were able to pay, if they believed that by coercion they would make the land of Ireland more productive than it was at the present time, by all means let the Government attempt the task. But he, as having some knowledge of the country, as having been through a period of trial and of difficulty at the head of the organization which had been attacked, knew different. The efforts of this organization had been directed towards the repression of disorder. ["Oh, oh!"]

He challenged any hon. Member to point to one letter which he had written or a speech which he had made which might be regarded as an incentive to crime or outrage. He maintained that the best efforts of the organization had been directed to keep the people peaceable and orderly; and he told the Government that so far from any policy of repression contributing to the peace of the country, instead of diminishing crime or abolishing "Boycotting," crime would be increased five-fold. He urged the Government not to be led away by the false and malicious representations which had been made to them. They might render the situation difficult to Irish Members; they might drive them from the country; but the Government must not lose sight of this fact, that it was not with the Irish Members, but with the country behind them that they had to deal.

Mr. BRODRICK said, he thought the speech they had heard showed the House what was the commentary to be made on the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and the condition to which the three Provinces of Ireland had been reduced under a policy of conciliation. The hon. Member who spoke last referred to the Province of Ulster, and called in question the language of a noble Lord lately a Member of that House, and whose language he represented as having been of a character to incite the people of that country almost to bloodshed. He wished the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had been present to have seen by practical and ascertained facts what was likely to be the condition of Ireland should the policy which he practically hinted at that evening be adopted by the House. It should be known once for all that the solution of the Home Rule problem did not consist solely in a certain amount of concession to the views of hon. Members opposite, but in bringing one portion of the people of Ireland into direct conflict with three other portions. He recollected a speech made by a Gentleman who held a high position in the organizations which had been referred to. The hon. Member for East Galway (Mr. Harris) made a speech which he (Mr. Brodrick) thought proper to bring before the notice of the Government of that day. The speech was delivered in 1881.

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The hon. Gentleman then declared that if the landlords were shot down like partridges in September he would say nothing against it. As to the assertion that there was a conspiracy on the part of the landlords, and from that the outrages and the difficulties with which the Government had to contend resulted, was it not the fact that if the landlords had the power of eviction the tenants had the power of obtaining a judicial rent and also large damages for disturbance? There had, he said, been intimidation by the National League at every polling-booth in Ireland. In many cases the people were brought up to the poll by their priests, and they had to deliver their votes openly before a member of the League who was in the polling-booth. The majority by which Irish Members sat on the Benches opposite was a cooked majority. The number who claimed the privilege of voting as illiterate electors was actually in excess of the number of illiterate electors returned in the Census. The hon. Member for East Kerry (Mr. Sheehan), in a speech delivered a fortnight or three weeks ago, advised the tenants to insist on getting 30 per cent off their rent then, or to get 50 per cent off next March; and by the next rent day after that there would be no rent at all. It was perfectly well-known that not one-tenth of the outrages committed in Ireland ever reached the ears of the police. When an appeal to the constituted authorities involved persecution against which the law failed to protect a man, there must be a large proportion of outrages which were never brought to the knowledge of the police. He regretted that the Government had used language last July which tended to encourage the National League in the belief that they were not about to vindicate the law. He did not say that the Government had failed in their duty in the last six months, so far as the ordinary law was concerned; but the convictions showed that it was not the will of the Government but the power of the law that was deficient. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian had declared that the paragraph in the Queen's Speech in which the Government stated their intentions as regarded Ireland was not altogether as clear as the House might desire; but he asked—was the late Prime Minister's own speech that

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night clear to any Member of the House? The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had made a straightforward and outspoken speech; but was not the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite a "contingent and shilly-shally speech?" It was impossible to tell what the right hon. Gentleman would do. He withheld his counsel and invited hon. Members opposite from Ireland to state their demands. He laid down limits that appeared to be dubious as to his own power of concession. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman of what were some of the demands of Irish Members opposite. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), addressing the Irish Volunteers in America, in 1882, said—

"Oh, that I could carry those arms to Ireland! Well, but it may come to that some day. None of us will be satisfied till we have destroyed the last link that keeps Ireland bound to England."

Was not that a sufficiently definite assurance of what the policy of the hon. Gentleman would be? Did the right hon. Gentleman opposite think that O'Donovan Rossa and James Stephens would give their dollars to sustain a Parliament that would be friendly to England? Did the right hon. Gentleman opposite think that the policy which he refused distinctly to discard would be acceptable to an English Parliament? Whatever the policy of Irish Members opposite might be, it was certainly not a backward policy, but an advancing one, and one of its objects had been plainly avowed to be to get the ownership of the land for the people of Ireland. The irresistible conclusion to be drawn from the language of the right hon. Gentleman opposite was that he was undergoing one of those processes of conversion which he invariably underwent when the newness of his last conversion was gone. In the magnificent peroration he had given them that night Democratic sentiment, Communism, and Conservatism were all mingled. They all knew what almost invariably followed on such declarations from the right hon. Gentleman. They knew that he had incubated if the egg was not hatched; and they would soon see the result. The right hon. Gentleman said that 15 years ago he held language similar to that he used at present as to local government in Ireland.

That remark conflicted entirely with the right hon. Gentleman's own statement in 1873, when he appealed to the House to pass a University Bill on the ground that it would remove the last social grievance to be found in Ireland. Each of the right hon. Gentleman's great measures had been introduced with the solemn promise that it would be the last one required to secure complete contentedness in Ireland; whereas each of them had left that country more dissatisfied and nearer to revolution than before. What then, it might be asked, were the prospects that any measure of local government for Ireland which the right hon. Gentleman might be willing to support was likely to be final? The result of all the healing Irish measures that the right hon. Gentleman opposite had induced Parliament to pass was that at the recent General Election not a single Liberal candidate had been elected for Ireland. He warned the House against embarking in the fruitless chase of seeking to produce contentment in Ireland by means of concession. When the right hon. Gentleman opposite talked of maintaining the supremacy of the Crown, the unity of the Empire, and the authority of Parliament, did he mean that that was consistent with establishing a Parliament on College Green? The right hon. Gentleman was scarcely justified in twitting Her Majesty's Government with a paragraph which had appeared in an Irish newspaper when he had himself failed to disavow the policy which had been attributed to him in a London newspaper, and which had struck terror into the hearts of his political Friends. The fact was that the right hon. Gentleman was sitting on the rail, willing to be knocked over on either side, and waiting to see whether the Members of his Party would accompany him. The right hon. Gentleman in the action he was pursuing might be paving the way for the disruption of the Liberal Party. When the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had charged the Liberal Party with having no policy, the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) had laughed and sneered and scoffed. But they all knew what was the policy of the right hon. Member for Derby. He always waited to see which way the wheel turned, and had been aptly described as "the High Priest of

the Jumping Cat," whose shrine was the only one at which the right hon. Gentleman had ever yet been known to worship. He did not believe that this system of waiting upon opportunity would recommend itself to the English people. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his speech that evening had taken up the strong ground that Her Majesty's Government would not consent to remain in Office unless the powers necessary for the proper government of Ireland were conferred upon them, and the country was waiting to hear what was the policy of those who were anxious to take their place. The Irish Party in that House were strong; but no Government could exist for a moment which was prepared to purchase their support. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was certainly not responsible for the interpretations which it suited some hon. Members opposite to put upon the action of the Irish voters in this country during the recent elections, inasmuch as before the Dissolution of the late Parliament his speeches had shown that he was not prepared to take any share in the government of Ireland unless the necessary powers were conferred upon the Government to enable them to maintain law and order in that country. He hoped that both Parties in that House in dealing with this question would be influenced by considerations of right and justice, and would not permit themselves to be swayed by any hope of securing the votes of the Irish Members. The country, however, would be enabled to judge by the speeches which had been made that night from both Benches on which side of the House it was most likely that weakness on this question would be shown. He trusted and believed that Her Majesty's Government would pursue the line of policy with regard to Ireland which they had laid down, and would so deserve and receive the support of Parliament and of the country.

MR. ALBERT GREY remarked that he had been much disappointed at the speeches which had been delivered by the right hon. Gentlemen the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Leader of the Opposition. They had met at the opening of a new Parliament to confront a great national crisis, and they had to take into consideration two great facts,

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the first being that in three-fourths of Ireland the government of the League was supreme and the Queen's writ did not run; and the second being that an overwhelming proportion of the Irish Representatives had openly declared that they were resolved not to relax their efforts until they had secured the legislative independence of their country. What were the steps taken by Her Majesty's Government in face of a crisis such as that? They had introduced into the Queen's Speech an ambiguous sentence, and they seemed to have no other recourse than to send the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) to Ireland to see the state of the country for himself, and to make a Report to them. This was an exceedingly feeble line of action for the Government to take. The very moment they wanted the Report they sent the Reporter; and what an insult it was to their own officers in Ireland! What were Lord Ashbourne and Mr. Plunket doing? Could not the Government trust their Reports? Were they determined to rule Ireland entirely through English eyes that they must send the right hon. Gentleman to report? Was it not a condemnation on themselves that they should be obliged to wait until the right hon. Gentleman had prepared his Report before they could decide what steps they would take for the enforcement of the law in the disturbed parts of Ireland? As to Home Rule, he was glad that the Queen's Speech rang with no uncertain note—namely, an unalterable and determined resolve to maintain the Legislative Union. On this point he could find no fault with Her Majesty's Government; but he objected to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, because it contained no distinct announcement of a determination on his part that he also was resolved to uphold the Legislative Union. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he would not have his hand forced. The crisis was so great that the hand of every Member of that House ought to be forced, so that the country should know who was or who was not in favour of Home Rule. Having listened attentively to his speech, he was afraid that if the closed hand of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian were to be forced, there would be found in it a Parliament on

College Green. He was surprised that so old a Parliamentary hand as the right hon. Gentleman, while inviting the Irish Members to give full expression to their views, should have sought, by his advice, to put a muzzle upon the mouths of the Liberal Party upon this question. Why should the Representatives from Ireland be invited to speak, and the Representatives from Great Britain be urged to keep silent? He trusted that they would hear from the other Leaders of the Liberal Party a clear and distinct statement of their views upon this question. He hoped the noble Lord (the Marquess of Hartington) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) would get up and announce their determination to uphold, by every means in their power, the Legislative Union. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian expressed a hope that in their debates they would not allow any hot or angry feelings to disturb the calm consideration of the great questions at issue. He earnestly hoped that such would be the case. But what did the country expect at this crisis? It expected the absence of Party recrimination; that there should be an indifference on the part of Members as to what set of men might enjoy the sweets of Office; and that they should approach this great crisis with an absolute and unalterable determination to uphold the Legislative Union, and to restore Ireland to the authority of the Queen.

Mr. JOHNS said, he rose with a great deal of diffidence to dissent entirely from the doctrine which had just been enunciated by the last speaker. He was one of those who thought that it was not for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) to open his hand or to raise his voice; but it was for the Chancellor of the Exchequer and right hon. Gentlemen who sat on the opposite Benches to say what was to be done for Ireland. It was no part of the duty of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) to say what course ought to be pursued. As a young Member of the House he (Mr. Johns) had listened with a good deal of respect to much which had fallen from hon. Members in the course of the debate; but he must certainly confess that he had been somewhat astonished at the remarks which had been made by the

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hon. Member for the Guildford Division of Surrey (Mr. Brodrick). If they were to take the language of the hon. Member as the standard upon which they were to prosecute their debates in that House, he was afraid that their deliberations would deteriorate very materially from those which had taken place in previous years. He certainly did not understand, politically, what "a jumping cat" meant. Possibly the hon. Member did; but, if so, he ought to have acquainted the House with what his exact meaning was. He (Mr. Johns) thought that all that had fallen from the hon. Member for the Guildford Division was a condemnation of the Queen's Speech. He did not know whether the remarks of the hon. Member were intended to be delivered in support of Her Majesty's Ministers; but most assuredly they were as strong a condemnation of the Queen's Speech as could have been uttered, although the hon. Gentleman dealt only with the paragraphs which related to Irish matters. Allusion had been made to the political utterances of Viscount Oole in Ireland. If his (Mr. Johns') memory served him, Lord Cole had never been looked upon as a very discreet man, and could scarcely be regarded as a shining political light. A good deal had been said as to "Boycotting." He happened to hail from an agricultural constituency, and he was sorry to say that in the centre of England a good deal of "Boycotting" was going on at present. He regretted to add that the whole of it emanated from the Party who sided with hon. Gentlemen opposite. The Tories were in full swing in North Warwickshire, "Boycotting" all who had supported him. He hoped that hon. Members opposite would communicate with their friends and supporters in that district and intimate to them that "Boycotting" was as undesirable a process in England as in Ireland, and that it ought to be terminated as speedily as possible. If exceptional legislation had to be adopted in reference to Ireland upon this particular question of "Boycotting," he, for one, asked that it should be extended to the whole of the United Kingdom as well as to Ireland. He did not believe in exceptional legislation for Ireland so long as "Boycotting" was allowed to remain a marked feature in the Midland Counties of England. He

thanked the House for having permitted him to offer these brief observations.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE: Mr. Speaker, there is one subject in respect to which I can contribute something towards this debate. It is a subject which has received some prominence in the Queen's Speech, and has been repeatedly mentioned by hon. Members this evening. It is the annexation of Burmah. I have listened with the utmost respect to all that fell this evening from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). I shall not presume to follow him into the abstract principles which he adduced, nor attempt to argue as to how far a civil wrong may constitute a *casus belli*, nor whether the desire of mercantile expansion would justify a certain degree of aggressiveness. I shall rather try to apply specifically those principles to practical politics, and to present the actual case as it occurred for the judgment of this House. I was Lord Canning's Special Commissioner, in 1860, for the formation and constitution of the Province now known as British Burmah, and for that purpose I travelled over the country. I have subsequently governed Bengal Provinces adjacent to Burmah. Therefore, I have personal knowledge of the subject upon which I am about to address the House briefly. Looking over the 25 years—a quarter of a century has elapsed since the establishment of British Burmah in 1860—and considering all that has happened in that space, I know—as all India knows, as everyone experienced in the East knows also—that the recent annexation of the Kingdom of Ava, or Burmese Proper, to the British Dominions was just, timely, and expedient. The Burmese King of Ava was bound to us by peculiar bonds of political obligation. His relations with us were of an intimate character, unlike any relations which he had, or possibly could have, with any other Power. He was not exactly under our protectorate; but he was, since the several wars which his Predecessors had with us, peculiarly situated both as regards the alliance he could give us, or the support which we could afford to him. In that special situation he, and some of his Predecessors too, pursued a course of consistent hostility; at first, petty hostility indeed, but, by degrees, assuming graver and graver proportions,

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till it was about to burst out into a flame, when the British Government was obliged to extinguish it forcibly. The Resident at his Court, the accredited Agent of the British Government, was so slighted that he had to be withdrawn. British subjects were maltreated; British steamers were detained by violence in Burmese rivers; Hill tribes under British control were claimed as Burmese subjects; brigandage was suffered to break out in troublesome vicinity to British territory. Shocking massacres of portions of the King's own family were perpetrated by his own orders. The humane world began to say that these horrors were preventable, and to ask how long England would stand by and see such atrocities committed without any attempt at prevention? Even these events, taken by themselves, might not have necessitated armed intervention; but they were accompanied by a long series of intrigues with Foreign Powers in Europe, conducted under cover of Commercial Conventions. As loyal and patriotic Englishmen, we may hesitate to allude to these transactions with much of particularity; and there is always a need for caution and reserve in touching on relations of some delicacy with Foreign Powers. But we are informed that a Blue Book containing a mass of official Correspondence relating to Burmah will be shortly presented to this House. How far those Papers will explain or illustrate these transactions we cannot yet say, till we shall have studied the Blue Book. But there is sure to be shown quite enough to indicate to those who can read between the lines that, for several years, the Burmese Sovereign, or the Court of Ava, had been endeavouring to set up indirectly some foreign European Ally within Burmah Proper which could be used as a fulcrum against the long-established British influence in that Kingdom, or the Upper Valley of the Irawaddy, and as a lever ultimately for expelling the British from British Burmah, or the Lower Valley of the Irawaddy. Perhaps these sinister endeavours may have, in some degree, been thwarted by the action—loyal to us—of the European Powers thus appealed to. Partly, also, English diplomatic pressure in Europe may have been of some avail. Still, the Burmese King persisted in introducing foreign European agency on a large scale into his Dominions, evi-

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dently with the view of onlisting the European Governments, of which those Agents were the subjects, on the Burmese side as against the British. These measures were fast maturing into accomplished facts had it not been for the prompt intervention by force of the British Government. During last autumn the matter had become so urgent that there was hardly a day to be lost. In Burmah, too—as we have but too often found elsewhere—the season for military operations is very short. This much, I am confident, will be perceived by this House as soon as the Blue Book shall be read. As a climax, there was the affair of the Bombay and Burmah Trading Company. No doubt, that was a grave civil wrong. Though it was no ordinary case, though its magnitude was wide, extending over a large area of country, affecting the staple of Burmese production—teak timber—though it was closely connected with the Burmese Sovereign himself, still it alone might not have rendered necessary a recourse to arms. It was the connection which this case had with our political relations that brought about the necessity of war. The case, indeed, was as a link in a long-drawn chain of injury and insult to the British nation, or as a spark igniting a mass that had been rendered combustible by provocation. Military operations, then, were the only means of settling affairs which, remaining unsettled, would have involved us in inextricable complications with Foreign Powers. Sir, besides the justice and reasonableness of our action there is the expediency. Such expediency relates to the interests of the Burmese population. That portion of this population which inhabits British Burmah, or the Lower Irawaddy, is benefited by the freedom and security of the trade with the Upper Irawaddy, on which national interests depend, and which was constantly interrupted by anarchy at Ava. That portion which inhabits the Upper Irawaddy, or Burmah Proper, is benefited by the substitution of British administration for the cruel and inefficient rule of the Burmese King. The hon. Member for North-West Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth), who this evening seconded the Address in reply to the Queen's Speech, showed, by statistics, the amazing improvement wrought in British Burmah within the last 20 years. By that summary this

House can measure the progress which will take place in Burmah Proper, recently annexed. Under Providence, the annexation will be fraught with blessing to a Burmese population already considerable, and capable, under our just rule, of multiplying, to replenish a fertile area now half-waste through misrule. These advantages will be secured to them at a slight sacrifice to us. A comparatively small force will suffice for garrisoning the country. Such a force would cause no perceptible drain on the military resources of India. We shall, indeed, have one more wild and mountainous frontier in our Eastern Empire. But who that has witnessed the triumphs of British management on the Trans-Indus borders, in the Himalayan States, in Assam, on the Lushai Hills, can doubt that we shall easily settle the new border between Burmah and China? That which has been so well done in the upper regions of the Indus, the Ganges, and the Brahmaputra, we may now do in the upper regions of the Irawaddy. This frontier, too, will touch China, becoming the first point of contact between the British-Indian Empire and China Proper. With the capacity and potentiality of China, who shall venture to estimate the vastness of the commercial result that may arise hereafter from such a contact? There will also be Chinese immigration into Upper Burmah; and we know what that will be from our experience of what that immigration has been, and is, in Lower Burmah. The emigration of the Chinese from China towards the United States has been checked—that towards Australia is likely to be checked also. It will now have an unchecked flow into Burmah; and there it will have free play for development. All this will happen as among the consequences of a just and necessary war, rapidly, easily, and cheaply conducted. While entirely deprecating aggressiveness for the sake of any advantage, however precious, yet if the justice and necessity be indisputable, as they are in this case, I am not ashamed to express my joy at finding that in these days of profitless trade something considerable has occurred in Burmah that may help to lift our commerce out of the slough of depression. Sir, before I sit down I will allude to one more passage in the

Gracious Speech from the Throne. I rejoice to see that the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) proposes an inquiry by this House as to the results of the Indian administration since the Crown assumed the government of India, nearly 30 years ago. This inquiry implies no disparagement whatever to the noble progress which has been attained in India during that time. But it does imply that we may still direct this progress into higher walks of social or political advancement, and towards movements of a character affecting the self-education of the Indian people in the best and loftiest sense. It is true, on the one hand, that, as responsible for the defence of the country, we must keep in our own hands the supreme direction of affairs. In that we can admit of no participation; and, therefore, we must have Europeans in those posts which demand British-born capacity. But short of this, on the other hand, we should try to promote Natives more and more in the Public Service, always without prejudice to the rights of the European officers actually in that Service. We should improve the salary, furlough, and pension rules for Native officials. We should raise the Natives of India more and more to positions in which they will feel responsible for evincing energy, self-reliance, and promptitude. This is, indeed, that practical education which lasts through life. But, further, we should impart national education to them as forming a nation. Such education consists in teaching them the art of self-government in local affairs, in inducing them to take a lively interest in the management of their Provincial concerns, in causing them to perform those many honorary duties which are performed by municipal magnates in our British towns at home, and by the country gentlemen in our counties—in cautiously introducing among them the municipal franchise primarily, and afterwards that elective or electoral system which is the life of our body politic. In guiding aright the legitimate aspirations which they now have, and in inspiring them with an ambition yet nobler than any which they now possess, we shall imbue them with a real loyalty, of which we had an earnest the other day, when hostilities with Russia were threatened; and we shall render them,

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as a mighty mass, a source of strength to the British Empire at large.

MR. PARNELL: I do not intend to add to the heat which the hon. Member for the Guildford Division of Surrey (Mr. Brodrick) imported into the debate a short while ago. In dealing with his speech I will only say that I do not think that the hon. Member was either fair or accurate in the references he made to some of my Friends and also to myself. The hon. Gentleman was certainly not fair to the hon. Member for the Eastern Division of Galway (Mr. Harris) when, in reading from a speech alleged to have been made by him a great many years ago, in support of the accusations brought so freely by the hon. Member for the Guildford Division of Surrey in his speech to-night, that hon. Member omitted to tell the House a fact which, I think, must have been within his cognizance—namely, that the hon. Member for East Galway apologized for, and withdrew, every word of the speech complained of, on the first opportunity he could find, afterwards. I think it was not fair to my hon. Friend that, under these circumstances, this old speech should have been brought up in judgment against him and against the Irish Members to-night without the additional information being afforded by the hon. Member which, I submit, it was both in the hon. Member's power to afford, and which it was equally his duty, under the circumstances, in dealing with the grave situation of affairs in Ireland, to have vouchsafed to the House. Neither was the hon. Member correct in his reference to me. He was both inaccurate and vague. He tells us that it was stated in the English newspapers that I was reported in an American newspaper to have made a speech in America in 1882. The hon. Member will forgive me for reminding him that I was not in America in 1882. [MR. BRODRICK: In 1881.] Nor in 1881. I was in America neither in 1881 nor in 1882, for I had the misfortune to be in a rather different place, and I certainly was not in a position to make the speech of which the hon. Member complains. I will only say, in leaving the hon. Member, that when the hon. Member goes back to rake up speeches which he alleges to have been reported in certain newspapers he might, perhaps, occupy a little of his time in making perfectly certain as to

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his facts and as to his dates. I prefer, Sir, rather to imitate the spirit displayed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) in dealing with this question; and I desire to acknowledge to the fullest extent that that right hon. Gentleman has approached the question to-night in a manner worthy of the traditions which attach to his name and to the great power he possesses. The right hon. Gentleman has invited me, at some future time, to state the demands which are made by more than five-sixths of the Representatives of Ireland in regard to the government of their country, and I have no doubt that such an opportunity would be found at the proper moment. For the present, I can only say I have little doubt that if the House at large, or even a majority, approach the question of the government of Ireland, or the alterations to be made in it, in the same spirit and with the same largeness of views as have characterized the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, such a solution would be found as would enable Ireland to be entrusted with the right of self-government, and secure those guarantees, regarding the integrity of the Empire, the supremacy of the Crown, and the protection of the minority—of what is called the loyal minority—in Ireland which have been required by the Leaders of both the political Parties in the House. I have always believed that if we could come to a discussion—if we could agree upon the principle that the Irish people are entitled to some self-government, that Parliament has to a very large extent failed to impose conditions for governing Ireland during the 85 years that have elapsed since the Union—we should not find the details so very formidable, or such great difficulties in the way of securing the Empire against the chances of separation, which seem to oppress the public mind in England at the present moment. My own candid opinion is this—that so far from increasing the chances of separation the concession of autonomy to Ireland would undoubtedly very largely diminish them. I believe that the feeling in this country upon the matter—a feeling which I believe to be a genuine one and really to exist—the feeling that the entrusting of Ireland with self-government might re-

sult in danger to the Empire, simply arises from the want of knowledge, which must befall Englishmen, with reference to any Irish question; and from the very industrious attempts which have been set on foot by some gentlemen, who assume to represent the landlords of Ireland, with the view of throwing the public opinion of this country on the wrong scent, and diverting attention from the real issue to a question about danger to the integrity of the Empire, with reference to which I believe there is really no apprehension at all. Indeed, the very persons who are loudest in their talk about the risk run by the loyal minority in Ireland, and the integrity of the Empire, secretly and in their own hearts know perfectly well that the statement has no foundation. No, Mr. Speaker; this question is really a question of the amount of rent which the landlords of Ireland shall receive; and when hon. Members, representing the landowners of the country, talk about the integrity of the Empire they are thinking rather about the integrity of their breeches pockets. The Land Question is, undoubtedly, a very difficult question, and to my mind presents the real point of difficulty in arriving at a solution of the question of Irish autonomy; and the House will find that if that question be once settled on a basis satisfactory to the Irish landlords and tenants, if such a basis could be arrived at, you would hear nothing more from Irish Representatives on the opposite benches about the integrity of the Empire and the risk of separation. We have been spoken to to-night about the necessity of protecting the loyal minority. Now, I myself was born a Protestant; I have always lived a Protestant, and I hope to die a Protestant; and if in the future, after the concession of the Irish claims, any danger were to arise to my Protestant fellow-countrymen, I would be the first to stand up for liberty of speech, liberty of conscience, and liberty to live and thrive for every section of the community, whether they be Protestants or whether they be Catholics; and perhaps I might be a more effectual aid, in times of real danger, than some of those hon. Gentlemen who talk so loudly and who boast so much. But I have no such apprehension. I am convinced that the Catholics of Ireland would not attempt to oppress their fellow-country-

men. They would desire, and it would be their object, in view of the history of the past, to give the Protestants of Ireland more than fair play; they would endeavour to bring them to the front, and give them the fullest share in the government of Ireland. Look at the considerable proportion of Protestants which the Irish national constituencies have willingly and freely returned. If they have not returned more Protestants it is not on account of any prejudice against their creed, but because it has been difficult to find more from that class with the necessary leisure and with a desire sufficient to induce them to come to Westminster in order to represent Irish constituencies. No, Sir; I have no belief at all in the talk either of the danger of separation or the danger to the Protestant minority. The allegation is brought forward for interested motives by the landlord class in Ireland in order that they may, for a few years longer, retain the power of exacting from their tenants exorbitant rents which the soil has not produced. If there was no Land Question in Ireland there would be no opposition from any influential or considerable section in the country to the concession of a full measure of autonomy for Ireland. But in any case the Catholics of Ireland are perfectly willing that any guarantees that the ingenuity of man can frame for the protection of the minority shall be framed and shall be put in force; and it would be found that the Catholics would treat much more justly and much more generously the 1,000,000 Protestants of Ireland in regard to their future representation in the Irish Parliament than the Protestants of England and Scotland have treated the 2,000,000 of Catholics in regard to their just representation in this Imperial Parliament. Allusion, Sir, has been made in the Queen's Speech, and also by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer—I admit a most moderate allusion has been made by him—to the difficulties in connection with what is called "Boycotting," and also the difficulties in the way of obtaining of rents. The right hon. Gentleman certainly did not appear to me, speaking from his point of view, to attempt to magnify these difficulties. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that convictions had been obtained in almost every instance under the ordinary law,

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and that more serious crime had not increased since the Government allowed the more stringent provisions of the Coercion Act to drop. He also admitted that while, what he terms, and justly terms, minor offences, such as threatening letters, have somewhat increased, yet, in regard to "Boycotting" offences, the Government have obtained about 150 convictions out of 400 prosecutions, and that in other cases prosecutions are still pending and have yet to come off. I regard that testimony as most important, for it shows that at the termination of the Crimes Act there was not that relapse into serious crime which many people had apprehended; and it is a somewhat remarkable result in the case of a people of such an elastic nature as that which unhappily belongs to the Irish. It is much to their credit that they should have abstained from crime, and set their faces resolutely against crime as they have done. I think it is a matter which ought to be better known and admitted more by the public feeling in England than it appears to be. Nevertheless, I admit that, unhappily, in regard to the question of land, affairs in Ireland are at present very serious. That result is one which I myself have deprecated very much. Neither the organization of which I am the head in Ireland nor I myself can charge ourselves with having done anything to foment that state of things. On the contrary, so far as my influence and that of my friends has been available it has distinctly been used to prevent "Boycotting" in as many cases as we could possibly interfere; and it has also been distinctly used in the direction of repressing and restraining the movement which sprung up in a spontaneous manner among the people themselves. These matters are on record, and, of course, it will not be denied that these have been the efforts of nearly all of the important leaders of the National Party in Ireland. I do not deny that some extravagant speeches have been made by one or two gentlemen—speeches which I have been the first to deprecate—but we all know that it is very difficult at times to put an old head on young shoulders, and young men are sometimes very much carried away when making speeches into saying things which in their sober moments they would undoubtedly regret. But as re-

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gards the movement itself, it is a very remarkable and a noteworthy fact that the present movement was a spontaneous one, and in that it differs from the Land League movement of 1879. Upon that movement £250,000 sterling was spent in organizing the tenantry and in persuading them to resist the payment of rents which were admittedly, at the time, rack rents. That movement resulted in the passing of the Land Act of 1881. But upon the present movement not one single penny has been spent. In addition to the repressing and restraining influences we have exercised, we have refrained from making any expenditure whatever in aid of the movement for the reduction of rents, to which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has referred. Therefore, it cannot be said that it has been a movement which has been encouraged and fomented by the National League. I think the spontaneous character of the movement is a matter well worthy the attention and consideration of the House and of the Government. The Irish tenantry have, for a very great number of years, paid large sums of money in the shape of rent. They are represented as persons desirous of evading their obligations. That is not my experience. My experience, on the contrary, has been that they have been rather too willing to pay excessive body and soul together, even at the risk rents; and so long as they could keep off starvation to their families and themselves, they have attempted to keep the roofs over their heads at any cost. But now their condition is so desperate, and brought as it has been to its present pitch by such a reduction in the prices of agricultural produce as we have not had any experience of for 30 years—in the prices of all the agricultural produce which their farms yield—that they have been forced into the present movement in order to claim from certain landlords—not all landlords, because I believe the majority of the Irish landlords at the present moment are giving fair reductions, and are, in that way, preventing the tenants from going to extremities, and also saving the remains of their own property—but in the case of a minority of the Irish landlords who have stubbornly refused all reduction of rent there does unhappily exist on a certain number of estates in Ireland a combina-

tion for the purpose of obtaining a reduction of these rack rents. If the matter be inquired into, I think it will be found that that is the whole dimension to which the complaint is capable of being stretched. The House, composed, as it is, largely of Representatives from agricultural districts, must know that that agricultural depression does exist, and has sprung up since rents were fixed under the Land Act of 1881. The rents were then fixed for a term of 15 years; but owing to the depreciation in the prices of agricultural produce, amounting to 50 per cent, it has now become in many cases absolutely impossible to collect these rents. I think that it is no discredit to the exertions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) to say that the rents fixed under his Act, owing to this great fall in the prices of agricultural produce, have become impossible rents, and that the purpose of that Act has been defeated. There are many examples which I might give of the action of landowners in Ireland in proof of my contention as to the exorbitancy of rents. Take a case which happened the other day in my own county of Wicklow—a county which has always been remarkably free from crime and outrage, having been without a single case of outrage during the whole of the Land League agitation. I will take the case of an estate of a nobleman on which the rents have been fully 20 per cent lower than those of the poorer landed gentry—namely, the estate of Lord Fitzwilliam, a large property worth fully £50,000 a-year. The other day Lord Fitzwilliam voluntarily and of his own accord gave a reduction of 50 per cent on the half-year to all his tenants—those who had obtained reductions under the Land Act, tenants from year to year, and leaseholders. Lord Fitzwilliam gave them all round a reduction of 50 per cent. I know that this has been denied. I have seen a letter from the agent, Mr. Duncan McNeill, who states that it was a reduction for the whole year, and therefore was only a reduction of 25 per cent. Practically speaking, it was a reduction of 50 per cent upon the half-year; because, as a tenant upon that estate, I had paid my rent in full for the preceding half-year, and I myself received back from Mr. Duncan McNeill an abatement of 50 per

cent upon the amount which I owed to Lord Fitzwilliam in respect of a tenancy upon which a judicial rent has been fixed. This is a conclusive proof that there is great agricultural depression in Ireland, and that agricultural depression is recognized, not only by the tenants, but also by the landlords. The rents on Lord Fitzwilliam's estate have been so moderate that many of his tenants have never gone into the Land Court at all; and notwithstanding that fact he has given this large reduction to the tenants to save them from extermination. What, then, must be the fate of poor tenants in a county like Kerry, under an agent like Mr. Hussey, where every concession is refused, and the only answer to the tenant is a visit from an army of policemen and soldiers to drive away any poor stock the tenants may have? We were told just now that the Queen's writ does not run in Ireland. The only answer the tenant gets to an application for a reduction of rent is, as I have said, a visit from an army of policemen and soldiers, to drive away the stock he has on the holding, or a shower of writs. Queen's writs not only run, but fly. They come in clouds; they come in storms. Well, Sir, the situation is undoubtedly a serious one; but if the Government step in and support that small minority of landlords who are refusing all reasonable concessions to their tenants, like that which I have cited, the result will be that these landowners and many others will be strengthened in their unjust demands, and great suffering and misery would befall the unfortunate and wretched people. The weight of authority and power which must always exist will weigh down the scale unjustly and cruelly towards the tenant. I shall be glad if some proposition can be made for dealing with the land difficulty in Ireland, because I look upon it as the real difficulty in that country, which overshadows every other. I do not think that there is any real disposition on the part of the Irish tenants to refuse just and fair concessions; and I am sure the great majority of the people are most anxious that the landlords should receive such fair terms and fair treatment as the extremity of the times renders at all possible. Some scheme of purchase might be devised on some such lines as those which are understood to have been put forward by

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the eminent statistician, Mr. Giffen, in a recent letter which has attracted a good deal of attention. I do not pledge myself to details; but as to the general idea contained in that letter, it is one under which the bulk of the land in the occupation of agricultural tenants might be purchased. It must be recollected that this is a limited question; and I am very much disposed to believe—of course, I have not accurate information in my possession, but I am disposed to believe—that the land of Ireland in the possession of agricultural tenants, within the meaning of the Land Act, including *bond fide* leaseholders, and leaving out of the question meane lands, does not amount to the value of more than £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 at the outside; and taking that valuation as the basis—and certainly we could not take a higher—I think it would be fair to arrange to purchase at such a number of years purchase as would fairly compensate the landlords and extricate them from the dangerous and difficult position they occupy now. The depreciation of prices which now exists makes it difficult for the tenant to pay any large amount of money; indeed, it is impossible for him to pay the judicial rents. The question demands the careful attention of the House and the Government; and I believe, and all those who are not influenced by Party motives in Ireland are of opinion, that there should be some fair settlement, and if such fair settlement were arrived at and agreed upon by all parties, and if it were really a fair one, I am convinced that the payments would be made by the Irish tenants to the last penny. I hope, Sir, that we may have a further opportunity of reverting to this matter. We are bound to stand by our people. When it comes to be a struggle between the Irish landowners, aided by the Government, and the Irish tenants, whom I and my Friends represent, and the Irish labourers, we can have no doubt as to which side we should cast our lot with. But we wish that the “still small voice of reason” should prevail. We do not desire to go into any contest. We see in the present position a desire and a wish on the part of Englishmen to study and understand, with a view to its final settlement, this great Irish question; and we are resolved that no extravagance on our part of action or language shall mar

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the chance which we believe our country possesses now for the first time in her history.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON: In rising to reply to the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), I wish to say that I did not hear his opening sentences; but since I came into the House the hon. Member has spoken upon the Land Question, but I do not find that he has mentioned any of those burning questions which are now exciting public attention in Ireland and all over the Empire. In Ireland the hon. Member has declared, in the first place, that he has taken off his coat and that he stands on a single plank. It would now appear that the hon. Member is engaged to-night in removing some other portion of his garments, or that he is increasing his platform. We have heard not one word about the single plank on which he has informed the country he and his supporters intend to stand. According to the speech of the hon. Member, so far as I can understand it is now a simple question of the land. It is simply the further development of that Land Question with the settlement of which, in former times, he and his Friends professed themselves so entirely satisfied. [*Cries of “No!”*] Now it seems that all that is required to settle the Irish Question is to buy out the landlords at a few years purchase, and then peace and happiness—nothing was said about loyalty—and prosperity will return to Ireland. No doubt before the debate closes the hon. Member for the City of Cork will move an Amendment to the Address. To his supporters in Ireland he has stated most distinctly and repeatedly that he has now but one object. It is no longer the land; but his object—I am quoting his own words—is “to secure a separate Parliament for Ireland, free from outside control.” Those are words made use of by the hon. Member in a speech delivered at Castlebar, and repeated elsewhere. Now, I want to know what attitude the hon. Member takes on the question at issue at present—whether England is to remain connected with Ireland, or to be separated? The hon. Member for Dublin Mr. Harrington referred to a speech made in the North of Ireland by Viscount Cole; and he tried to fasten that speech upon the Party to which I have the honour to belong. I am not in the

least ashamed of it; but the hon. Member wishes to fasten on the Party to which I have the honour to belong the exclusive right of using violent language. Let me point out to the House that there are other Members who use violent language. Allow me to quote words made use of by the hon. Member for Fermanagh (Mr. W. Redmond) in Dublin the other day, and then let me ask hon. Members to compare the words of Lord Cole—who I do not believe was ever much gifted with the power of oratory—with the words made use of by the hon. Member for Fermanagh, notoriously one of the most polished rhetoricians below the Gangway. These are the words made use of by the hon. Member for Fermanagh, four days ago—

"He did not think it was worth while to discuss the matter, for the experience of the past had shown that the more coercion they used, the more clearly they would see the necessity for driving from their midst the Government from which coercion came. The English people knew they had enemies in every quarter of the world. They knew that the very moment they struck at the Irish people they would give the signal which would stir the Indian Princes to a greater and still more successful mutiny, and which would, perhaps, lead the Russians into London to stable their horses in the House of Commons."

Now, Sir, that is the class of eloquence which is habitually employed by hon. Gentlemen opposite in speaking to their constituents in Ireland; and the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), although he says that he has deplored the employment of language of this kind, and adds that it is impossible to place old heads on young shoulders, never raised his voice in Ireland to denounce it. This language, to any civilized assembly, is beneath contempt; but when addressed to the sympathizing ears of the ignorant multitude, it must have the effect of hounding on their ignorant dupes in Ireland to the perpetration of crimes and outrages which their leaders have not the determination or courage to perform. In regard to the measures which the Government propose to introduce for Ireland, perhaps I may be permitted to say a word. We, in Ireland, have been asking ourselves the question—and it is a very serious question—what is the use of a Government at all, when we see the law evaded, broken, and defied with impunity; when we see the citizens in any part of Her

Majesty's Empire deprived of their civil rights, when they cannot buy and sell in any market in the South unless they can show the mark of the beast in the shape of the National League ticket—an organization which meets now all over the country with all the paraphernalia of justice and the Law Courts, which tries its unhappy victims as they would be tried before a Court of Law, and, what is more, enforces with unvarying severity its unwritten law; when we see these things we ask, what is the use of a Government? This is not the first time that the Government—I do not say Her Majesty's present Government, but other Governments—have shown a certain amount of laxity in dealing with Irish crime. We saw it in 1881 and 1882, when so unfavourable a shadow was cast over Irish history; and when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) to-night accuses the Government of vacillation in dealing with the Irish Question, I could not help recalling those years in the history of the late Parliament when outrage and murder stalked abroad in Ireland, and when no hand was raised—at all events, not the hands of a paralyzed Government—to arrest its evil course, and the first blow at the organization, of which the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) was the head, was not struck by Her Majesty's Government, but by a few Orangemen on the shores of Lough Mask. We believe that the first duty of any Government is to cause the law to be respected and to be observed. When the present Government took Office they undertook to give up the exceptional legislation which up to that time had been deemed necessary. It was an experiment. I am sure that everybody who cares for Ireland desires, from his heart, that no more coercion should be necessary; but, in my opinion, as an Irishman, and as a magistrate, I have certainly come to the conclusion that that experiment has proved a failure, and I gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Government have come pretty nearly to the same conclusion. But there is this of value in the experiment—that it has shown conclusively that no conciliation, by whatever Party, can gain the adhesion of hon. Gentlemen opposite and those they represent. The hon. Member for

the City of Cork and his Friends have declared over and over again that they will be satisfied with no concession short of separation. [*Cries of "No!" and "Quote!"*] If hon. Members dislike the word "separation," I would say a Parliament in College Green entirely without any outside control; and if that is not separation I leave it to any hon. Gentleman in this House to describe otherwise the distinction between a Parliament sitting in College Green without outside control and complete separation. The experiment tried by Her Majesty's Government has proved a failure. I do not attempt to say that crime and outrage have assumed the proportions it did from 1880 to 1882. Why have they not done so? It has been because there was no more necessity for crime and outrage in Ireland. What is the meaning of those crimes which have stained the pages of our Irish history with blood? The object was to subjugate the will of the Irish people until the hon. Member for the City of Cork could erect a platform and then stand without his coat on the top of it. Hon. Members opposite frequently say that the landlords are in favour of coercion, because coercion is an Act simply to protect landlords. [*Cheers from the Irish Members.*] I am glad that I have elicited that cheer. I do not know whether hon. Members opposite ever go into the statistics of crime caused by outrage in Ireland. The truth is that out of 57 murders that took place in two years, only seven landlords were murdered—so that the landlords had rather a good time of it—three were agents, and the rest were miserable tenants and caretakers on the wild mountains of Kerry, Cork, and the West, who refused to bow to the iron yoke which the hon. Member for the City of Cork sought to weld round their throats. When the hon. Member comes forward as the Representative of Irish grievances, he does not represent that class, at all events, whom he tries to exterminate and stamp out. As far as we, as landlords, are concerned, we come off better than the victims in the South and West. At that time we had the Land League. Well, the Land League was proclaimed, and what had we then? There is a habit among criminals, when a place is made too hot for them, to adopt an alias, and in this

case the Land League adopted an alias, and called themselves the National League. The Land League was resuscitated as the National League, and, winked at by Her Majesty's Government, with the same machinery, the same objects, and the same leader and agents, has ever since been carrying on its fell work of intimidation and disloyalty to the Crown in Ireland. Therefore, I consider that Her Majesty's Government would be absolutely wanting in the first functions that a Government owes to the country it rules if it did not accompany any Act of a remedial character with another crushing-out of this organization, which is now the curse of the country. Hon. Members below the Gangway pride themselves on their strength, and are inclined to laugh at the weakness of the Conservative contingent from Ireland. They are 85; we are 16. But now let me observe to the House that it is impossible to gauge the ratio between loyalty and disloyalty in Ireland by the number of Members who sit below the Gangway opposite. A very able letter was written not long ago by a very honest man, although I entirely disagree with him, but whose honesty I respect. I refer to Mr. Davitt. Mr. Davitt wrote a letter to *The Times*, in answer to a letter from Lord Cowper, in which he said—"Lord Cowper, when he confronts these figures, I think, will admit himself defeated." Lord Cowper denied that the majority of the Irish people were in favour of Home Rule. Mr. Davitt said, in his letter—

"Let us suppose, by way of illustration, that an election had taken place in England, that this election had returned to Parliament 447 Members in favour of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and 120 Members who were in favour of Lord Salisbury. 'Could Lord Cowper,' said Mr. Davitt, 'in confronting these figures, maintain that England had not distinctly decided on the side of Mr. Gladstone?'"

Mr. Davitt thought that was a very conclusive argument. In my opinion, however, it is defective, and the analogy breaks down. In order that the analogy should be perfect, we must conceive, as exists in Ireland, an electors' intimidation society. We must, furthermore, conceive that the 447 Gladstonian Members were not chosen by their own constituents, but by the head of the electors' intimidation society. And to further

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establish the analogy between England and Ireland, we must conceive that the power of the intimidation society is backed up by the whole influence of a powerful priesthood—a priesthood possessing unbounded influence over the minds and consciences of the electors—an influence not circumscribed by any earthly horizon. If such a condition of things could exist in England the analogy would be perfect; but I do not think any sane man can imagine that such an intimidation society would be suffered to exist for a week in this country. The analogy, therefore, breaks down. How are hon. Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway opposite chosen? They are not chosen by their own constituents; they have no voice in the matter. Hon. Members opposite may be admirable masters of political tactics; but they have been chosen by a Council of three. [*Cries of "Name!"*] The hon. Member for the City of Cork ('Mr. Parnell'), the hon. Member for Dublin (Mr. T. Harrington), who has spoken this evening, and the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon). That Council of three chose every single Member who sits opposite to me at the present moment below the Gangway. I will give the House an instance to prove exactly what I mean. There was one constituency in Ireland—

MR. DILLON: I rise to Order. I beg to say that the hon. and gallant Member has made a false statement. [*Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to interrupt. When the hon. and gallant Gentleman who is in possession of the House has concluded his speech it will be quite competent for the hon. Member to reply.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON: I am quite ready to receive correction. I am not certain as to the Council of three, for I was not present at any meeting of it; but I have been informed, on the best authority, that what I state is correct. I will now give the instance I was about to refer to. There was one constituency in Ireland which had a will of its own, and which thought it had a right in the 19th century, and in a free country, to choose its Representative. That was the constituency of North Louth. The choice of the constituency of North Louth fell upon a Gentleman who will probably be well remembered in this

House—I refer to Mr. Philip Callan. The hon. Member for the City of Cork absolutely refused to sanction the choice of the electors of North Louth. [*Cries of "No; he was never chosen!" from Irish Members.*] A Convention, or whatever it was called, was summoned, and various accusations were brought against Mr. Callan, which afterwards were dropped. One of them was that he fell asleep in the House of Commons. Many years ago I myself was a Member of this House, and I can only say that there were few Members who through the whole Session escaped that feeling of sleepiness. I have repeatedly seen right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Benches nodding through a Scotch debate. But when the hon. Member for the City of Cork went to North Louth he did not say one single word about this somnolent habit of Mr. Callan's; but he said that Mr. Callan was unmanageable, because he spoke when he was told to hold his tongue. And, therefore, poor Mr. Callan, who had offered involuntary sacrifice to Morpheus in the House of Commons, was supplanted by the High Priest of the Temple of the Muses at Liverpool. I do not wish to express any opinion of the choice that was made, but what I want to show is this, that the hon. Member for the City of Cork used the influence which he undoubtedly possesses in Ireland as the head of this great intimidation society, and went down to North Louth with hired mobs in special trains, and interfered in the choice of the constituency. [*Cries of "No!"*] I defy contradiction as to the special trains, because I know who paid for them.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I rise to Order. I wish to ask whether a Member is entitled to make a charge against another Member of taking a hired mob to a particular constituency during an election, which would be an offence under the Corrupt Practices Act, and would render that Member legally incapacitated from sitting in this House? Besides, I may remind you, Sir, that there is an Election Petition on the subject pending at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: There is nothing in the form of the words used to bring the hon. and gallant Member under any remark from the Chair; but it certainly is a very grave charge to make against an hon. Member, espe-

cially in a case in which I understand the hon. and learned Member (Mr. T. M. Healy) to say there is a Petition pending.

MR. PARNELL: Perhaps I may be allowed to explain that there is not the slightest foundation for the statement which has been made by the hon. and gallant Member.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON resumed, amid cries of "Withdraw." He said: If it will please hon. Members opposite I am quite ready to withdraw the word "hired;" but I will not withdraw the statement of the fact that special trains brought men from Cavan and Monaghan; and the hon. Member for the City of Cork cannot deny that £60 was paid to the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland for the hire of those trains. I am not saying that it was an illegal act; I am only stating what took place. I will only add that the hon. Member for the City of Cork is the political father of all the hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite. Now, Sir, we object to a House of Commons so made up; and I think that the interruptions I have elicited from hon. Gentlemen opposite afford a standing proof to the House of what chance the 15 loyal Members would have had of being returned, being, as they are, men who would not do as they were told by the hon. Member for the City of Cork, and who would not sit on those Benches at his beck and call, like so many political bagpipes with hats on. It is right to look with the gravest apprehension at a Parliament so composed and so guided; and I humbly trust that Her Majesty's Government will deal firmly but justly with Ireland. The hon. Member for the City of Cork cannot accuse me of being an exterminating landlord, because in this House I supported the Land Act of 1870. I did so because I believed that Irish tenants required protection. The misfortune of all concessions yet extorted by Ireland has been that they have been snatched from an unwilling hand, and not accepted as gifts. The opportunity has now arrived for turning over a new leaf and starting on a better course. There is no nation in the world, with all her faults, that better understands justice than Ireland; but now, when there is an opportunity of turning over a new leaf and starting on a better course, if England is found coming with gifts in one hand and with weakness and vacil-

lation in the other, the Irish people would not believe that Parliament are giving of their own free accord, but would think they are only conceding to fear what they refused to concede to justice. I believe that if England would now deal fairly, justly, and rightly with Ireland, we might have at last that finality without which we can never have peace. When the Irish people have forgotten the lesson that by crime and outrage they can extort concessions from England, and when they learn that the law must be maintained, then the darkness and the clouds that have so long overshadowed the country will flee away before the dawn of brighter and better days.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The hon. and gallant Member who has just sat down has spoken with some pomp in the course of his speech of being a magistrate. I think the speech which the House has just listened to is a very happy example of the judicial tone and temper with which gentlemen of his class administer justice in Ireland, and of the way in which, under a Coercion Act, impoverished and distressed tenants would be dealt with when handed over to their landlords. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has boasted that he is not an exterminating landlord, because he supported the Land Act of 1870; but I should like some better and more independent evidence upon that point than that of the hon. and gallant Member. I should like to examine the records of the Land Commission before I could satisfy myself upon any evidence which he can give. The hon. and gallant Member says that he supported the Land Act of 1870. I congratulate him upon having done so; but at that time, unfortunately, the hon. Member for North Armagh (Major Saunderson) was not a Tory, nor was he an Orangeman. The hon. Member did not become a Tory, nor did he become an Orangeman, until he was kicked out of Cavan by the Liberals.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON: I beg the hon. Member's pardon. Not by the Liberals, but by the Home Rulers.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am delighted that they executed so much justice. But on being so dealt with and turned out of Cavan by the Liberals or Home Rulers the hon. and gallant Member changed his coat. He went to

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North Armagh, and what was his conduct there? I appeal to English Conservatives to judge of Ireland by the conduct of the hon. and gallant Gentleman. The hon. and gallant Gentleman poses before the English Conservatives as a loyal supporter of Lord Salisbury, and of right hon. Gentlemen who sit opposite. It is not for me to say a word about the conduct of the Government opposite. I am willing to confess that, in times of difficulty and distress, Her Majesty's Government have endeavoured to the best of their ability to carry out the powers entrusted to them; and I do not intend to say a harsh word of them, although I do not agree with some of the things they have done. But the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh poses before English Conservatives as a loyal Member of the Party, whereas the hon. and gallant Member got his seat as a turncoat Liberal. And who was the Conservative candidate for North Armagh? It was the Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. John Monroe, now Judge Monroe. These are the loyal Conservatives who appeal for support to English landlords and to the English Conservative people on the ground of their great loyalty to the Tory Party. The hon. and gallant Gentleman and Mr. Justice Monroe were both put up for the constituency, Mr. Monroe being sent down as the Representative of Lord Salisbury, to whom the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Major Sanderson) went yesterday with his begging petition. Having gone to Lord Salisbury in his distress and danger, I wonder that the noble Marquess did not ask him why he did not allow Justice Monroe to become the Member for North Armagh. The hon. and gallant Gentleman speaks of hired mobs; but who, I would ask, broke up the meetings of Judge Monroe in Portadown—who smashed the head of Mr. Thomas Dickson, the late Member for Tyrone? Why, the loyal Conservatives of North Armagh. When the hon. and gallant Gentleman speaks about hired mobs and special trains, the Irish Members have not the advantage which he possesses of access to the books of the Great Northern Railway. I observe that the gentleman who is President of the Great Northern Railway was included in the deputation to Lord Salisbury, and I hope the people of Ireland will take note of the proved fact that private mat-

ters of this kind can be communicated in such a manner to private individuals. If the secrets of the Great Northern Railway could be exposed we should be able to know something more about hired mobs. We should be able to know who paid for the tickets to Dromore and Rosslea, where hired demonstrationists at 7s. 6d. had to be brought. We have been told that there are mobs in Ireland; but it is well known that there are mobs and mobs—there are mobs, I believe, that do not require to be paid for at the rate of 7s. 6d. per head. There are mobs imbued with some ideas of patriotism; but they are composed of very common people, who have to work at the plough from morning till night, and who send Gentlemen like the hon. and gallant Member to this House. These are mobs which go of their own accord to elections, and do not require to be hired. But will the hon. and gallant Member reveal the cost of the mobs for his hired demonstrations? No doubt, these are scarcely arguments to be addressed to a deliberative Assembly, and I would not have spoken were it not for the extraordinary gyrations and gesticulations of the hon. and gallant Member. I and my hon. Friends have been told that we are intolerable, that we are difficult to get on with, and that Gentlemen of the class to which the hon. and gallant Member belongs would have no chance in an Irish Parliament; but I should say that in the English Parliament the hon. and gallant Gentleman has no chance if many of his speeches are constructed on the same gigantic, I may say mountainous, scale as that we have just listened to. I believe the hon. and gallant Member will find that in a House intended for debate it would be difficult to get up a discussion on the scale which he has initiated. I do not think that it was the scale of the hon. and gallant Gentleman when he was Member for Cavan, but that it is only since he has been branded by the Orangemen of North Armagh that he has attempted anything of the kind. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has quoted the hon. Member for North Fermanagh (Mr. W. Redmond) as a Gentleman who speaks with one voice in Ireland and another voice in the House of Commons, and whose words on one occasion have received no rebuke from the hon. Mem-

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ber for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). The hon. and gallant Gentleman, I will say, is the last person in the world who should attempt to condemn heated speeches; and the position he has taken up with regard to that matter reminds me very much of Satan's reproof of sin. Not two months ago the hon. and gallant Member, in defiance of the Corrupt Practices Act, surrounded by his excited friends, declared at a meeting in the North of Ireland that if the Nationalists dared to announce a meeting in Fermanagh—he did not say he would come to murder them; but he said—“Give us notice when you are coming, and we will see what we will see.” That is one instance of the style of the hon. and gallant Gentleman. Then there is the remark about a bullet, which, if uttered by Joe Brady, or individuals who, like him, had been convicted of crime in Ireland, would be very terrible. But this magistrate—this holder of the Queen's Commission—who gets up in this House to reprove the Nationalists for their language—told the population in the North of Ireland, never notorious for peacefulness, that if the Nationalists had won certain elections, “it was not by the ballot, but by the bullet, that Orangemen would be put down.” The hon. and gallant Gentleman seems quite proud of that statement; but why did he not get up in this House and make a speech of the same kind? Instead of reproving the hon. Member for North Fermanagh, why did he not trot out some of his own elegiacs, or give the House a small taste of the invincibility of the Orange Lodges? Let it be understood that those Gentlemen who attack Irish Members for heated language and unfortunate demeanour can coo in this House as gently as a sucking dove, but that when they are addressing men in whose belts are revolvers their language is such as I have described. It is such language as this that leads to violence. Viscount Cole, who lately had a seat in that House, said—“It is time to preach a crusade against Catholics;” not against Nationalists, let it be borne in mind, nor against Parnellites, or Absolutists, but against those who believe in the Seven Sacraments as expounded by the See of St. Peter. He said—

“You ought not to employ Catholics. Dismiss your Catholics, and employ only Protestants in their stead.”

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Hon. Gentlemen enjoying the confidence of the Ulster Conservatives have very simple machinery ready at their hands; they have the entire English Press at their disposal; and the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh was not ashamed, when attending the deputation which waited on Lord Salisbury the other day, to make a statement which was untrue, and which he might have found out to be untrue, if he had taken the least trouble to ascertain the fact. The hon. and gallant Gentleman then stated that the Newbridge Board of Guardians, or that the National League of Newbridge, had passed a resolution ordering the Board of Guardians, the members of the National League being themselves the majority of the Board, not to give labourers' cottages to men who were not members of the League. Lord Salisbury had naturally asked whether that resolution had been actually passed, whereupon the hon. and gallant Gentleman said he believed it had been. Would the House believe that there is not a single tittle of foundation in truth for that statement? It is absolutely and actually a figment, and is as false as the announcement which the hon. and gallant Gentleman has just made, that the Irish Members have attacked Mr. Callan for having fallen asleep in the House. There is not a particle of truth in that statement. Other statements have been made about Mr. Callan. It has been said that Mr. Callan has been drunk in the House of Commons. Thus, on the one hand, the Irish Party are to be charged with being debauched, and now, because they have attempted to purge the Party of a man whom they feel to be a disgrace to it, and whose conduct in the House of Commons must very frequently have given rise amongst English Members to the feeling that at least Irishmen might return creditable persons to represent them there, the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh gets up and says that they attacked Mr. Callan because he fell asleep in the House of Commons. But falling asleep might be Orange for getting drunk, just as in the little placards sent out last year the Orangemen had invited those who attended their meetings to bring “copies of Moody and Sankey's hymn-books” with them—another name for revolvers—and to bring their “sweethearts” with them,

by which was meant some other lethal weapon. This was the Party to which the hon., gallant, and truthful Member for North Armagh belonged.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now reflecting on a Member of this House in a manner which is un-Parliamentary.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I will at once withdraw the word "truthful" if it is regarded as offensive. I shall be very sorry in any way to contravene the Rules of the House in addressing hon. Gentlemen, and I trust that I shall in no way trespass on any ruling of the Speaker. In conclusion, I heartily adopt the statement of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, that if those gentlemen who are now so ferocious in Ireland once have the Land Question settled and had the money for their estates in their pockets they will care very little more about the Irish people. At the present moment they do not live in the country; most of them spend their money and time in England. It is quite true that many of the Orange Brotherhood live in Ireland, and are very creditable and respectable members of the community. They pay for their halls, they sustain their chapels, they pay for their railway tickets to and from demonstrations; but subtract from the Orange organization the landlord party and it would fall like a house of cards, and great would be the fall thereof.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL): Sir, like the general body of the House, I have not been able to prevent myself taking a very close and deep interest in the encounter which has just taken place between the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh, who so naturally enjoys the confidence of the electors of Ulster, and the hon. Gentleman who has just resumed his seat. The language of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh has greatly impressed the House. [Laughter.] I say that with all seriousness, because it is evident that an hon. Member like himself, who represents a great Party and a great interest, and who represents a Party, moreover, labouring, and rightly labouring, under the strongest possible impression as to the critical nature of their situation—the hon. and gallant Gentleman, speaking, as he did, under such circumstances, with such fire, and such

true eloquence, must have impressed a large portion of the House. Moreover, I do not scruple to say that I could not help listening with an amount of pleasure—such as I have experienced before on more than one occasion—to the not ungenial or ill-natured, though sometimes bitter, humour of the hon. Member for South Derry (Mr. Healy). It has occurred to me within the last hour and a half or two hours that there are considerations which might possibly influence the House of Commons to consider favourably whether it might not be in the interest of all Parties, and in the interest of the country generally, that the general debate on the Address in answer to the Speech from the Throne should come to a close to-night. ["Hear, hear!" and cries of "Oh!"] I am alluding to what I may venture to call the general sense of hon. Members; and although the remark may seem at first rather a strong one, I think I can suggest one or two reasons which may have weight with the House. A great deal has taken place since 2 o'clock this afternoon. There has been an enormous amount of popular excitement attending the meeting of the House of Commons. There have been some features in the political situation tending to give rise to considerable uncertainty as to the political future, whether of the Government, the Opposition, or the Irish Party. All that, Sir, culminated at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The House is now in possession of the Speech from the Throne, and also the House has listened to speeches of great interest and great importance from three Leaders of public opinion. I am extremely anxious to say, if I may do so without presumption, that the tone in which this great debate, so long looked forward to by the country, was begun, has not in any way degenerated. The House was almost unanimously of opinion that the Mover and Seconded of the Address discharged their traditional duty in a manner which reflected the highest honour upon them. But after them came a speech from the Leader of the Opposition, perhaps one of the most remarkable orations that the House has ever listened to from him. I do not intend now to argue on that oration. As I listened to it there was much with which I thought I should like to express my agreement, and much also from which it would have given me

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great pleasure to express my strongest possible disagreement; but it was a speech which, like the Speech from the Throne, requires consideration. Then my right hon. Friend who sits near me (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) explained, in terms which were certainly not ambiguous, in terms which I think were very forcible, the views, and the policy, and the position of the Government. I venture to think that, coming after the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, it was a speech which also requires consideration. Then, after that, again, came the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). Now, all the speeches I have mentioned have been, more or less, surprises to the public. The Speech from the Throne contained, I think, passages for which the public were hardly prepared. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone) certainly surprised the House; for we must recollect that he is at the head of a great Party, which is numerically more powerful than the Party supporting the Government. It must also be recollected that much has been done recently that was calculated to enlist the sympathies, if not to obtain the support, of hon. Members below the Gangway opposite. Under these circumstances, the public were certainly prepared to receive Notice from the right hon. Gentleman of a hostile Amendment, which, if it had been carried, would have placed him on this side of the House. But nothing of the kind. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was pleased to express unstinted approbation of the general foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government. He was most generous and unmeasured in the praise which he poured upon Lord Salisbury's Eastern Roumelian policy; and not only that, but even, as it were, showing that he did not contemplate making a hostile movement against the Government, he expressed what was evidently a sincere and earnest wish on his part, that the present Government might be fortunate enough to go through their policy in Eastern Roumelia, and to carry it to a successful conclusion; and in that task he promised them his cordial and warm support. I have some slight knowledge of the Eastern Roumelian question; and I am of opinion that if the present Government is to remain in Office till that

question is brought to a satisfactory and permanent conclusion, the present Government will possibly successfully weather more than one Session of Parliament. I have said that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was certainly a surprise; but the greatest surprise of all was the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork. I made no doubt in my own mind—from what knowledge I happen to possess in regard to the Irish political movement I made sure—that there was a passage in the Speech of so indubitable a meaning and so clear a form, that the hon. Gentleman, heading, as he does, a strong numerical Party, and representing, as he apparently does, a large portion of the Irish people, would have had no choice but to meet that paragraph with a direct negative. The hon. Gentleman will not be surprised—he will not be disposed to blame me for having come to the conclusion—when he recollects that the incidents of the late Election were still fresh in my mind, and the speeches which he and his supporters made both before and after the Election—that no doubt could be left on the mind of any human being as to the issues which he would bring before the House of Commons as soon as Parliament met. Moreover, I felt assured that the hon. Member, being at the head of a Party relatively and absolutely stronger than the Party led by O'Connell, would have adopted the course adopted by O'Connell, and would have directly placed before the House, in a manner which would have enabled the House to come to a clear decision, the views, as he understands them, of the Irish people on the question of the government of Ireland. The hon. Member, for reasons which are best known to himself, and which I do not impugn, has not taken that course. All I say is, that the speech of the hon. Member to-night has been a surprise to the House of Commons, and will be a surprise to the public. That being so, and it being evident, from the attitude of the Front Bench opposite—I may say the condition of the Front Bench—and from the pensive attitude of the Liberal Party, and from the waiting, watching, and cautious attitude of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, that neither the Front Bench opposite, nor the Liberal Party,

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nor the Irish Party think the present occasion a fitting one for raising a decisive issue as to the fate of the Government, or as to the future government of Ireland, am I not justified in recommending the House quietly to consider whether it might not be well to close the general debate on the Address? We can then proceed to discuss Amendments. There are some Amendments which have been given Notice of to-night. There is one which has been given Notice of in regard to the annexation of Burmah and the war in that country. On that point I shall be only too glad that the war and the causes of the annexation should be discussed without delay; but I know that the whole Burmese Question is a most complicated one—that it is a question involving a large amount of matter of detail, and requiring a considerable amount of study to those interested in it. A Blue Book, containing as much detail as the Government have it in their power to produce, has been laid upon the Table to-night; and I cannot help thinking that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hunter), who has given Notice of the Motion, and who takes great interest in the subject, will, at a future time, be in a better position to bring his views before the House of Commons than he can possibly be at the present moment. He may have exceptional facilities for obtaining information on the subject; but, unfortunately, the House at large is not in the same fortunate position; and, therefore, if he wishes this subject to be fairly discussed in the House of Commons, I would ask him whether he would not do better, in the interests of the question itself, to defer the debate until the time when it will be my duty to make a formal Motion on the subject in this House? There is another Amendment of which Notice has been given by a Member well known to the House of Commons, the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collinge), and which, as I understand it, is intended to raise the condition of the agricultural labourer. That is a subject with which the Government will not find fault. On the contrary, it is a subject which, considering the change which has taken place in the electorate, and the vast number of the agricultural body now represented, eminently and pre-eminently deserves, I believe, the consideration of

the House of Commons, and I have no doubt the hon. Member would find little difficulty in obtaining an opportunity of bringing it forward at a more fitting time. But, with the exception of these two Amendments, I do not know that there is any special subject which the House is asked to consider. [An hon. MEMBER: The crofters.] Of course, there are the crofters; but they are rather a portion of the agricultural population; and when I refer to the agricultural population I do not refer only to the agricultural population of England. But, after all, would it not be better that this new Parliament, from which the country expects such great things—which is the result of a larger measure of Parliamentary Reform than this country has ever known—would it not be well for this Parliament to consider whether it might not adopt a wise and prudent course by reverting to the, perhaps, better practice of former times, and shorten the proceedings on the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne? That was, undoubtedly, the practice of earlier Parliaments, and was the practice until the last few years. I am only anxious myself that the House of Commons, from which so much is expected, should be enabled, by the general co-operation of all Parties in the House, to get as rapidly as possible through the transaction of the vital Business of the country. There is the question of Ireland, which will, undoubtedly, have to be considered separately, either on a Motion by the hon. Member for the City of Cork or some one of his followers. There is also the question which the Government has given Notice of to-night—the question of reforming—no, not reforming; that is, perhaps, not the right word to use—the question of improving still further the Procedure under which this House conducts its Business. I want the House—I want clearly to explain to the House, as I view it, and as, I believe, my Colleagues view it, the position of Her Majesty's Government. We are perfectly aware—it does not require any great wisdom or knowledge to be aware of it—that we do not command a majority of pledged supporters in this House; but, at the same time, what we are not aware of is, that there is any other set of Members in the House who are in a position to say that

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they do command a majority of pledged supporters in the House of Commons. That being so—I say it with no Party feeling—we have considered it to be our duty to meet Parliament, and to endeavour, to the best of our ability, to carry on the Business of the country, and to place before Parliament the measures which we think Parliament would do well to adopt. But the position is not one that can be a grateful or a pleasant position for Her Majesty's Government. We remain here, Sir, not for the pleasure of retaining Office, nor for the mere pleasure of governing, but for the purpose of fulfilling our duty. As long as that duty can be discharged by us on reasonably honourable terms—*[Laughter]*—I am afraid that hon. Gentlemen opposite who laugh have not been accustomed to follow a Government who conducted the Business of the country on those terms, and they appear to think the position Quixotic. However, we have, unfortunately, a prejudice in favour of conducting the Business of the country on reasonably honourable terms, and on those terms only; and the moment we see the slightest indication of any desire on the part of any considerable section of the Members of this House to take up the Government of the country, that moment we will take every imaginable step to bring the question to an immediate and rapid issue. I do not know that there is much more on which I need detain the House, unless I revert for one minute to the matter which has been so effectually and indefinitely, though a little confusedly, put before the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. To go back, I refer, if I am not trespassing too much upon the attention of the House, to the question of Irish government, as that question was raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), when he alluded very scornfully to the terms in which the Local Government Bill for Ireland is alluded to in the Speech from the Throne. It appears to me that in all the right hon. Gentleman's remarks he, for some reason best known to himself, mixed up the question of local government, as we should consider the meaning of the term, with local government in Ireland as hon. Members opposite would consider the meaning of the term. And he seemed to imagine that it was

never in the power, or that it was ever in the mind, or that it had ever been in the dreams of any Member of the Tory Party to propose to the House of Commons any measure that, by any possibility, could be considered to contain any germ of any institution which might in time possibly develop into an Irish Parliament. It may be possible hon. Members may think us wrong in that conclusion; but that, I venture to say, is the unanimous and united conclusion of the Tory Party. Therefore, I do not wish Irish Members, nor Members of the Liberal Party opposite, to imagine that, even if other circumstances were favourable for the purpose, any Local Government Bill for Ireland which the Government might wish to introduce and carry would contain anything which would come within any measurable distance of that which I believe to be the object of the hon. Member for the City of Cork—the institution of an Irish Parliament, on which the Irish people and Party are supposed to have set their hearts. It would be the wish of the Government, as I believe I may say it would be the ambition of the Government, to be able to introduce into Ireland—if only peace and order prevailed in that country, and the same state of law and general acceptance of obligations that prevails in England—a local government as similar as possible to any institution of the kind introduced into this country, believing that the great principle of the Legislative Union is similarity of institutions in England and Ireland. That, at any rate, I take to be the view of the matter taken by the Tory Party. Circumstances may prevent that similarity from being attained as rapidly as could be wished; but similarity of institutions and equal laws is the foundation of the Union which we intend absolutely to maintain. I do not know whether, in the course of time, a change may come over Ireland which may possibly encourage the Government to press forward upon the attention of Parliament a measure such I have described; but this I will say—that the present state of Ireland is not, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, one which would be favourable for the consideration of a measure for establishing local government. A measure is under consideration—many of its leading features may have been determined

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—but the time for the introduction of that measure has not yet come, and I do not know whether it will come; but I hope that it may, and I believe that the introduction of a measure of local government for Ireland by the present Ministry will, when it comes, be a conspicuous sign that peace and order prevail in that country. That, Sir, is the view we take of the position of affairs in Ireland. We cannot conceal from ourselves that the state of things is not such as to justify the Government in beginning immediately to discuss the question of local government. The Union between the two countries which the Government intend to do their best to maintain, whether in Opposition or in power, is not a vague phrase, such as is used by hon. Gentlemen opposite, when they talk about the “unity and integrity of the Empire,” and their burning and intense desire to maintain that Union equally with ourselves. But when we talk of maintaining the Union between England and Ireland, we mean the maintenance of the Parliamentary Union as established by the Act of 1800, and nothing short of that. It is possible that these words may produce feelings of anger or of hostility amongst the Representatives of Radical feeling in this country and amongst Representatives of Irish feeling over the Channel; but they are words which must be said. They are not said with any malice; they are not said, I can say from my heart, from any other feeling than that of the truest friendship for Ireland, and the most earnest and intense desire to promote her prosperity. But they are words which represent the unshaken, the immovable conviction of the whole body of the Tory Party throughout the length and breadth of England; and I firmly believe myself that they are words which will before long unite the vast majority of the people of the United Kingdom.

Motion made, and Question, “That the Debate be now adjourned,”—(*Mr. Sexton*,—put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

House adjourned at ten minutes after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 22nd January, 1886.

Several Lords—took the Oath.

BURMAH—MILITARY EXECUTIONS— THE PROVOST MARSHAL.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I rise to ask the Under Secretary of State for India a Question of which I have given him private Notice. It relates to certain statements which appeared in *The Times* yesterday from its Correspondent at Mandalay. Before proceeding to read the statements, I desire to say that, by asking this Question, I do not in the slightest degree imply any opinion on my part as to their correctness. They affect very seriously the character of a public officer, the Provost Marshal in Burmah. I do not know who this officer is; but the conduct attributed to him appears to me to be so unworthy of a British officer that I feel great confidence in expressing the sincere hope that these statements will ultimately turn out to be inaccurate. It is quite as much in the interests of the officer himself, as with a view of putting a stop to such proceedings, if unfortunately they are correctly reported, that I put this Question. I will read the statements as they appear in *The Times* of yesterday, and I am sorry to add that with respect to the first of them further confirmation appears to-day in other papers. The extract from *The Times* to which I refer is as follows:—

“The Rev. Mr. Colbeck, the representative in Mandalay of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, has addressed a public protest to the Chief Commissioner against a recent attempt by the Provost Marshal to procure testimony against other persons from a Burman while he was covered by the pointed rifles of a firing party. Mr. Colbeck, who has long been resident in Burmah, declares that such proceedings cannot fail to bring shame and discredit upon our name, nation, and religion. The ghastly scenes which constantly recur in executions carried out by the Provost Marshal constitute grave public scandals. The Provost Marshal, who is an ardent amateur photographer, is desirous of securing views of the persons executed at the precise moment when they are struck by the bullets. To secure this result, after the orders ‘Ready,’ ‘Present,’ have been given to the firing party, the Provost Marshal fixes his

camera on the prisoners, who at times are kept waiting for some minutes in that position. The officer commanding the firing party is then directed by the Provost Marshal to give the order to fire at the moment when he exposes his plate. So far no satisfactory negative has been obtained, and the experiments are likely to be continued. These proceedings take place before a crowd of mixed nationalities, and cannot fail to have a demoralizing effect on both soldiers and spectators."

I am quite sure that the noble Lord opposite, and all your Lordships who have heard or read these statements, will agree with me that the proceedings attributed to the Provost Marshal are very outrageous, and deserve serious reprobation. Although I think it very unlikely that the noble Lord will be able to give me any positive information on the subject just now, I earnestly trust that my noble Friend will make inquiry without delay into the truth of these allegations, so that if they are inaccurate, the character of this officer may be cleared, as I trust it will; but if, unhappily, they turn out to be correct, that measures may be taken not only to put a stop to those proceedings, but to mark in a most signal manner the sentiments of Her Majesty's Government with regard to them. There is one other matter to which I wish to refer. One would gather from those statements that a considerable number of persons are, at the present time, being tried by court martial and executed in Burmah. I will venture to suggest to the noble Lord opposite that he should very seriously consider to what extent there is legal warrant for trying persons within Her Majesty's Dominions who are not under the Mutiny Acts. Burmah has now been annexed, and is a part of Her Majesty's Dominions. I do not wish to express a positive opinion on that subject at present; but it is, I think, worthy of the careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Lord HARRIS): My Lords, in reply to the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Ripon), I have to say that Her Majesty's Government have read with the greatest concern the account of *The Times* Correspondent at Mandalay with respect to these executions, and the manner in which they have been conducted. We have no information, however, at the present

moment, which will enable us to say whether these accounts are varnished or not. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, recognizing the concern which no doubt the public feel alike with the Government on this question, has despatched telegrams to Lord Dufferin and Mr. Bernard requesting information upon the matter, and asking that a strict and searching inquiry be made into the matter. As soon as this information is obtained, I shall have great pleasure in informing the noble Marquess. With respect to what he has stated as to court martials being held in Burmah, I would deprecate any discussion at the present moment, and until we have further information about them.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY suggested that, as Papers were about to be presented on the subject of Burmah, it would be as well that they should be accompanied with a map of the country.

LORD HARRIS said, he would make inquiries as to that.

SIR WILLIAM ROSE, K.C.B., LATE
CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS.

RESOLUTION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I rise to perform a sorrowful duty. It is to move—

"That this House is deeply sensible of the loss which they have sustained by the death of Sir William Rose, K.C.B., the late Clerk of the Parliaments, and think it right to record the just sense which they entertain of the zeal, abilities, diligence, and integrity with which he executed his important duties in that and other offices in the service of this House during a period of 50 years."

My Lords, I have but little to add to the terms of the Motion. The loss of Sir William Rose has been regretted, I think, by all in this House. There are very few of us who have been here long enough to remember the time when Sir William Rose was not at this Table. His manner and kindness to all the Members of this House are well known. He was laborious and careful and exact in his duties. He possessed a profound knowledge of the precedents of this House, and of our customary law; and he was able to render services to the Members of this House in that capacity which we specially require. Owing to

The Marquess of Ripon

the fact that our Speaker does not possess authority over us, and that the disposal of all Order in this House is immediately the work of the House itself, an authority like that, able and willing to furnish us with guidance, was of inestimable value. My Lords, I feel that I am only expressing the opinion entertained by all Peers in this House, on whichever side of the House they may sit, of the deep loss we have sustained by the death of Sir William Rose.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, my noble Friend (Earl Granville) alluded last night in a touching manner to the loss we have experienced by the death of Sir William Rose. I only rise for the purpose of saying how heartily I concur in every word that has fallen from the noble Marquess. I have known Sir William Rose for very many years, both in his public and private capacity; and anyone more obliging, more attentive to his duties, or more anxious to assist everyone to obtain information, I think none of us have ever known. The House has sustained a very severe loss by the death of Sir William Rose, and I am sure that noble Lords will concur in every word that has fallen from the noble Marquess. I beg to second the Motion.

Moved to resolve, "That this House is deeply sensible of the loss which they have sustained by the death of Sir William Rose, K.C.B., the late Clerk of the Parliaments, and think it right to record the just sense which they entertain of the zeal, ability, diligence, and integrity with which he executed his important duties in that and other offices in the service of this House during a period of 60 years."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

THE EARL OF LIMERICK said, he desired, on behalf of the younger and private Members of the House, to express their deep sense of the assistance which was invariably so kindly and constantly rendered to them by Sir William Rose.

Motion agreed to, nemine dissentiente.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 22nd January, 1886.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolutions in Committee—Ordered—First Reading—Church of Scotland* * [6]; *Licensing Laws Amendment (Local Control)* * [35]; *Burial Law Amendment* * [45]; *Spirits in Bond (Great Britain and Ireland)* * [52]; *Oaths* * [64]; *Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland)* * [72].

Ordered—First Reading—Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment * [1]; *County Government (Ireland)* * [2]; *Police Forces Enfranchisement* * [3]; *Church Patronage* * [4]; *Poor Law Guardians (Ireland)* * [5]; *Public Health Acts (Improvement Expenses)* * [7]; *Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers Expenses) (Ireland)* * [8]; *Municipal Franchise (Ireland)* * [9]; *Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment* * [10]; *Tenure of Town Houses (Ireland)* * [11]; *National School Teachers (Ireland)* * [12]; *Registration of Voters (Ireland)* * [13]; *University Education (Ireland)* * [14]; *Salmon Fisheries (Ireland)* * [15]; *Butter Substitutes* * [16]; *Crofters (Scotland)* * [17]; *Technical Education (Ireland)* * [18]; *Housing of Working Classes in Towns (Ireland)* * [19]; *Municipal Boundaries (Dublin)* * [20]; *Rates (Dublin)* * [21]; *Private Bill Legislation* * [22]; *Boundaries of Towns (Ireland)* * [23]; *Parliamentary Elections (Polls)* * [24]; *Representation of the People Act (1884) Extension* * [25]; *Copyhold Enfranchisement* * [26]; *Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday* * [27]; *Police Constables' Pensions* * [28]; *Fishery Piers and Harbours (Ireland)* * [29]; *Trees (Ireland)* * [30]; *Metropolitan Board of Works (Fire Brigade Expenses)* * [31]; *Tobacco (Ireland)* * [32]; *Contagious Diseases Acts Repeal* * [33]; *Metropolitan Board of Works (Water Supply, &c.)* * [34]; *Fairs and Markets (Tolls) (Ireland)* * [35]; *Quarter Sessions (Boroughs)* * [36]; *Tenure of Land (Scotland)* * [37]; *Probation of First Offenders* * [38]; *Port and Harbour Authorities* * [39]; *Land Purchase Facilities* * [40]; *Sites for Schools, &c. (Ireland)* * [41]; *Landlord's Right of Distress Abolition* * [42]; *Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c.)* * [43]; *Explosive Substances Act (1883) Amendment* * [44]; *Bankruptcy (Ireland)* * [45]; *Land (Highlands and Islands)* * [46]; *Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister* * [47]; *Marriages (Nonconformist Chapels)* * [48]; *Beer Adulteration* * [49]; *Allotments and Small Holdings* * [50]; *Church Boards* * [51]; *Mining Leases* * [52]; *Shop Hours Regulation* * [53]; *Allotments* * [54]; *Game Laws Amendment* * [55]; *Beer Adulteration (No. 2)* * [56]; *Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment* * [57]; *Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment* * [58]; *Marriages (Hours of Solemnisation)* * [59]; *Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Redemption* * [60]; *Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment* * [61]; *Beer Adulteration (No. 3)* * [62]; *Workhouse Children* *

[67]; Turbary Mountain Grazing and Sea Wrack (Ireland) * [68]; Theatres, &c. (Metropolis) * [69]; Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) * [70]; Land Cultivation * [71]; Fishery Acts (Scotland) * [73]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Durham) * [74]; Municipal Franchise (Ireland) (No. 2) * [75]; Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment (No. 2) * [76]; Unclaimed Deposits * [77]; Tramways Acts (Ireland) Amendment * [78]; Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) * [79]; Sanitation of Houses * [80]; Metropolitan Board of Works (Keeping of Firewood) * [81]; Parliamentary Elections * [82]; Land Tenure and Transfer * [83]; Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) (Scotland) * [84].

QUESTIONS.

ARMY—THE TESTING OF SIDE-ARMS.

COLONEL SALIS-SCHWABE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether sidearms, more especially Cavalry swords, used to be and are now subjected to a test by a viewer or official of the Ordnance Department before issue, and whether each Cavalry sword or other sidearm used to be and is marked, so that the viewer who passed it fit for use can be identified; and, whether several sidearms, especially Cavalry swords, have, within the last three years, been found, after issue to Her Majesty's troops, to be unable to stand the test which they should have undergone before issue; and, if that be the case, whether the viewers or officials of the Ordnance Department who passed such sidearms are still employed in the public service?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. W. H. SMITH): All sidearms, including Cavalry swords, are and have been subjected to a test by a viewer before issue to troops; and every arm so tested is marked in such a manner that the viewer by whom it has been passed can be identified. No sidearms have been found within the last three years unable to withstand, after issue to the troops, the tests to which they should have been and were subjected before issue. It is, however, to be observed that a far more severe test of fitness than that hitherto adopted officially has recently been applied to sidearms in the possession of the troops; and, I may add, the future standard of efficiency at the time of issue will be regulated by this more stringent trial.

BURMAH—MILITARY EXECUTIONS—THE PROVOST MARSHAL.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the following paragraph contained in a telegraphic despatch dated Mandalay, January 19th, published in *The Times* of the 21st inst.:—

"The ghastly scenes which constantly recur in executions carried out by the Provost Marshal constitute grave public scandals. The Provost Marshal, who is an ardent amateur photographer, is desirous of securing views of the persons executed at the precise moment when they are struck by the bullets. To secure this result, after the orders, 'Ready,' 'Present,' have been given to the firing party, the Provost Marshal fixes his camera on the prisoners, who at times are kept waiting for some minutes in that position. The officer commanding the firing party is then directed by the Provost Marshal to give the order to fire at the moment when he exposes his plate."

and, whether in view of *The Times* correspondent's declaration that

"So far no satisfactory negatives having been obtained the experiments are likely to be continued,"

he will telegraph to the authorities in India calling their attention to the allegation with a view, if it be found to be true, to the immediate suppression of the practice and the prosecution of the Provost Marshal?

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Secretary of State for War, If there is any truth in the following statement from *The Times* of January 21st, respecting certain executions in Burmah:—

"The ghastly scenes which constantly recur in executions carried out by the Provost Marshal constitute grave public scandals. The Provost Marshal, who is an ardent amateur photographer, is desirous of securing views of the persons executed at the precise moment when they are struck by the bullets. To secure the result, after the orders, 'Ready,' 'Present,' have been given to the firing party, the Provost Marshal fixes his camera on the prisoners, who at times are kept waiting for some minutes in that position. The officer commanding the firing party is then directed by the Provost Marshal to give the order to fire at the moment when he exposes his plate;"

and, if so, whether the Government have taken or intend to take any action in the matter?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: There is an urgent question arising out of this—namely, whether at the present time questions of life and death in Upper Burmah are under the control of the

Chief Civil Authority (Mr. Bernard) or whether the military authorities are allowed to exercise any sort of uncontrolled martial law?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL): I am not quite certain whether the Civil Authorities in Upper Burmah have hitherto superseded the Military Authorities; but when Mr. Bernard went up to Mandalay, in the absence of General Prendergast, on the expedition to Bhamo, I was then under the impression that Civil government had recommenced, in Mandalay at any rate. But since Mr. Bernard's departure from Mandalay and General Prendergast's return, I am not quite sure what would be the precise relation between the Civil Authorities and the Military Authorities. If the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) will repeat the Question on Monday I will try to ascertain in the meantime. In reply to the hon. Members for Glasgow and Newry, I may say I am not surprised that both hon. Members should have thought it their duty to put Questions on the very grave and startling information which for two days running has been given to the public by *The Times* Correspondent at Mandalay. I cannot bring myself to believe that any officer wearing the Queen's uniform would have allowed himself to perpetrate actions which really would have disgraced the officers of King Theebaw. I cannot bring myself to believe that there is any portion of truth in this announcement; but when the announcement of the proceedings of the Provost Marshal at Mandalay appeared in *The Times* of to-day, I thought it my duty to telegraph to the Viceroy to ascertain the exact foundation for these serious allegations. And I did more than that—I departed, I believe, from the established practice. In order that no time might be lost, I sent a similar telegram direct to the Chief Commissioner at Mandalay. I trust most earnestly that it may turn out that these allegations are not well founded; but I have instructed the Chief Commissioner at Mandalay, on my own authority, that if, in any degree, these allegations are true, the gravest and most immediate action must be taken against the officer concerned.

Dr. CAMERON: I shall in a few days ask if any reply has been received by the noble Lord.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—INCOME TAX.

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that the Financial Minister for India has proposed, with the approval of the Viceroy, a graduated Income or License Tax; and, if so, whether the Government has offered any objection to this proposal?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL): I have some difficulty in answering the Question of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not quite know what he precisely means by a graduated Income Tax. As far as I can gather, he has been careful to leave not only his opponents, but also his possible Colleagues, in a state of the utmost uncertainty on this point; and, therefore, I can only answer his Question by telling him what the Indian Income Tax proposed by the Government is, and leave him to draw his own conclusions as to whether it comes up to his own idea of a graduated Income Tax. The draft Bill of the Government of India, which has now passed through two stages in the Legislative Council, provides that non-agricultural incomes shall be taxed, and the sources are classified under four heads—offices, profits of Companies, interest on securities, and other sources. The rate of Income Tax is five pice a rupee, which, I believe, in English money is a little under $\frac{1}{4}$ d. in 1s. 6d., on incomes of 2,000 rupees per annum and upwards; and, roughly, 4 pice on incomes under 2,000 rupees. There are certain exceptions—namely, incomes derived from land or agriculture, charities, soldiers with pay under 500 rupees a month, Government officials with salaries under 100 rupees a month, also all persons with a total income of less than 500 rupees per annum. In cases of incomes derived under the fourth head of "other sources," incomes under 2,000 rupees per annum are assessed in six grades, rising from 500 rupees to 2,000 rupees. The approval of the Secretary of State in Council has been given to the Bill. This is all the information I can give to the right hon. Gentleman, and upon that, no doubt, he will form his own conclusions.

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: The noble Lord has not answered the last portion of the Question.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Of course, the Indian Budget has not come before the Government as a whole; but the approval of the Secretary of State in Council has been given to the Bill, the heads of which I have stated to the House.

CHINA—THE REPORTED LOAN.

MR. M'LAREN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give any information respecting the truth of the rumours that a Chinese Loan is being negotiated by a foreign syndicate in Germany for the construction of Railways in China; whether any inducements have been offered by Her Majesty's Government to the Chinese Government to raise their loans for public works in the London Money Market; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have taken any steps to secure for British manufacturers all contracts for Railway material required by China?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BOURKE): We have heard the rumour referred to by the hon. Member; but we have no means of knowing whether any loan will be brought out by the Syndicate in question. The attention of Her Majesty's *Chargé d' Affaires* at Pekin has, however, been called to the subject. It would be altogether contrary to the usual practice of the British Government to interfere with the manner in which the Government of China may see fit to raise loans. Her Majesty's Government will, if the occasion arises, be ready to give such assistance as they can properly afford in support of British manufacturing and commercial interests in China; but they could not take the steps suggested in the third clause of the hon. Member's Question.

MR. M'LAREN: Are we to understand that the right hon. Gentleman lays down the principle that the Government will, in no circumstances, interfere with foreign Governments on behalf of English commerce in competition with the commerce of other countries?

MR. BOURKE: I said just the reverse. I said the Government would always be very glad to give such support as may properly be given to gentlemen engaged in commercial affairs.

BURMAH—THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT.

MR. M'LAREN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any representations have been made by the Chinese Government to Her Majesty's Government respecting the annexation of Burmah?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BOURKE): I have to say that Her Majesty's Government are in communication with the Government of China with respect to Burmese affairs. The time has not yet arrived when it is thought advisable, in the interests of the public, that those communications should be made known.

IRELAND—"BOYCOTTING"—ALLEGED OUTRAGE.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON gave Notice that he would ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Whether it is true, as stated on the occasion of a deputation to Lord Salisbury, that a boycotted woman in Ireland was held down by her neighbours, while a dog gnawed her legs; and, if true, whether any persons have been arrested for the outrage?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE) said, that this statement referred to a very horrible and serious outrage if it really occurred. He had no doubt that if it had occurred it had already come under the cognizance of the authorities in Ireland. He had taken steps to make inquiries, and had no doubt his hon. Friend would get the information he sought.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he would repeat the Question on Monday.

MR. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that when this Question is asked I shall ask the Home Secretary, Whether his attention has been called to the action of an English lady who tied a little child, aged two, to a chair before a fire and slowly roasted her to death?

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—INTRODUCTION OF PUBLIC BILLS.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN drew attention to the fact that, at the close of the debate on the Address, the introduction of Bills would occupy some three hours; and he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the debate could be

closed at a reasonable hour, so that Members interested in the Bills might have an opportunity of introducing them?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, in reply, said, that they might, perhaps, be able to make an arrangement which would be convenient to the hon. Member if it were possible to close the general debate on the Address that evening, and take the first Amendment upon it on Monday.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, what he meant was, that when the debate closed it should be at a reasonable hour, say 10 o'clock, so that hon. Members might have an opportunity of introducing their Bills.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st January.]—See page 92.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. SEXTON said, they were not able last night to respond to the appeal of the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) that the general debate on the Address should be allowed to close as soon as he had himself sat down. If there were no other reasons for refusing to close the debate, they considered that it would not be duly respectful to the position held in the Government of the country by the noble Lord himself if they were to allow his speech on this important occasion to pass by without any notice. Moreover, they knew the secret of the haste of the noble Lord. They knew that he was very anxious to go on with what he called the reform of Procedure. The noble Lord wished the House, in regard to the length of the debate on the Address, and in regard to other matters, to go back to the habits and practices of the good old times; but there were more recent times than the good old times when the noble Lord himself was not anxious to curtail debate. Those times might soon return, and the Irish Members, for their part, had too sincere a regard for the freedom of debate in

that House to abet the noble Lord in any measure which might prevent aspiring and active Members of the House from rivalling the former courses of the noble Lord, or which would prevent him, when opportunity and occasion served, from returning to the practice which he formerly adorned. That being so, they were not in a hurry at that moment to approach the question of the reform of Procedure. With regard to the speech of the noble Lord, he would say that surprise was its keynote. According to the noble Lord, everything was surprising and everybody was surprised. The country, the noble Lord said, was surprised by the Queen's Speech. He should not wonder if he heard that the noble Lord himself was surprised when he first saw the Queen's Speech. The country thought that the Government was composed of men consistent in their course of public action. It was thought that they were men whose minds were animated by a consistent principle of conduct. If that were so, he admitted that the country had good reason to be surprised. None of the Irish Members could forget that in the brief interval during which the Government had been in power the Prime Minister made a public speech of the greatest gravity and moment, in which he referred to the dualism of Austria-Hungary in connection with the Irish Question. The fact was that those words of the Prime Minister were placed before the country by him at a time when the question of the national legislative freedom of Ireland was occupying the public mind to the exclusion of everything else. Those words were uttered after the Irish Leader had made his declaration that the claim of the Irish people to legislative independence would be the immediate care of the Parliamentary Party; and he contended, therefore, that the words of the Prime Minister could have no other interpretation in the minds of intelligent men, and they had no other purpose in his own, but to convey to the country that his Administration were ready to consider the claim to legislative independence of Ireland; and in the settlement of that question to consider—at least as a general guiding principle—the settlement which had made the Imperial authority of the Emperor of Austria consistent with the concession of the claim of the people of Hungary to national independence. At a later date

the Prime Minister distinctly shadowed out a settlement of the Irish Question in a public speech limited, on the one hand, by the integrity of the Empire, and, on the other, by the protection of the rights of the Protestant and territorial minority in Ireland. What was the meaning of making those limits at all, and of defining them in a public speech, unless they had a relation to a project of legislative independence for Ireland, and unless the Prime Minister meant to indicate to the country that the Tory Government were ready to concede that freedom within the bounds of those limits? The Government came into Office last June; the elections took place in November and December. Ministers spoke often in that interval; and they never directly or indirectly, by any declaration or hint, gave the country to understand that there was lurking in the minds of any of them a fundamental objection, or objection in point of principle, to a settlement of the Irish national question, provided the integrity of the Empire were preserved and the rights of the minority respected.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL): I particularly inserted in my speech a passage saying that I would always do my best to support the maintenance of the Parliamentary Union between the two countries.

Mr. SEXTON replied that the noble Lord appeared to have felt called upon last night to make a very specific declaration on the subject. But up to the General Election—and that was the date which the House would have to keep in mind—there was not conveyed to the mind of the country any intimation or hint that the Government, as a whole, or that any important individual Member of it, saw any objection in point of principle to the concession of the Irish claim for the native care of native affairs, provided only, on the one hand, that the integrity of the Empire was maintained, and, on the other hand, that such guarantees as were available should be given that the rights of the minority should not be abused. If the Government saw any objection to the concession of the Irish claim, they deliberately withheld from the knowledge of the country the condition of their minds. They deliberately excited certain hopes in the breasts of the people of Ireland. They deliberately spread a certain impression through the minds of

the English people—they did all that to secure a certain result at the polls; and, failing to secure that result, they now turned round, without a moment's warning, and by an unprecedented act had by their advice induced the Sovereign in the Royal Speech to use language which he held to be not duly regardful either of the freedom of speech of that House, or of the usage, the custom, and the spirit of the British Constitution. He had always understood the function of the Sovereign of the Realm, in regard to the passing of laws, to be either to give or to withhold from Bills sent up by the consent of both Houses Her Majesty's Royal Assent. But observe the language used in the Queen's Speech with respect to the Irish National question. The Sovereign was actually advised to say—

"I am resolutely opposed to any disturbance of that fundamental law"

—that was, the law of the Legislative Union—

"and in resisting it I am convinced that I shall be heartily supported by my Parliament and my people."

The Party who professed themselves to be the guardians of the Constitution had thus advised and induced the Sovereign to depart from the Constitutional course of waiting on the action of the House. They had advised and induced the Sovereign to take what would be found to have been the regrettable course of declaring in advance Her Majesty's opposition to a certain Bill before the two Houses of Parliament had been pleased to consider that Bill. Was it meant by that paragraph (for which the Government were responsible) that if it should happen that both Houses were to agree to a Bill for the legislative independence of Ireland, the Sovereign would unconstitutionally persist in the exercise of the Royal veto to the extinction of the powers and of the functions of both Houses? If it did not mean that, it did not mean anything. He thought it would have been more decent, more seemly, and more Constitutional for the Government to have refrained from giving the advice reflected in that passage until the time had come for the Sovereign constitutionally to act—not in anticipation of the action of the two Houses, but as the sequel to it. Again, what did the Government mean by the "disturbance of that fundamental law?"

Mr. Sexton

How or why was one law more fundamental than another? Did not all laws rest on the same sanction—namely, the will of that and the other House of Parliament, and the assent of the Queen? And the lightest law to which those united consents were given had the same sanction as any other law, however great and vital it might be. Moreover, Her Majesty's Royal Predecessor and Relative, King George III., in 1782, gave the Royal Assent to a law which not only conceded the legislative independence of Ireland, but actually declared—and the language remained on the Statute Book to England's eternal shame—that that legislative independence, to which the Sovereign now declared itself to be resolutely opposed, should for ever remain in force. People sometimes talked as though an independent Irish Parliament were a matter of ancient history; but it should be remembered that there had been a series of Irish Parliaments. It was only 100 years since the last Irish Parliament met; and yet Irishmen were now told that it was impossible to alter "the fundamental law," although the Sovereign and both Houses of Parliament were pledged 100 years ago to the concession, and to the permanent existence of that legislative independence which now must not be even argued. Her Majesty's Government had, unfortunately, given the Sovereign ill advice. The truth of the statement would, no doubt, be accepted hereafter. Those who believed in the consistency of the action and mind of Her Majesty's Government must have been surprised at some passages in the Queen's Speech. Even those who had no faith in their consistency, and no belief in their intelligence, must have experienced similar astonishment. For while he found that the rising in Eastern Roumelia was giving an expression to the desire of the inhabitants for a change in their political arrangements, and although the desire of the inhabitants of Roumelia, expressed in that moderate and Constitutional manner, had led Her Majesty, under the influence of her Advisers, to feel herself bound to carry on negotiations to realize the wish of those inhabitants, a little lower down in the Speech he found that deep sorrow was recorded to have been caused in the Royal mind by an attempt to excite the people of Ireland against the maintenance of the Union. A rising

in arms by a rebel population in Roumelia was conclusive proof to the Royal mind of the justice of their cause; but the election of Nationalist Representatives by five-sixths of the Irish people, in the manner prescribed by the British Constitution—that election being conducted in a peaceful and orderly way—was not to be accepted as an expression of the desire of the people; but was to be treated, in the language of the Sovereign, as simply a regrettable and deplorable

"Attempt to excite the people to hostility against the Legislative Union."

What was the moral Her Majesty's Government wanted to drive home to the mind of the people of Ireland from these things? Were they to understand that as long as the Irish people confined themselves to orderly and legal and Constitutional modes of giving expression to their desires they would be despised and contemned; and that there was no probability that the expressions of their desires would be taken to be valid by the Government or by the Royal mind of England until they were driven and compelled to rise in arms? No body of men vested with the grave and solemn responsibility of the issues of Imperial rule had ever committed themselves to an inference so imbecile or so fatal as that which might be drawn, and which must be drawn, from those two paragraphs in the Royal Speech. The Cabinet consisted of 14 Members; and he ventured to say that any 14 schoolboys in the country who could not produce a more congruous document than that which he was criticizing deserved to be whipped. The question of local self-government in Ireland had occupied the fore-front in the Recess, and the Press and public men of all sections had recognized its urgency. The Government had played for a certain stake at the General Election, and they had lost it. And now it was found that, with an indifference to their own past constructive promises and of the expectations which they had raised, and with an insincerity which could scarcely be exceeded, they were preparing, by means of the Queen's Speech, to make a fresh raid at a convenient moment upon public simplicity and credulity. That Speech was not meant to be taken by anyone literally—it was simply intended to meet the requirements of a dramatic exigency. He could only

compare that Speech to a letter written by a lady who had an action for breach of promise looming in the distance, with a view to its being read before the jury. The Queen's Speech had been drawn up, not as an exposition of the intentions of the Government, but for consumption in Ireland, so that after they were turned out of Office they might point to it and say — "See what splendid things we would have done for you had we remained in Office; and see what splendid things we will do for you if you place us in Office again." But, after all, what promise did the Government hold out to the Irish people? They were told that as soon as Procedure was done with the Government would go on to give to England and Scotland county councils of a representative character. They all knew that in England and Scotland county government was not so offensive or so injurious to the people as it was in Ireland. In England and Scotland county government was conducted by gentlemen between whom and the people there existed not only no conflict, but a general confidence; and yet, while councils of a representative character were promised to England and Scotland, not one word about the representative character of the councils was said in the case of Ireland. The Bills of England and Scotland were to precede the Bills for Ireland; and if they indulged the wild and improbable supposition that Her Majesty's Government were to remain in Office, the prospect before Members for Ireland was this — that Procedure would occupy till Easter; that the English and Scotch County Government Bills would consume the time until Whitsuntide; and that the House would approach the consideration of a worthless Bill for the County Government of Ireland about the time when hon. Gentlemen in that House began to pine for the pleasures of grouse shooting, and to think of the charms of country life. The sole principle which actuated the present Government was the desire to get into Office whenever they could, to occupy it as long as they could, and when they were thrown out to get back as soon as possible. This Queen's Speech was not to be treated as a frank and candid contribution to the political questions of the time. It was simply a kind of device whereby the Government, after having lost Office,

might be able once more to deceive the opinions of the public. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) had a majority over the noble Lord, and, upon an Amendment, could throw the Government out if he liked. The noble Lord, when he nodded assent, left another material element out of view. The noble Lord forgot that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian had not a majority of the House. The right hon. Gentleman had not been engaged for 50 years in the conflicts of public life without knowing that it was not wise to take so grave and vital a step without something like an approach to certainty as to the resulting consequences. He, therefore, thought the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, in abstaining from moving an Amendment and taking a division upon the Address at the present moment, had shown that prudence he had gained by the length of his experience. He would also say that it was too soon for the noble Lord to attempt to give lessons in Parliamentary strategy to the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. But the noble Lord had also been surprised by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) refraining from moving an Amendment upon the Address, and thus having prevented a general debate upon the Irish National question being raised with a view to a division being taken on the subject. Had the Government made any definite propositions with regard to Ireland; had they laid down any definite principles, and had they held out any hope or prospect of a permanent settlement of the Irish Question, the Irish Party would have been prepared to consider those proposals, and to have arrived at a conclusion whether those proposals were satisfactory or not. The Government, however, had made no proposals whatever. The paragraph in the Queen's Speech was simply a blunt and an emphatic "No." That paragraph, therefore, in the opinion of the Irish Party, offered no fit materials for a debate. The effective answer to a blunt and emphatic "No" was not action in that House, but organization outside. The noble Lord had pointed to the example set by O'Connell as one to be followed by the Irish Members; but that example was set a long time ago, when the Irish Party was in a very different position from that which it at

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present held, and when the science of Irish political action had not advanced to the point now attained. Moreover, the final success of O'Connell was not such as to tempt the present Irish Party to follow his example. And he thought that no hon. Member who heard him would question the accuracy of what he said when he asserted that the present Irish Leader had proved himself to be a man of original faculty. He had shown, by his manner of dealing with circumstances, that he was a man who used his faculties with signal success; and, therefore, he might be absolved from following in all respects the example of O'Connell, and especially he might be pardoned for declining such advice when it came from a British Minister. Another reason why the hon. Member for Cork had refrained from moving an Amendment to the Address upon the present occasion was that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian had repeatedly affirmed, with the consent of the country and, as he believed, of all reasonable Englishmen, that he was favourable to the settlement of the claim of the Irish nation to have a national Legislature, provided the integrity of the Empire, the supremacy of the Crown, and the authority of this Parliament to wield the requisite supremacy were respected. They knew of nothing in the desires of the Irish people, they knew of nothing in the proposals which had up to the present been placed before them, which were inconsistent with the securities demanded by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had told them, moreover, that the study of this question, unutterably grave, had been, and was, his daily and nightly care. Well, they desired—and no one would deny the reasonableness of the desire—to allow the right hon. Gentleman to complete his studies. They desired to allow the right hon. Gentleman time to arrive at a conclusion on this question with deliberation, and to have an opportunity of stating that conclusion, when the proper time had arrived, with due definiteness. And when the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to state to the House and to the country the conclusion at which he had arrived, the time would have come when the Government would be somewhat in the frame of mind of the hero of a fanciful anecdote of a countryman of his (Mr. Sexton's) who was said

to be "blue-moulded for want of a beating." Upon this question the Government were the challengers, and they must recollect that the challenged had always a right to the choice of weapons. It was for them to say whether they would proceed by means of a division on the Address or by some other method which, though less direct, might be more effectual. It was quite plain to them that this paragraph in the Speech was not intended so much as a declaration of opinion as for coaxing either the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian or the Irish Members into the presentation of a measure. In regard to the hon. Member for the City of Cork, he would say that his hon. Friend was now beginning to be rather too old a bird to be caught by a certain familiar method; and, even if he were not an old bird in politics, the chaff in this case had been spread in an exceedingly artless manner. The Government expected that the Irish Members would propose an Amendment on the subject. When coercion was proposed, and when the Government came forward with their Bills, they, or their Successors, would be left under no mistake for a single moment as to the intention of the Irish Members to resist such an attempt to injure and insult their people. They would fight every inch of ground along which the measure would have to pass to the utmost of their power. They would fight it by every means at present known to Parliamentary usage, and every means their future study of Parliamentary usage would enable them to conceive. While, however, they were ready to fight positive proposals, they were not prepared to hang a debate on a contingency, and to go to a division on a "when" or an "if." The truth was that he pitied the Government more than he blamed them. He believed that they had good intentions last week; but those intentions had disappeared under the pressure of circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had, of course, to bear in mind that he had arrayed in the ranks of his Party a certain poisonous element in the shape of 18 Irish Tories, and that nine English constituencies had done him the ill-service of returning Irish Tories to the House. Everyone knew that Ireland needed remedial measures; yet if the Government proposed a speck

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or an atom of remedy for Irish grievances about 27 Irish Tories, sitting for English as well as for Irish constituencies, would desert their Party. ["No!"] "No," they said! Why, he saw a Gentleman, an Irish ex-official of undoubted military spirit, opposite him (Mr. Johnston), who had proclaimed over and over again that upon the day that Home Rule was passed—they should remember with the consent of this Parliament—that he and his valorous followers would line with rifles every ditch from Belfast to the Boyne. They all know that the cardinal article of this Gentleman's creed—an article which threw into the most complete insignificance the Thirty-nine Articles—was that rather than allow Home Rule for Ireland they would kick the Queen's Crown into the Boyne. Irish rebels might in former days have been found in the Nationalist ranks; but Irish rebels were today enshrined in the ranks of the Constitutional Party. What did the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol think of gentlemen who were capable of insulting the Royal dignity by kicking the Queen's Crown into the Boyne?

MR. JOHNSTON: I never said so. I rise to Order, Sir. I never made such a statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman will have a full opportunity afterwards of combating any statement made by the hon. Member. He is out of Order in interrupting.

MR. JOHNSTON: I never said so.

MR. SEXTON said, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would not continue in that House the habit of indiscipline which led to his severance from official life in Ireland. He never said that the hon. Gentleman had used that specific language; but he did assert that the hon. Gentleman had repeatedly declared that if Home Rule were passed he and his friends would line every ditch from Belfast to the Boyne with rifles. [Mr. JOHNSTON: Hear, hear!] Consequently, he could not perceive the practical point of the hon. Gentleman's contradiction. It rather appeared to him to be based on a fine distinction, like those points of Calvinistic doctrines which caused very violent discussions inside the fold, but the meaning of which was not very clear to outsiders. It was very sad to see these rowdy supporters of disunion springing up in the ranks of the "Loyal

minority." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol was well aware that if he were to propose the smallest and most contemptible measure of reform he and his Government would immediately die of an "internal disorder." On the other hand, he believed that the right hon. Gentleman could not propose coercion, for the common-sense of the country would reject it. The right hon. Gentleman could only go on doing nothing, and for that reason he from his heart rather pitied than blamed the Government. He denied that any case had been made out for coercion. In the Queen's Speech reference was made to the absence of serious crime in Ireland. The Grand Juries, the Constitutional pilots of coercion, had been silent; not one word had fallen from the Judicial Bench to intimate that witnesses would not come forward or that juries were unwilling to find verdicts. Indeed, the right hon. Gentleman showed himself that the ordinary law was amply sufficient to deal with the existing state of affairs. Only a few days ago two Judges in Ireland refused to change the venue in a certain case, and stated that their knowledge of the verdicts found by the juries in that and other counties did not entitle them to do what they were asked. The only claim for coercion rested upon the charge of "Boycotting." He would solemnly tell the House that "Boycotting," though it had its grave and condemnable aspects, was, in fact, a safety-valve against outrage. He would prove it in a few words. The condition of things in Ireland was this—that the bulk of the small occupiers had cleared themselves of their last penny—sometimes selling their stock, sometimes their very furniture—two or three years ago, in order to gain the advantage of the Arrears Act. They robbed themselves of the last penny they had in the world in order to procure a clean slate; but in the years which had elapsed since then the value of every staple of agricultural produce had gone down upon the average all round about 40 per cent. He could assure the House that the small farmer in Ireland was not able at the present moment to get for his produce all round within 40 per cent of what he could have got when the judicial rents began to be fixed. The tenants could not pay the judicial rents this year—it

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was impossible. English Gentlemen who listened to him knew the truth of what he said. They had reason to know the gravity and reality of the agricultural depression. They knew that they themselves had cut down their households and retrenched their expenses; that some of them had parted with their town houses, and in various ways had practised a rigid economy in order, in obedience to the dictates of their own consciences and public opinion, to make abatements to their tenants. He had seen many remissions of 50 per cent. Was it not strange that English gentlemen, who had shown so generous a regard for their tenants, who themselves were often men of capital able to bear a strain as well as the landlords, should unite themselves for the purpose of denying similar rights to Ireland with a body of hard driven and unscrupulous Irish landlords, who refused to give any abatement? The Duke of Devonshire had given an abatement of 20 per cent to his Irish tenants, and another great English landlord in Ireland had given a similar abatement; but in these cases the Irish tenants had the good fortune to be under landlords whose instincts were guided, and whose conduct was governed, by the usages of English life. But what was very strange to him was this—that the Duke of Devonshire having given this abatement of 20 per cent, and thereby admitted the urgent pressure of the Irish agricultural crisis, should have accepted association with the landlords who were refusing abatements, and had placed himself at the head of the extermination association, and given countenance to the deputations which waited on the Marquess of Salisbury to urge either that the Irish tenants should be compelled this winter to pay unreduced rents while parting with every shilling they had for food, or for dealing with their land this year, or else that they should be turned out of their holdings, and the landlords enabled to break the tenancy. He was glad the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) was present to hear him; and he would tell the right hon. Gentleman that the real object of this cry for coercion was to enable the landlords to break the tenancies created by the Land Act of 1881; to enable these rack-renting and unscrupulous landlords, with millstones of debt round their

necks, to immorally and flagrantly evade the responsibilities and duties placed upon them by the solemn fiat of the law. These purblind landlords were all in favour of the Legislative Union. The Legislative Union, indeed! Why, the Legislative Union had ruined them. It took them away from their own country into competition with the landlords of England. It had sent them out upon a wild goose chase of competition in the cost and expense of life with a far wealthier set of men than themselves. After 85 years the consequences of that course were seen. They saw this set of poor extravagant Irish landlords, with two-thirds of the fee-simple value of their land in the hands of English money-lenders, engaged in the idle attempt socially to compete with the landlords of England. Was it because three generations of these spend-thrifts found themselves in the hands of those who were generically termed the Jews, that when they had got to this desperate pass they were to be enabled to extract their unabated rents for the purpose of endeavouring to meet engagements contracted by their own folly and their own vice? That was the real case for coercion in Ireland. As to "Boycotting," if it was not for the comparatively moderate means which it placed in men's hands for vindicating public opinion against those whom the people of Ireland considered to be public enemies, it would not be within the power of law or government to limit outrage. The force of "Boycotting" lay in the universality of that public opinion. When landlords persisted in heaping law costs upon indigent tenants, thrust out tenants for the non-payment of impossible rents in order to break their tenancy and obtain once more the arbitrary ownership of the land, he said that the people of the country having no power to make the law for themselves, and finding their Representatives in the House of Commons always overborne and often insulted, were morally justified so far as they could in making public opinion and their consciences stand in the place of the law. They were justified in refusing association, in refusing dealing, with anyone who availed himself of an alien law. He would tell the House, once for all, that there was only one way of ending "Boycotting" in Ireland. It was an impalpable

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evil, which was the growth of public opinion. So long as laws were maintained in Ireland which the people knew to be unjust, which they saw to be an agency for their extermination and for driving them from their homes and their country, they would say that as between English law and their own self-preservation it was their duty to make their public opinion felt as far as they could. The only way to prevent the formation of that public opinion was to confide the power and responsibility of making Irish law to the hands of Irishmen, thereby giving the best security that the law should be administered satisfactorily. The Nationalist Members felt that they had a position of growing influence and of gathering strength. Attempts had been made to minimize the National success of the General Election in Ireland; but he thought that the Gentlemen who listened would agree with him that wherever that National success might be questioned, it was not doubted in the House of Commons. They were five-sixths of the Members from Ireland, and they represented five-sixths of the population. ["No!"] Unquestionably. ["No!"] An hon. Gentleman opposite, who looked studious, but who was not well-informed, said "No!" He invited that hon. Member to go to any record he liked and add up the population in the 85 seats they had won, and he would find that the total generally represented five-sixths of the population. He invited him further to add up the electors of these 85 constituencies, and he would find that those electors generally represented five-sixths of the electors of Ireland. Another fact was one that English gentlemen who know how few seats were uncontested in Great Britain would hear with interest. Out of the 101 seats—counties and boroughs—in Ireland 20 fell into the Nationalists' possession without contest. The House would perceive the significance of that. All the contests against the Nationalists were managed by a central bureau—the silk mercers, he understood, gave £1,000—and it had ample funds. They had the authority of Viscount de Vesci, one of the leaders of the so-called Loyal and Patriotic League, that those contests were inaugurated and carried on for the purpose of giving every man in favour of upholding the Legislative Union between Ireland and Great Britain an

opportunity of voting. Why did they not give this opportunity in these 20 seats? It was, he presumed, because there were no men there who wanted to record their votes in favour of the Legislative Union. They fought 68 contests with anti-Nationalists. Well, in the four Divisions of the county Tipperary the Nationalists polled 16,000 votes, the upholders of the Legislative Union polled in the four Divisions 800. In South-West Meath the so-called Loyalists polled 200; in South Cork, 195; in South Galway, 164. [Mr. BRODRICK: East Antrim.] Viscount de Vesci was confident that every man who was in favour of upholding the Legislative Union would come forward and vote. In East Galway, 133 voted; in North Kildare, 174; in North Mayo, 131; in Mid Cork, 106; in South Mayo, 75; and in East Kerry, 30. Out of 68 contests in which they engaged, in only 10 did they poll over 1,000 votes; while the average vote for a successful National candidate was in every case 4,000 or 5,000 votes. When he heard talk of intimidation and illegal acts connected with the elections, he asked how came it to pass that after this ridiculous result, after this proof that the anti-National Party of Ireland had no appreciable existence, how came it to pass that not a single election had been questioned by an Election Petition? Well, he would ask hon. Gentlemen opposite what was the definition of a real contest? It was a contest in which each side had at least some chance of winning. Now, was it expected that people at sham contests would have behaved as they would at real contests? Many National voters were old and feeble and were very poor, and the magistrates and the Government in Ireland took good care not to extend facilities for polling in proportion to the extent of the franchise; and yet, though the proportion of the voting was so great as it was, it had been suggested by an hon. Gentleman opposite that there had been abstentions. He knew of poor men in his Division of Sligo, badly clothed and badly fed, who walked in the most inclement day of the week for over 20 miles in order to record their votes, and that, of course, was a sham contest where he received 5,000 and the other man got 500, and everybody knew from the beginning that the seat was won. He never saw

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anything like the eagerness of the voters to exercise the franchise. He knew what he was talking of, for he was a candidate in two elections, in one of which he was defeated by 35 votes. He knew of a large number of cases that proved beyond doubt the eagerness of the people to exercise their votes. During his unsuccessful contest in the town of Belfast, a dying man when told that he could not go to the poll replied, that if only he could record his vote for the National Party his death would be a matter of no concern. Another man, aged 91, proposed to walk seven miles to vote, and did actually walk four before he could obtain a seat in a conveyance. Even the police admitted to him at the booths that at other elections the difficulty was to bring up voters; but in this case it was impossible to hold them back; but he noticed in the deputation which recently waited on the Marquess of Salisbury, that a flagrant falsehood was placed in the forefront of the proceeding. ["No!"] Yes; that was the fact. In the progress of reform the transition of the party of tyranny was generally from brute force to lies. When brute force failed, they resorted to falsehood. It was their last card in the pack. The Marquess of Salisbury was told that owing to intimidation (though there was no Petition one-third of the voters outside Ulster did not go to the poll. Now, could they have common patience with that. Could statements such as those be listened to with patience when he said that in Ulster, Leinster, and Connaught, with 51 contests, the total number of votes in the three Provinces reached 300,000? Striking out the constituencies where there were no contested elections, and where there could be no appeal, and which, therefore, should be thrown out of account, the proportion of electors who actually came up to poll in the contested Divisions in three Provinces was 75 per cent, not including spoiled votes. Would anyone say that there was intimidation in London? Yet, in the London boroughs the proportion of voters was 71 per cent, whilst the percentage all over Ireland was 75. Now, would anyone have the hardihood—though he knew that was the chief stock-in-trade of some Gentlemen opposite—would any one get up and say, after that conclusive proof that Ireland went to the poll more

numerously than London, that intimidation kept any number away? There were six contests in Dublin, four of which were shams, two were real. That was, there were two contests in which the anti-Nationalists might have been supposed to have a chance; but four were places in which his hon. Friends could not be beaten. But in the two cases where there were contests the voting was 80 per cent, and that in a place where, if they wished to intimidate, and could have done so, they would, doubtless, have been supposed to perform the operation. Out of 68 contests which the Nationalists fought they were beaten in four only; and when he told the House that one of these seats was taken from them by a majority of 27 out of nearly 4,000, and in his own case that he was beaten by 35 out of 8,000, he thought it would be seen that hon. Gentlemen opposite who sat for these constituencies in Belfast and Derry were not safe in their possessions; and he might quote for their comfort the words of Macbeth—

"To be thus is nothing; but to be safely thus." If they drew a line round Antrim and around two-thirds of Down, they would have brought the anti-National Party within a paddock. So that it was apparent that the anti-National Party in Ireland had no longer any practical standing. As to the charge of intimidation, in the 10 contests between Liberals and Tories where the Nationalists had no interest, the total poll was 78 per cent of the register. Where, then, was the intimidation? But in the two cases where they had a real contest the poll was 80 per cent; and now, to cap the climax and crown the argument, he would point out that in the four Ulster contests, where they were beaten, and where they had supreme reason for intimidation if they could, and were it lawful, in these four, so full and free was the election that the voters numbered 90 per cent of the register. Well, if that was not a conclusive case he did not know what was. He had proved that where the fight was real the voting went up, and that the vote was lower when they were not concerned. He hoped that the House would not in future be troubled or irritated by attempts to minimize the effect of the Nationalist victory at the last General Election. Considering the poverty of the

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people, and the distance they had to travel to record their votes, there never was an instance of such a manifestation of complete confidence in a Parliamentary Party as was afforded by the results of the last General Election in Ireland. If the verdict then given by the Irish people could not gain for Ireland Parliamentary freedom, he feared that no Party means could gain it. It was for the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, who he hoped would soon have Ministerial responsibility, to consider whether he would make himself a participant in the folly of the present Government, who, while friendly to the rising in arms of the Roumelian people, appeared to think that a great Constitutional movement was to be despised and condemned because it was in a country within the British Empire. They, the Irish Members, were not called on in this stage to define the means of satisfying the demands of the Irish people. It was for them to state the grievance; it was for the Government, with its resources of statesmanship, to find these means. It had been shown that during the last 85 years since the Union the population of Ireland had decayed and fallen away, while that of every other country had increased; that land had fallen, and was falling, out of cultivation; that distress and poverty were increasing; that famine was becoming more frequent and periodic, and that discontent and the convulsion of society were increasing. When these facts were established the functions of the Irish Members were discharged, their duty was done. Those who had the responsibility as well as the power of Government knew well that within the bounds of the British Empire there were a score or so of Parliaments, and that, nevertheless, the integrity of the Empire still existed; the Government must be versed in the framing and revising of Constitutions; they must be acquainted with the construction of these various Parliaments, and with the securities established to prevent these Parliaments transgressing proper bounds. They had agents in every country, and could examine the duality of Austria and Hungary, of Norway and Sweden, of Finland with Russia; they could consider the great Federation of the German Empire, and the miniature Federation of Switzerland. It was for the Govern-

ment, with these details in their hands, to inform themselves and cull and select from those various precedents that system of check and counter-check, of balance and counterpoise, by which freedom might be granted the people of Ireland, and the integrity of the Empire at the same time protected. It was absurd and delusive to pretend that the integrity of the Empire, the supremacy of the Crown, or the authority of the Empire were imperilled or called in question by the wishes or necessities of the Irish people. The supremacy of the Crown was never called in question. It remained unaffected in the Irish Parliament that previously existed. The supremacy of the Crown was, in fact, altogether outside the scope of the question. The supremacy of this Parliament required no guarantee; and he would tell them that the only permanent guarantee rested in the satisfaction of the people. Let them only consider the effect of arbitrary coercion. Nothing but discontent and opposition could be felt towards the insulting rule of alien officials. Let them contrast that with the state of affairs which would ensue if the laws for Ireland were made by Irishmen, and if the Irish people were sensible that the law deserved their respect and obedience because it was framed with a view to their wishes and necessities, where, then, would be the danger to the integrity of the Empire? As to the authority of this Parliament, had they not all the authority necessary for the supremacy of the Crown—the authority that was inherent in them? The Act of 1782 was repealed—foully, shamefully, and corruptly repealed—in 1800 by this Parliament. It must, therefore, be obvious that if at any future time they found that the existence of an Irish Parliament endangered the supremacy of the Crown or the integrity of the Empire this operation could be repeated. He called upon them to believe him when he said that if they looked around, if they considered the numbers of the Irish race, if they considered their growth and power in other lands; their growing influence in England, in the Colonies and dependencies, of this country and in other countries; if they took into account and into their minds the persistent and unquenchable determination of that race to procure the freedom of their country; if they also

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remembered the growing complications of British interests in various parts of the world, and the ease with which such complications might be affected and disturbed, the growth of military spirit in Europe and other parts of the world, they would, he thought, agree with him that the danger to the integrity of the British Empire would, as far as Ireland was concerned, lie in a dogged perseverance in the fatal—the now anachronistic—fallacy of keeping at their doors a discontented country and a convulsed society; and that so far as Ireland was concerned the permanent, and sole permanent, safety, both for the integrity of the Empire and the supremacy of the Crown, lay in boldly, courageously, and frankly approaching the question, and once for all giving a safe and rational measure of freedom to the Irish people. He would not be drawn for a moment from these grave questions before them by any speeches that had been made on the other side of the House into any idle or bitter discussion. He would only say that the peculiar qualities of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Major Saunderson) were rather thrown away on that House. That House liked to hear a little argument. The House was patient and attentive whenever it heard a speech such as reasonable men might be expected to offer, or reasonable men to hear with patience; but as far as the hon. and gallant Gentleman was concerned his eloquence was rather thrown away—he would be more at home in a ditch-lining region. From what he had seen of the gallant Gentleman he would say that he would probably have made an exceedingly presentable dervish. He would conclude by saying that he had taken from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, with all the respect that was due from one of his inexperience to one of his great ability and experience, the advice he had given with regard to the spirit in which the Irish National cause should be discussed. The question required the wisdom of counsel, the moderation of thought, and the forbearance of language which had proceeded from the right hon. Gentleman; and he (Mr. Sexton) was also mindful—and he believed that England as well as Ireland would be mindful—of the prudence and forbearance and statesmanship of the course and example set by the hon. Member for Cork.

For his part, he had endeavoured to confine himself to arguments relevant to the question; and he thought he could say with some confidence, both for his hon. Friends and himself, that they would, with all that force that was in them, whatever provocation might be applied, and from whatever quarter it might come, refrain from doing any act, or from saying any word, by which they might compete with others in the evil system of exciting passion. They would say nothing which could prejudice, or hamper, or delay that calm, wise, peaceful, and he hoped friendly, settlement of the great national and international question in which their thoughts and affections were engaged.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) said, that whatever might be the surprise felt by the House at the course taken by the Irish Party, that course could scarcely have been anticipated. That House, which met a few days ago for the despatch of Public Business, was elected under very peculiar circumstances. The House would remember, and it had been reminded by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), that over 80 Representatives for Ireland had been returned to Parliament for the purpose, and with the object, of promoting and effecting, if possible, the separation of themselves and their country from the Legislative Union with England which now existed. The speeches made by those hon. Gentlemen during that electoral contest were not ambiguous. What was claimed by the hon. Members who were returned was complete and entire legislative independence, and, therefore, as a necessary consequence, that there should be conceded to Ireland and the Parliament established there power and authority over the Irish Executive, and, with that, power over the persons and property of everyone in Ireland. That programme was a very extensive and exceptional one; and, when a Parliament was assembled in which those 80 Members found their places, it would surely seem to be the clear duty of the responsible Ministers of the Crown to advise Her Majesty to refer in some way to these circumstances in the Speech from the Throne. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo had, however, criticized the paragraph relating to Legislative Union in the Speech from

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the Throne, and he had called it unusual and unconstitutional. Well, he (Mr. Holmes) would admit that it was unusual; but he denied that it was unconstitutional. A paragraph of that sort, it was true, did not appear in every Speech from the Throne. Indeed, it necessarily appeared in very few such Speeches; because the state of circumstances in which such a paragraph would be inserted was very exceptional. When, however, those very exceptional circumstances did exist, the Ministers of the Crown would be wanting in their duty if they did not advise the Queen to express the opinion which they, as her Advisers, were understood to entertain. He might refer the House to a great authority upon Constitutional usage. When a similar agitation arose in Ireland more than 50 years ago—and many hon. Members were returned from Ireland pledged to a similar programme—a great Constitutional authority, Earl Grey, advised His Majesty to address Parliament in language stronger than any which was used on the present occasion. These, then, being the circumstances under which the House assembled, and the Speech from the Throne was delivered, it might have been expected that the Leader of this powerful Party would, in some way or other, bring the subject to the notice of the House, and take the sense of the House upon it. He (Mr. Holmes) would admit that it was not necessary for the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork, or his Colleagues, to take that course in order to show what their views were, for those views had been most distinctly formulated on many occasions, when they had said that what they desired was a separation from the Imperial Parliament. For the same reason, it was not necessary that they should respond to the invitation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) to state what were their views, or what their countrymen required. But he (Mr. Holmes) must confess he was surprised to hear the hon. Member for the City of Cork, the Leader of their powerful Party, address the House in very calm and temperate language in the course of the debate without referring to the repeal of the Legislative Union from one end of his speech to the other. He made some remarks on the Land Laws

in Ireland, and the necessity for some further legislation, overlooking the fact that for the last five years the Legislature had been employed in dealing with that question. He referred to the fact that some landlords were just and others unjust; but, from the beginning to the end of his speech, he never once referred to the platform on which he and his Party were elected, or to the question on which they took their stand. Beyond that, on the previous evening two other hon. Members of the hon. Gentleman's Party had addressed the House; and if they had not altogether abstained from the subject, they had by no means given it a prominent position in what they said. He (Mr. Holmes) must, however, confess that the hon. Member for Sligo had that night, to a certain extent, relieved the House from the surprise with which they listened to the hon. Member for the City of Cork, and had enabled them to clearly understand the principle and policy of the distinguished Leader of his Party. He (Mr. Holmes) understood the hon. Member for Sligo to say that he and his Friends were not sure at present of the course which might be taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, and that it would, therefore, be premature in them to formulate their demands in a Resolution until they saw what prospect there was of that Resolution not only commanding the votes of the 85 Irish Members, but also receiving the support of the right hon. Gentleman, who might ultimately succeed in educating his Party to a greater extent than he appeared to have done at present. But there was no necessity for the hon. Member for the City of Cork to explain what his policy and his views were on this subject. Last night the hon. Member for the Nuneaton Division of Warwickshire (Mr. Johns) had approved the policy of the Leader of the Opposition not opening his hand, and had said that it was not for the right hon. Gentleman or his Party to supply views or suggest a policy to the Government. He (Mr. Holmes) quite agreed with that proposition, and Her Majesty's Government had not asked for any views; their own views were expressed in the Speech from the Throne, and in the speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, who, in his speech, had given a temperate and grave explanation, not

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merely of the views of Her Majesty's Government, but of the entire Tory Party. The hon. Member for the Nuneaton Division of Warwickshire seemed prepared to follow the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian wherever he went; but it would be more to the purpose to know the policy of the Leaders of the Party to which the hon. Member belonged, and that, at all events, appeared to be the view of the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), who had expressed a desire to know what the views of his Leader were, and a wish that would, it was to be hoped, be gratified before the debate concluded—to hear from the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington), or some other Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench, whether they were not disposed to furnish some little light and leading on this, one of the greatest questions ever submitted to the House of Commons. He (Mr. Holmes) would express the hope that the hon. Member for Northumberland would be gratified in that desire; but it was a very slight hope, since the condition of the Front Opposition Bench from 11 at night to 1 o'clock that morning had not been of a character to lead one to believe that there was that profound interest in the subject which one would have supposed would be taken. The hon. Member for Sligo in his speech set forth the distinct issue that his Party asked, and would accept—namely, nothing less than complete legislative independence, free from any control whatever. Here was the issue, as to which there was no doubt or ambiguity; and if it could not be submitted to the House for those reasons of policy which had been thrown out from time to time, the day was not far distant, he hoped, when the country would know the views of all its politicians on the subject. The paragraph in the Royal Speech dealing with Legislative Union was not the only one dealing with Ireland. It was followed by another of grave importance, requiring most serious consideration from the House. It represented that the present social condition of Ireland was not a cheerful one. It painted that condition in colours that must be called gloomy. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, in referring to this paragraph, said that he had not the means of knowing what

the social condition of Ireland was. He (Mr. Holmes) would admit that, in a question of that kind, Her Majesty's Government had more means of information than any independent Member of the House; and he did not quarrel with the right hon. Gentleman for suggesting that this was a matter for the Government to consider for themselves. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that his mind had been engaged daily and nightly in considering this question for some time past; but he (Mr. Holmes) would be sorry if the right hon. Gentleman had confined his attention to one single aspect of the question. After all, the foundation of all legislation must rest on the social condition of Ireland; and, though Her Majesty's Government had more, still every independent Member must have much information on this point at his hand. Then the right hon. Gentleman had been engaged, and, as he (Mr. Holmes) thought, honestly engaged, from 1869, during the time he had been in Office, in promoting measures for Ireland. It must surely occur to the right hon. Gentleman, from time to time, to consider what had been the result of all his efforts. A very remarkable statement had been made by the hon. Member for Sligo in the course of the debate—namely, that during the past five years Ireland had been going from bad to worse; that discontent had increased and prosperity lessened; and yet those years were those wherein the greatest efforts were made at conciliation. [Mr. SEXTON: I said 85 years, not five years.] At all events, they might take the last five years of special effort as typical, during which time so much had been done for Ireland. He should, however, go a little more into detail, and he should ask whether that debate had not thrown some light on the matter? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian might not have made up his mind; but the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) had no difficulty on that point. The hon. Member had told them that in three Provinces in Ireland the only law recognized was the law of the League. Now, he (Mr. Holmes) was not accepting that himself in its broad and general lines. He, however, asked, what had they on this subject from the Representatives of the National Party? He thought the speeches of the Members for the City of

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Cork and for Sligo were very remarkable. The House would remember what was stated in the Royal Speech, that there was no marked increase in serious crime; but it was further stated that there was evidence of concerted resistance to the enforcement of legal obligations and also organized intimidation. Now, he had followed carefully the observations of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, who, in referring to the many branches of the National League, said strong efforts were made by the Central Authority to keep those branches within legal and proper bounds. He (Mr. Holmes) would admit that those efforts had been made; but the hon. Member had not told the House how the efforts were received by the local branches, and whether they were successful. [Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON: They were.] What were the facts? The National League had been growing steadily for some years; indeed, from 1883, when it stood at 242, until, at the end of 1884, it had 592 branches. In July last it had over 800 branches, and on the 31st of December it had 1,280 branches. ["Hear, hear!"] He was quite prepared for those cheers. He knew that it was their anxiety and wish to increase this organization; and, further, the House had been told, in the most distinct terms, by the hon. Member for Sligo, that the League intended to continue its work until the Irish Party had carried their great object, an independent Legislature. Indeed, he was very much mistaken if a great portion of the hon. Member's remarks was not a justification of that very intimidation condemned in the Queen's Speech, seeing it was referred to by him as a safety-valve. What was the character of this concerted action, this organized intimidation? From the information they had been able to obtain it amounted to this—that the League dictated to every person in many parts of Ireland what their course of action should be, and interfered with that individual liberty which should be protected in every civilized State, and that not as between landlord and tenant alone, but in every relation of life. ["No, no!"] He should be able to satisfy the House by evidence that that was so. The question could not be resolved by mere statistics of crime. To borrow a word from the hon. Member, the operations of the system were fre-

quently intangible; they could hardly reach it, or touch it. They knew meetings were held; but they had no means of learning what was done at them. ["Oh, oh!"] He was well aware that there were public meetings of this body; but the dangerous action of this organization originated not at the public, but at the private meetings. It was in private houses that their plans were carried out with regard to intimidation, and it was there that the danger lurked, that the danger was to be found. The effect could only be judged by combining the evidence of certain isolated facts, each one small in itself, and by the statements of those well acquainted with the country. The statements in the Royal Speech were based on documents prepared by Government officials. They were based on statements of those who had no power or wish to manipulate statistics. They were also based on the statements of the Judges, who, in the month of December, had directed that the writs of the Superior Courts should be served through the post, and not personally, owing to the system of intimidation by these 1,200 branches of the National League. They were also based upon the fact that at the Licensing Sessions in October it was necessary for the Crown to oppose the issue of licences; because publicans, by refusing to supply persons obnoxious to the League, failed to fulfil the obligations attaching to their licence. He might also refer to the remarkable case of the "Boycotting" of the Cork Steam Packet Company. That was once a prosperous and wealthy concern; but because they carried out their obligations as common carriers to an Association, they had been almost ruined and brought to the verge of bankruptcy. ["Hear, hear!"] The cheers of hon. Members showed that they approved of that. It was unfortunate, perhaps, that Her Majesty's Government were obliged to say that they considered that such action on the part of any organization was one which was contrary to the first principles of law. In support of his assertion that that organization carried on its operations in almost every part of the country and in relation to almost every business of life there was one piece of evidence he would like to bring before the House. It so happened that there was published in *United Ireland*, a journal conducted with great ability, and in support of the

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National League, each week, a series of resolutions supplied by the secretaries of various branches throughout the country; and by reading those resolutions one could form some idea of the nature of the operations of this organization. In a copy of the paper for October 24, 1885, found that at a meeting of the branch at Oughterard the following resolution was passed:—

"That in view of the present depression and fall in the price of stock and farm produce we call upon the shopkeepers to grant a reduction of 25 per cent in all outstanding debts, as it is impossible for the poor tenant farmers to meet all their liabilities at present."

It would thus be seen that this was not a matter between landlords and tenants, but that the ordinary shopkeepers were called upon, with the sanction of the National League, to make a reduction of 25 per cent. From the same journal, and almost next in succession, he read that at a meeting at Caherline, County Limerick—

"The case of a land-grabber, who had made a half-hearted surrender of his ill-gotten plunder, was before the meeting. It was resolved to exercise the force of public opinion against him until a complete restitution is made."

What was the meaning of a land-grabber according to this resolution? It meant a man who, when a farm was vacant, chose to enter into it, having made a contract with the owner. It was not contended that this person was not perfectly entitled by the law to do so. He made a bargain with the owner to occupy the land for a certain time on certain terms, and for this the operations of the society were directed against him. It might be said that proceedings were only taken against men who had taken farms from which men had been evicted.

Mr. T. O. HARRINGTON: Unjustly evicted.] But he Mr. Holmes, maintained that men who took land year after year from certain landlords were put under the same ban. Again, he read in *United Ireland*, of November 21, that the following resolution was unanimously passed at a meeting held at Grane and Urlingford:—

"That as Lord Mountgarret's agent, Mr. Keough, has deprived James Herke of his position as gamekeeper for no other crime than refusing to herd an evicted farm, we hereby announce to all whom it may concern that whoever grabs James Herke's situation as gamekeeper shall be looked upon as an ordinary grass

or land-grabber, and that we use all lawful means to secure that Lord Mountgarret's ducks and grouse shall be allowed henceforth to take care of themselves."

It would be observed that this was not a case of land-grabbing, but that of taking the ordinary situation of gamekeeper. Here was a resolution put and carried at a meeting at Kilworth and Aralen—

"That we hereby reiterate our determination not to pay rents without the abatements already agreed upon, and that any one receding from this determination be hereby declared a traitor."

He would go next to a resolution passed on the same day at a meeting of the branch at Barraduff, County Kerry—

"That the resolution against Patrick Neagle be rescinded, and any persons who wish to hold intercourse with him may do so, though we will not at present admit him a member of our branch."

Again, at Ballygran (Charleville), the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

"That we call on the contractors for labourers' cottages throughout the Croom Union not to deal with any obnoxious persons in the taking of lime or any other materials for the building of same."

At Rathmore, County Kerry, on December 12, the following resolutions were passed unanimously:—

"(1) That any person found communicating with a few obnoxious individuals in this locality will be expelled from the League henceforth; (2) that every person presenting cattle for sale at a fair shall produce his card, and that no buyer purchase from any person without producing same; (3) that no individual sell to any dealer without presenting his card, as it is the only way of detecting those employed by the Defence Unionists, and that we call on the other branches to follow this example."

So that, in point of fact, every person who did not belong to the League was prevented from buying and selling in the ordinary fairs and markets of the country; and in County Limerick one of the branches called the attention of the surrounding branches to the presence of an Emergency gang in the neighbourhood, and asked the people to co-operate with them in refusing to have any dealings with the "wretches." At Newcastle West, according to the record—

"A man came before the meeting and expressed his sorrow for having worked for Darcy, the 'Boycotted' land-grabber. He now promises to leave his employer forthwith, as did also his wife, who is a washerwoman there. His apology was accepted, and the League promised

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to find a house for him. The secretary was directed to write to the landladies of two public officials who are persistently keeping company with Darcy and his family, with the view to have them shift their lodgings."

At Ballylanders, a charge being made against Peter Creagh for using English-made nails, he promised to encourage "Irish manufacture for the future." There seemed to be some notion of a Statute of Limitations on the part of the League, as was shown by a resolution from the branch at Ahabollogue, County Cork—

"Mr. J. Carroll laid a statement before the committee of his eviction in 1867 and the grabbing of his farm by his brother. The committee consider that the conduct of Mr. Thomas Carroll was very bad; but having some doubt as to the power of the League in a case occurring in 1867, the secretary was directed to communicate with the Central League on the subject."

Would the National League go to the trouble of passing resolutions of that kind if they were not aware that there was a power behind them which gave a sanction to such resolutions? The fact was, that unless this organization changed its mode of operation, or unless it could be compelled to change that mode of operation, they could not have in many parts of Ireland that authority of law and order which was necessary in any civilized country. Now it might be said, what had the Government done for the purpose of getting this organization under control? He did not, in the slightest degree, shrink from that question. The Government had been in Office for six months. During the years 1884 and 1885 the National League was rapidly developing, and the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian did nothing to check its advance. "Boycotting" was not a growth of six months, but had been going on for some years past. It was somewhat difficult for the Government to find a remedy when they had been in Office only six months, seeing that the late Government were unable to discover any practical remedy after being in Office five years. Then, again, in November last, there was a great deal of excitement arising from the Elections; and he thought that it would be unreasonable to take notice of words that might be used at such a time—words which would not be repeated in calmer moments. Before the Executive

took exceptional powers, it was quite right that they should wait and see what the state of the country would be when the contest was over. During that period of excitement, however, all measures that could be taken ought to be taken under the ordinary law. No blame, he submitted, could be attached to the Executive, who had been making every effort to crush intimidation. But if they had not succeeded up to the present time, it might be asked what they intended to do in the future? The Speech from the Throne indicated pretty clearly that if the ordinary law was found to be insufficient for crushing this organized intimidation, exceptional measures would be asked for by the Government. The Speech indicated something further—namely, that, as far as the present information of the Government went, the powers which the ordinary law gave were not sufficient for that purpose. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Albert Grey) had asked what was the necessity of waiting for the Report of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith), who, in a day or two, would be responsible for the Government of Ireland? The Government of Ireland had in its possession many means of information; but, surely, it would be a very exceptional course to formulate what might be necessary at a time when the Government was in a state of transition. The House had the assurance of the Government that it would shrink from no responsibility for the purpose of securing in Ireland good order and obedience to the law. He contended that the language used in Her Majesty's Speech was justified by the state of the case. But he took no pleasure in making that statement. He believed that Her Majesty's Government were as anxious as any Government ever were to do full justice to Ireland; and he said more, for he believed that the Supporters of the Government, from whatever part of Ireland they came, were convinced that full and fair justice must be done where it was necessary to carry out any change of the law. As far as the Irish Executive were concerned, the House might rely that no effort would be lost to restore order and to remedy any grievance that existed—any grievance that could be legitimately remedied. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian yesterday, in solemn words, asked the House to

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remember that in the difficult position in which they were at the present time placed, their great object should be to arrive at the truth, and that they should put aside prejudice, and free themselves from anything like Party conflict. As far as they on the Ministerial side were concerned, they would be sorry indeed to make any political capital out of this question. In anything they might do, and in anything they had said, they had the deepest sense of responsibility, and were under the obligation of a most sacred duty. If it had been announced that it was the opinion of Her Majesty's responsible Advisers that the Union should be preserved, the reason of that was that they believed the dissolution of the Union would not only be fatal to the interests of the Empire, but also fatal to Irish interests. If the Government thought it might be necessary to ask the House to confer upon them powers to cope with intimidation, their only reason was that they believed it was of the first importance for Irish interests and for everyone connected with that country to have order and law maintained.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he did not pay any very great attention to what fell from the lips of the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Holmes). He had observed that the very last persons consulted by the Government with regard to its policy in Ireland were the Law Officers for Ireland. As far as he (Mr. Labouchere) could understand, the right hon. and learned Gentleman threw over, as far as he possibly could, the Leader of his Party. He stated, after explaining that all the supporters of the Government coming from Ireland—a very small body—would do full justice to Ireland, that he considered the Government ought as soon as possible to bring in some Coercion Bill. It was perfectly true, he said, that in the excitement of the Elections things were said and done that ought to be overlooked; but it should be remembered, he remarked, that "Boycotting" still continued, and therefore a Coercion Bill should be brought in at once. There had been, he pointed out, a great deal of "Boycotting." Why had not the Government prosecuted the "Boycotters?" The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) said that in

every case where the crime was known, and "Boycotters" had been prosecuted, convictions had been secured. In the face of that admission of the right hon. Gentleman, he (Mr. Labouchere) failed to see the necessity for any coercive legislation. He should like to know why the ordinary law was not put into force against the persons known to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, who stood alone on the Front Bench in demanding a Coercion Bill to deal with intimidation? He thought he was justified in saying that the Government rarely consulted their Law Officers for Ireland as to what they intended to do in Ireland. With respect to the Address, there was one paragraph to which he was not prepared to give his assent. It was the paragraph relating to Ireland. The paragraph stated that the Queen regretted that an attempt had been made to excite the people of Ireland to hostility against the Legislative Union between that country and Great Britain, and Her Majesty was resolutely opposed to any disturbance of that fundamental law—namely, the Legislative Union. He (Mr. Labouchere) did not attach undue importance to a Queen's Speech; for, as hon. Members were well aware, it merely embodied the sentiments of the Government for the time being, and was in itself of no more binding effect than a speech delivered by a Minister in his place. Lord Salisbury and his followers had been prating and protesting a good deal of late against any disturbance of fundamental law, forgetting that that fundamental law was only established at the beginning of the present century, and had already been changed by the destruction of the Irish Church. It might be supposed, from what had been said, that this was one of the laws made by the Saxons. It was, however, not an old law, but, practically, a new one. If hon. Gentlemen who were always talking about the Constitution knew what the Constitution was, they would see that there were no fundamental laws in it. The Constitution meant not permanency, but change. They could change and modify anything to suit the requirements of the age. It was a most unconstitutional thing to say that one law was a fundamental law and that another should be changed. He stood by the Constitution, and con-

tended that those who called themselves the defenders of the Constitution had invented an entirely new principle with their fundamental law. He did not regret that the attempt spoken of had been made. He rejoiced that it had been made, and hoped that it would be successful. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked why an Amendment had not been proposed from that side of the House? He (Mr. Labouchere) was not going to answer for right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench; but the reason why an Amendment had not been proposed by hon. Members sitting below the Gangway was because an Amendment only dealt with practical politics, and there was no reason in the world why they should interfere with the regrets contained in the Queen's Speech, or rectify, by means of an Amendment, the historical errors of the Government. Hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to consider that this Parliament was a sort of Irish faction fight. They were continually trailing their coat along the ground, and asking someone to jump upon it; and they almost went on their knees, imploring someone to come forward and turn them out of Office. Considering the present state of Ireland, as set forth in the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, he should have thought that the Government would have made some more practical recommendations in the Speech from the Throne than were to be found there. Ministers absolutely told the House that they knew nothing at all about Ireland. They had been in Office for many months now; they had had the assistance of Lord Carnarvon and of the late Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; but at present their only scheme for the government of Ireland consisted in sending the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. W. H. Smith) to Ireland as the new Irish Minister. He could not understand how that right hon. Gentleman, in a few weeks' time, was to discover everything connected with the state of Ireland, or how he could possibly know more about the condition of the country than Lord Carnarvon or the late Chief Secretary. There was one fact, however, more important than this new appointment. It consisted in this—that 86 Members had been returned to this

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Parliament under the Electoral Law passed last year, and passed deliberately with the intention that the opinion of the people of Ireland should be fairly represented in this country. The Irish Representatives had come back to the new Parliament with a policy. He did not say that they were prepared at once to go into the details of that policy; but the Government certainly knew what the opinion of Ireland was. In these circumstances, what did the Government do? In the Speech from the Throne, the Government tried to tell the Irish Members that no conciliation was possible. The Government would not even listen to their arguments, but immediately stepped in, before hearing what they had to say, and told them that it was a fundamental law of this country that they could not grant what Irish Members considered just and desirable for Ireland. Was the government of Ireland, at the present time, so excellent that the Government could come forward and say that no possible change in that government could be made? He would read two extracts from speeches which had been delivered on this question by two distinguished politicians. One was from a speech delivered by Lord Cowper, whom the Conservatives almost lauded when in Ireland, a Nobleman not distinguished for his exaggerated Radical views.

"In Ireland all local matters are really managed through the instrumentality of the Resident Magistrate, and the Resident Magistrate is in constant communication with the Castle. This state of things has partly arisen from the helpless nature of the Irish. . . A hateful system of bureaucratic government is the result."

The other extract was from a speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain), in which he said that the system of Irish government was founded on the bayonets of 30,000 soldiers, encamped permanently in a hostile country, and that it was a system completely centralized as that of Russia in Poland, or Austria in Venice. But the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) said that the Government would not even grant to Ireland at present any concession in regard to County Government. The noble Lord had adopted a most extraordinary theory in regard to this matter. He said, in effect, that

the Government would, perhaps, provide the Irishmen conducted themselves properly, kindly grant this reform to them, and would throw to them some little sop in the way of County Government. The noble Lord complained, frequently, of some ambiguity in the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). It was pointed out that when the right hon. Gentleman referred to Local Government, he, perhaps, did not mean the same thing that was meant by the Government when they spoke of Local Government. He (Mr. Labouchere) thought it was somewhat strange that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite should complain of ambiguity on the part of any Member on the Opposition side of the House, considering that during the last few weeks they had been doing nothing but trying to muddle up the whole question of Local Government or Home Rule, and to insist in their newspapers and in public that Home Rule meant nothing but separation. Did Home Rule mean nothing but separation? Were they to understand that if in Ireland there was a separate Parliament, perfectly independent of the Imperial Parliament, this would necessarily mean separation? Did hon. and right hon. Gentlemen know that in Hungary, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Germany, and in many other countries there were local Governments and an Imperial Government also, and that the local Governments were absolutely independent in all local matters of the Imperial Government? What was Canada? Was Canada an integral part of the Empire, or was it not? Were our Colonies not an integral part of our Empire? To say that the fact of there being one, two, or three Parliaments must necessarily produce the disintegration of the British Empire was to absolutely ignore the fact of what the British Empire was composed. As he had said, the British Empire was composed not only of these Islands, but also of our Colonies. One would suppose that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite were under the impression that the system of one Parliament for two Islands was a sort of Divine institution, and that anything else was likely to bring ruin to the Empire that accepted it. What was this Union? It was the outcome of the grossest corruption ever

perpetrated. That was an historical and admitted fact. Titles were sold openly in the market like cattle, and yet they were told that they must listen to the views of Dukes and Peers, when they chose to say that we must not grant Home Rule, or, if we did, those who called themselves Liberals now would join the Conservatives henceforward. He noticed the other day in a Conservative paper a statement to the effect that the letter written by the Duke of Bedford and the speech delivered by the Duke of Westminster were of more importance to the country than the results of the late General Election. As far as he (Mr. Labouchere) was concerned, it was a matter of the most absolute indifference to him, and he thought to most hon. Members of the House, what the Dukes of Bedford and Westminster thought. He knew this, however—that the Duke of Westminster the other day made one of the most disgraceful and scurrilous speeches which could have been made either by a Duke, or by any other person.

MR. FINCH-HATTON: I rise to Order. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether the hon. Gentleman is in Order in referring to a Member of the other House of Parliament in such a manner?

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Gentleman reflects in disparaging terms on a Member of the other House of Parliament he is clearly out of Order. But I do not gather from the remarks of the hon. Member that he is referring to the House of Lords, or to anything which has passed in that Assembly.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that hon. Members who had sat in the previous Parliament were well aware, from his conduct in the past, that he would not say a word of a disparaging nature in reference to the other House of Parliament. He was referring to a speech delivered by the Duke of Westminster in his individual capacity; and he said that if that was the mode in which the allegiance of Ireland was to be won over to this country, the mode adopted was a most strange one. He thought that the Duke of Westminster ought to be ashamed of that speech. The Legislative Union with Ireland had lasted less than a century, and it had been one of the most conspicuous failures in political history. There had been some 80 Coercion Bills; and, so far from our having won over

the Irish, they were, with few exceptions, determined to do all they could to put an end to that Legislative Union. No doubt, as the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) pointed out, the land was the difficulty; but when hon. Gentlemen opposite said that the object of hon. Members from Ireland was to confiscate the property of the landlords, what justification had they for that assertion? Could they produce any statements on the part of Irish Members showing that they dreamed of confiscating the land in any way? It was always said that anything which would allow tenants to live and thrive on the land must, in the nature of things, be confiscation. But why should not Irish Members be believed when they said that they did not aim at confiscation? Why should not that declaration on their part be received with the same respect as would be given to a similar declaration coming from the right hon. Gentleman the late President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain)? If the rents fixed under the Land Act were right at the time they must be wrong now, because produce had gone down enormously in value. The primary idea of the Act was to enable tenants to live and thrive on the land by their own industry, and to pay the excess, if there was an excess, to the landlord; but in many parts of Ireland that had become an impossibility. The Irish clung to the land; but you could not get rent from them if they had no money. They could not pay, and we ejected them. Why did not we hear more said against wholesale ejectments? "Boycotting" had always existed, and always would; and the meaning of it was that you were not to have social relations with a man who was regarded as an enemy of his country, and who was injuring, as far as he could, the cause of his country. He wished hon. Members would read Irish newspapers, instead of reading only the letters of correspondents in the London papers. They would then see that "Boycotting" was not the crime they assumed it to be; but that the real crime in Ireland was that some landlords were driving men, women, and children out of their homes because they could not pay rent. Would fathers allow their wives and children to starve on the roadside if they had money to pay rent? If such evic-

tions were going on in England, there would be such an outcry that they would be put an end to at once. The hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Brodrick) had protested against "Boycotting" in Ireland, and against the terrorism exercised during the Elections; but that terrorism was nothing to be compared with the terrorism exercised by squires and by dames of the Primrose League, some beautiful and others not, over the labourers in the English counties; while, in the National churches, clergymen might have been heard invoking damnation in the next world upon anyone who voted against the Conservatives. Then it was said that in Ireland Catholics were the difficulty—showing that as soon as you disposed of one difficulty another was raised. Yet, in Ireland, Protestants were returned by Catholics; but how many Catholics were returned by the Protestants of England? Sectarian spirit was stronger in England than it was in Ireland. Orangemen used Protestantism as a means to an end; and for a long time Orangemen had been the curse of Ireland. They made use of religious differences to perpetuate ill-will; and he rejoiced that even in Ulster, in the greater number of constituencies, they had been defeated. Now these self-styled Loyalists were talking of civil war, and trying to frighten us by saying that if Home Rule were granted they would die in the last ditch. It was a scandalous speech that was made by Lord Cole the other day, and his language exceeded in violence any that had been used by Nationalists in the moment of their wildest excitement; but he (Mr. Labouchere) had never heard of its condemnation. Why should not the House believe the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his Friends, when they said that they did not desire any separation beyond legislative independence? Why should they desire more? There was nothing to be gained by it. The Irish Members were ready to give every species of guarantee that could be desired; but what need of them?—for England was far stronger than Ireland, and would hold the forts and command the troops in Ireland, and could destroy the country in a fortnight if she should choose to do so. There was no desire on the part of Ireland to claim or demand a Navy and troops for Ireland.

Mr. Labouchere

Did the Government mean to tell him that the Irish would be such absolute fools as to engage in a wild, mad, rebellion with England? Our real guarantee was the Army, and the fact that we were the stronger power. If Ireland was as strong as England, and had a large Army and Navy, we might say, with some show of reason, that we would not give Parliamentary independence to Ireland, because it might lead to separation. The utter absurdity, however, of holding such a view under the present circumstances was quite apparent. What did hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite suggest as the only alternative to Home Rule? Coercion. They must elect to do either one thing or the other. They must either please the Irish, and gain their goodwill and good feeling, or perpetually coerce them. If they embarked in coercion, they would finally arrive at the point of treating Ireland as Russia treated Poland, and deprive her of her whole representation, and rule her by martial law and the sword. There was no choice between the two. It was curious to hear the hints of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland with regard to coercion. They did not hear any of those hints when the Conservative Party were desirous of obtaining the Irish vote. He believed it was also a coincidence, and not the result of any arrangement to that effect, that the Conservatives, although now ready to bring in a Coercion Bill, did not bring in that Bill during the last Parliament. He accepted that as a simple coincidence; but he might also observe that they heard nothing either about the "fundamental law." There was a speech made by Lord Salisbury at Newport which did not contain anything about it; and it was only when the Irish vote had been given to the Conservatives that they heard about these "fundamental laws" and the integrity of the Empire. As regarded that, the integrity of the Empire would be unimpaired, if there were a dozen Parliaments in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. But the suggestion that it was assailed was thought to be a good electioneering cry by those who wished to stave off democratic changes in this country; for if they could engage this country in perpetual disputes about Ireland, they knew that they would arrest

democratic progress in this country. It was the old game of the Conservatives. Mr. Pitt engaged in foreign wars simply to stop the progress of democracy, and Jingoism was only another means towards the same end. The Jingoists wanted to make them forget all domestic reforms; and now that they found the country was not prepared to grant to any Government money to aid, as it was called, some foreign nation—the aid offered generally ending in the absorption of that foreign nation, they wished to engage them in an internecine war at home, and to force England and Ireland to become perpetual enemies. If once they were unhappily embarked in such a contest with Ireland, whom would the electors of England prefer to carry it on? The Conservatives, of course. The Liberals were not the fit agents to do that abominable work; and if the Conservatives could establish such a war between the two countries, and absolutely refused to listen to the voice of Ireland uttered through her Constitutional Representatives, he believed that they would remain in power, with some short intervals, for the next 20 years. Supposing that Sicily desired to have a local Parliament, and Italy refused to grant it, insisting on ruling Sicily by means of coercion, would there not be articles written in many of our newspapers to show how absurd it was for Italy to deny self-government to that island? They were always fond of lecturing other Powers on such matters, telling them what grand principles and rocks of men and liberty England possessed; but when they were confronted with a problem of that kind at home they could not find a way to deal with it, and at once threw over their principles, and talked, forsooth, of a "fundamental law." An eminent Irish Conservative statesman (Mr. Burke), in 1798, had said—

"Ireland could not for one moment be separated from England. The closest connection was essential for the well-being of the Three Kingdoms, and the whole of the Imperial politics should be decided in England; but Ireland should have local, civil, and commercial independence, but look up to Great Britain in all matters of peace or war."

That was substantially what the Irish Members said now, and that was the statement of an Irishman respected all the world over; and he did not believe there was anything in the Irish demands

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which would not be in conformity with what had been said nearly 100 years ago. What Ireland wanted was to be civilly and commercially independent. They did not ask for separation, or absolute independence, and were ready to leave to Her Majesty's Government and to the Imperial Parliament all Imperial matters; but they asked to be allowed to legislate for themselves on matters essentially regarding Ireland, in order that they might insure that Ireland should be in the future more prosperous than she had been in the past. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had urged them to look at that question with calmness and deliberation. That was the spirit in which hon. Gentlemen on that side were ready to discuss it, desiring by every means in their power to unite the local independence of Ireland with the maintenance of Imperial authority. He therefore protested against any English Minister meeting the just and reasonable demands of the Irish people, expressed on their behalf by the vast majority of their Representatives, with a more *non possumus*.

COLONEL WARING said, he did not wish to go into the whole question of Home Rule for Ireland on that occasion, his object being to say a few words in reference to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) in regard to a speech attributed to Lord Cole while he was speaking in County Fermanagh. He would not contend that the noble Lord was justified in making the remarks which had been attributed to him. He had not seen the source from which the report had been quoted, and he was unable to say whether it was or was not correct. If it was correct, it was to be regretted that Lord Cole should have used such language; but it must be remembered by those who condemned it that the speech was made under strong provocation. He did not intend to adopt a *tu quoque* argument; but it would not be out of place to remind the House that the hon. Member for South Londonderry (Mr. Healy) informed them that loyalty in Ireland would be driven into the North-Eastern portion of the Kingdom, and then hedged in with a ring of fire. In such circumstances Lord Cole would have to migrate; and he did not think it wonderful that an

Mr. Labouchere

excitable young Nobleman should have thought the time had come when retaliatory measures ought to be contemplated. With regard to the main question at issue, he held that no one could understand or could deal properly with the Irish Question who did not study history, both ancient and modern. It was not sufficient to go back to the history of the Union, or even to the history of the 18th century. It was, he believed, necessary to start with the first connection between England and Ireland, and to follow through the successive centuries and varying chains of events. The hon. Member for Cork professed that he could not conceive what it was that the loyal Gentlemen of Ireland mistrusted in the proposition he made. In the first place, they would like to know a little more definitely what that proposition was. At all events, there were strong reasons for mistrusting any proposition which proceeded from the hon. Member. The House must not judge of the views of the hon. Member from the moderate, temperate speech he delivered last night, or of the views of hon. Members who acted with him from the words they used when speaking from those Benches. A more correct opinion might be, perhaps, formed by a study of their gestures when Gentlemen who disagreed with them were speaking. But if English Members wanted to know why the Ulster Members were unwilling to trust themselves to the tender mercies of the hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues they must look back into Irish history, and study the annals of the periods when the Party now represented by the hon. Gentleman held power in Ireland. He believed they must begin in the year 1641. If they wanted to see what would be the probable result of any line of policy, they should ascertain what had been its consequences before. When the Party which the hon. Member for Cork now professed to lead held sway in Ireland in 1641, they knew what the loyal portion of the community suffered at their hands. They also knew how the loyal minority were treated in 1687 and 1689; and they had good reason to suppose that if the same Party again held sway in Ireland similar results would follow. He did not believe in the possibility of safeguarding the loyal minority by any guarantees whatever. In the first place, by whom were the gua-

rautes to be given? It did not appear to him that there was any person on the part of the so-called National Party in Ireland who could guarantee what they would do, or what they would not do. Secondly, to whom were the guarantees to be given? If they were to be given to the English Government, what security had the Loyalists that when the time came the English Government would exact those guarantees? It was possible that, under certain circumstances, the Loyalists might take guarantees for themselves; and, if so, they would be very careful to exact observance of them. The Loyalists did not fear Home Rule in the abstract; they did not fear that any English Government would ever agree to establish an independent Parliament in College Green. But they did fear that, bit by bit, and little by little, concessions might be made to the disloyal Party, and that tribunals might be established, with small powers at first, but by degrees having such scope and power as might sap the safeguards of Loyalists' lives and liberties. They did not fear at all the withdrawal of the English power from Ireland. If that power was withdrawn, the men whose ancestors dispersed the Army of King James II. at Newtown-Butler, and starved behind the ramparts of Derry, would be able to take care of their own interests; but they did not wish to be chained by English laws, like Prometheus to the rock, while the twin vultures of bigotry and Atheism from Rome and from Chicago were pecking at their vitals.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM said, that that debate showed that they had already realized some of the advantages which they hoped to realize from the extension of the Parliamentary franchise. Nothing in connection with the debate had given him more pleasure and hope than the exceedingly moderate and courteous way in which the hon. Member for Cork approached the solution of this problem, and the magnificent speech of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, which raised the discussion to a very high position. He was, however, sorry that the House did not get from the Government the aid they expected in the solution of this problem; but the Tory Party seemed to be incapable of striking out any policy but one of coercion, or of applying any other method than that to the

solution of a political problem. Coercion was spoken of by them as if it had never been heard of before; but the truth was that it had been tried in Ireland for the last 80 years, with what results they saw. He, for one, would never vote for any coercion for Ireland which was not applied to England. The facts and arguments in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the previous evening pointed to the conclusion that coercion was not required; but his conclusion was that it must be adopted. When they were told this on the opposite side of the House, he could not forget that they heard nothing about coercion for Ireland from the Tory Party six weeks ago, and that the cry for it had only recently sprung up in that Party. A Party which got the Irish vote at the Elections by abstaining from saying aught about coercion, and then, when the last vote was polled, turned round and said that coercion was required, was not, in his (Mr. Handel Cosham's) opinion, worthy of the confidence of that House or of the country. For his own part, he could not believe that a Government was deserving to be trusted with coercive power in Ireland who first used the Irish Party as the means of climbing to power, and then, when they had attained power, kicked down the ladder by which they had mounted to Office. It was, at any rate, surely their duty to listen to the Irish Members, who had been returned by the great body of their countrymen; and it was also their duty, if possible, to give effect to the demands which they preferred on behalf of those whom they represented. As to the integrity of the Empire, he was charged to say that no one on that side of the House attacked that integrity; but he believed that the integrity of the Empire could be best secured by doing justice. The more they built their laws on doing justice and on the belief in the justice of those laws, the more likely their laws were to be permanent. The only shock which the permanency of the Empire had ever received had, in fact, come from the policy of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. They had, as everyone knew, lost the Colonies in America through following their policy, and they might lose Ireland now by following the same course. He believed, however, that not only the Irish Party,

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but a large contingent of the Liberal Party, would be able and would be determined to prevent a coercive policy being adopted towards their fellow-subjects in Ireland. As a Party, it was true that the Liberals were under no obligation to the Irish. As a Party they owed them nothing, while hon. Gentlemen opposite owed them a good deal. In truth it was notorious that a great many seats on the other side of the House would be vacant if it had not been for the Irish vote. But, allowing that the Liberals owed nothing to the Irish as a Party, they did owe something to justice. More than that, he believed that the Union between the two countries would be cemented, and would be rendered more firm, by giving the Irish jurisdiction over their local affairs. He had, he must confess, heard with some surprise the regret expressed by an hon. Gentleman opposite, that they had not come to finality in legislation for Ireland. The truth was that there was no finality in human affairs, and they certainly had not attained it in Ireland. A great deal of misery still existed in that country; but, at the same time, it was not true that our legislation had been unsuccessful. For instance, the removal of the Irish Church had, he believed, altogether removed religious dissensions and the religious difficulty. As to the existence of "Boycotting" in Ireland, he wished to confirm a remark of an hon. Friend of his on the previous evening, that "Boycotting" was not confined to Ireland. Let hon. Gentlemen visit the rural districts of England, and they would find the Primrose League ladies, the parson, and the squire "Boycotting" to an extent they ought to be ashamed of. The Nonconformists in the rural districts were, to his knowledge, as much "Boycotted" as anyone in Ireland; and he could only say that if these practices continued it would be necessary to take adequate steps to make those guilty of "Boycotting" in England ashamed of themselves, and to put a stop to these practices.

COLONEL DAWNAY said that, in common with many other hon. Members on both sides of the House, he deeply regretted that Her Majesty's Government had not seen their way to take immediate action for the better protection of the loyal classes in Ireland.

Mr. Handel Coatham

The hon. Member for Sligo had said he and his Friends were unable to proceed with their demands because they were thwarted by 27 loyal Members. He (Colonel Dawnay) ventured to say that that extended further than he supposed, and that he would find other Members in the House who would stand by those 27 loyal Members. The House was told in the Queen's Speech that if the existing provisions of the law proved to be inadequate, further provisions would be asked for. But could there be better proof that the existing laws had broken down than the statements of the deputations that waited upon the Prime Minister last Tuesday? It seemed to him that the speeches on that occasion proved to any unprejudiced person that the Loyalist classes in Ireland were suffering under a system of persecution and terrorism which no other civilized Government would tolerate for a single day. That this system of persecution was steadily increasing, that it was spreading to all classes, that it was paralyzing every trade and industry, and rapidly bringing Ireland to social, moral, and financial ruin was perfectly plain. He listened attentively last night to the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork. It was a studiously moderate speech; but the hon. Member for the City of Cork, speaking to the House of Commons, was always moderate. He only disclosed his real views and intentions when he spoke in Ireland and America. They all knew what his real intentions were, because he had said he would never rest until he had broken the last link which joined Ireland to England. And his method of carrying this object out was simple. Every concession wrung from an unwilling British Government was to be a lever, a coign of vantage, and a starting point for a fresh concession. Now, only one thing was necessary for the success of this plan, and that was to have a weak and irresolute Government to work upon—in fact, the sort of Government the country had during the last five years. The experience of the last five years had proved that concessions to lawlessness were always useless, and that the hon. Member for the City of Cork would never be satisfied with concessions—in fact, he dared not be satisfied until he had ruined England, because he drew his support from the enemies of England in

every part of the world. There were two faces to the Irish Question. These were the real Constitutional agitation and the sham agitation, the sham Constitutional agitation inside the House and the real agitation outside the House, the dagger and the dynamite of the Leaguers and the Fenians. We had now a new Government—a Government that in its foreign policy, on the testimony of the late Prime Minister, had proved itself worthy of the highest traditions of English statesmanship. He earnestly trusted that it would show the same courage in protecting the loyal classes in Ireland; that it would throw aside all unworthy Party considerations; that it would proclaim the National League and put down with a strong hand the most brutal and cowardly system of despotism and terrorism the world had ever seen.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he thought the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) had been somewhat premature in expressing a wish that the general debate on the Address might be concluded in one evening. When it was remembered that this was a new Parliament, with many Members new to Parliamentary life, that they had practically a new Government, and a House of Commons elected on an enlarged constituency, they must all agree that it would be improper to leave the important questions in the Speech from the Throne without some discussion. The noble Lord had made a pitiful appeal to the Leaders of the Opposition to initiate legislation; and then, not having much expectation that his wish in that direction would be gratified, he turned to the hon. Member for Cork in the hope that issue would be joined with the Government on the Address. He

Mr. Illingworth) thought every Member on the Liberal side of the House had reason to be satisfied with the position which the Opposition had taken up. They held it was the duty of the Government to initiate legislation, and the duty of the Opposition, if not constantly to oppose, as used to be the canon of the noble Lord, yet to examine with care and deliberation, the proposed legislation. An additional reason why they should act deliberately at this stage was that they might have very few chances for some time to come to criticise specific measures of legislation. If they were to enter into a wrangle about procedure as soon as

the Address was disposed of, he would advise new Members to say good-bye for this Session to any specific proposals of legislation on any subject whatever. He thought hon. Members who had just spoken, and also the Secretary of State for India, had very much exaggerated the commendations made by the Leader of the Opposition of their foreign policy. When the right hon. Gentleman spoke with approval of the foreign policy of the Government, he almost specifically limited it to the course taken by Lord Salisbury in regard to the union of Bulgaria and Roumelia and the agreement with Russia. The less that was said on the opposite side of the House upon this question the better. They had come to adopt the views of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian; and the moral was that they should distrust their own inspirations and their own selfish views as to what was good for other countries as well as for their own, and more readily adopt suggestions from that quarter. As to Burmah, the right hon. Gentleman had distinctly reserved any definite opinion; and, for his own part, he (Mr. Illingworth) did not listen with satisfaction to the observations of the Seconder of the Address (Mr. Houldsworth) when he broadly hinted that the industrial classes of this country would condone an action which might not be politically or morally sound if, forsooth, an increase of trade would come to the people in the North of England. The hon. Member was then exercising his own imagination, for there was no class of the community which more readily took sacrifice upon itself, in order to escape immoral transactions, than the majority of the working classes of this country. The House could not forget the course taken by the working classes in Lancashire, who voluntarily subjected themselves to privation rather than this country should take part with the South in the quarrel between the Northern and Southern States of the American Union. He begged the Government to understand that they on the Liberal side had not abandoned their right to a free and unfettered examination of the merits of the annexation of Burmah. Then the noble Lord had sought to raise political capital out of the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff to Constantinople and Cairo; and in this case, too, he (Mr.

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Illingworth) thought they should wait to see some fruits before they gave even that astute diplomatist very much credit. He was afraid, indeed, that, instead of benefiting Egypt by asking for the interference of the Sultan in its internal affairs, they would add another evil to the mischief which they had already done to that misgoverned country. The next part of the Queen's Speech to which he would allude was that addressed exclusively to the House of Commons, stating that the Estimates for the ensuing year had been framed with due regard to efficiency and economy. In the very next paragraph they were assured that Her Majesty felt great sympathy for the great number of persons in distress; but he should like to see deeds as well as words. They knew that for the last 10 years there had been a general failure of harvests, and that as a result all classes in the country, from the most opulent and idle to the most industrious and needy, had been called upon to bear more or less privation. They had not command of the sunshine; but when the suffering was so acute and protracted as to be recognized in the Queen's Speech they had a right to ask whether the Expenditure of the country was on such a scale as would relieve the people from unnecessary burdens? He must admit that economy had not been duly observed by his own Party for many years; but he did not see how they could have economy with the spirit which the present Government had displayed. Economy could not be made to any large extent in the Civil Expenditure; but this new Parliament owed it to the country, and particularly to the industrial classes, to watch with a vigilant eye the extravagant Estimates to which of late years they had been accustomed for the Army and Navy. It was impossible to look into a newspaper without seeing every day that a new ship had been either launched or put upon the stocks. Ever since the time of Sir Robert Peel, when Liberal Ministers vied with Conservatives in keeping down expenditure, a new spirit had prevailed of rivalry in increasing the Army and Navy Expenditure; and what were the fruits of this rivalry? Was this country stronger in comparison with the other countries of Europe for these bloated armaments? The reverse was the case, and the increase of our ships and our

Mr. Illingworth

munitions and armaments had only found its fruit in corresponding increase abroad, and an increase of the burdens on the industrial classes in every country in Europe. Lest this rivalry led to some great calamity and crash, he would urge new Members not to yield to the evil traditions of the last 30 years. Then there was another point. Towards the close of Her Majesty's Speech there was a paragraph to the effect that a Royal Commission had been issued to inquire into the working of the Education Act. This Government had, during the short time it had been in Office, hastened most indecently to avail itself of every opportunity of perpetrating a job. He augured from that that their confidence of remaining in power a long time was not very great. He did not complain very much of those smaller acts; but it was a reasonable ground for complaint that when Commissions were appointed on great public questions they were not fairly constituted. Whatever might be the Report of the Commission on Trade, the fact that it was unfairly constituted would affect its value; and he regretted that when he looked over the names of the Commission on Education he found a repetition of the same unfairness. The object of the Government in appointing this Commission was to buttress up what were called the voluntary schools. The Address gave the House plainly to understand that the object of the inquiry was as to the value of the two methods—namely, the miscalled voluntary system on the one hand, and the State system on the other hand. The Commission should have had upon it equal numbers of men known to favour either side, in order that there might be no suspicion of partiality at the source of the inquiry. But, so far from that being the case, from two-thirds to three-fourths of the Commissioners were men wedded to voluntary schools. Why should such a man as Mr. Alderson, who recently received an important appointment as Charity Commissioner, and whose services should be given to his office every hour, why should he be taken away to this Commission when other men could have acted who were eminent in education? Why should the Hon. Lyulph Stanley, who probably knew as much of the national system of education as anyone in the country, have been overlooked or

thrust aside? He also would like to know why a late official in the English Department, now a member of the Scotch Department, should be made a Member of the Commission? The Department with which that gentleman was connected formerly was coming under the review of the Commission, and he was, in point of fact, to be put in judgment upon his own work; and that he (Mr. Illingworth) held to be a disqualification in the case of Sir Francis Sandford. He could only say that whenever this great education controversy was reopened, he, and those who thought with him, would not feel themselves bound by the verdict of a packed Commission. The Education Act of 1870 was regarded as a compromise in which every consideration was shown to what were called the voluntary schools—schools which were really State supported, though unfortunately not under public management; and if that compromise were now disregarded on one side, those who held that public expenditure should be followed by public control would, of course, no longer be bound by the contract.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, it was easy to understand what had prompted the delivery of the speech to which they had just listened. The hon. Member spoke with indignant regret of the enormous Estimates of the last few years, during which, while those Estimates were growing, the hon. Member was a loyal supporter of the Government under which those Estimates grew.

MR. ILLINGWORTH protested that he frequently took exception to the amount of the Estimates under the late Government.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, that if the hon. Member had done so he had always done it in a very gentle voice; and there was very little heard from the economists of the Liberal Party while the expenditure was rising year by year. With regard to the Commission on the Depression of Trade, which the hon. Member had criticized so adversely, it was rather curious to hear the hon. Gentleman lamenting that the present Government had words and not deeds with which to remedy the sufferings of the people, when the present Government, at all events, had set on foot that inquiry, which the hon. Gentleman and his Friends would rather not have seen

commenced. As to the criticisms of the hon. Gentleman on the appointments made to the Commission on Education, he did not believe that any appointment made by the Government was open to adverse criticism in the House. With regard to Mr. Alderson, he was known by those who were acquainted with his Department to be a careful and zealous worker, and that he had had a large experience in matters of education; and as to Sir Francis Sandford, he was well known to be one of the most experienced and capable men, and well qualified to guide the deliberations of the Commission. He wished, however, to say a few words to the House upon the other subject which the House had already been considering, and upon which he hoped, before the debate on the Address closed, they would get from the Front Opposition Bench some definite and intelligible speech. No one, he thought, could feel that the discussion that evening had been in any way wasted. It was a clear advantage to the House that the challenge which was thrown out in definite and deliberate language by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India at the close of the debate on the previous evening had been, to a certain extent, accepted by the hon. Member for Sligo that evening, and that he had ventured to say what his Chief (Mr. Parnell) yesterday did not say—namely, what was the real meaning and purpose of the Irish Party. In the speech of the hon. Member for Cork there was a very curious suppression of the meaning and purpose of the Irish Party; and he said there was only one difficulty with regard to the Irish Question, and that was the Land Question, and that if that difficulty were solved there would be nothing to interfere with the discussion and decision of the question. But when the hon. Member spoke of the Land Question as being a difficulty, he meant that it was a difficulty in the way of the establishment of a Legislative Assembly in Ireland; and his suggestion was intended to be that if this country would only provide the funds to buy out and pacify the landlords of Ireland, it would cease to be to their interest to resist the severance of the Legislative Union, and they would easily submit to that proposition. Now, he thought it was desirable that the House should exactly see what was the position of things in this Parliament

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with regard to the Irish Question; and, with the permission of the House, he would say a few words upon the question from the point of view of an English Member of Parliament not associated with either of the two Irish Parties, and as one who, he thought he might venture to say, had held himself, during the past five years, somewhat free from Party with regard to this question. The ingenious speech made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had two very obvious purposes. In the first place, he invited hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite to object to any discussion of procedure in the House of Commons until the Government had put forward a definite proposal of its own with regard to Irish affairs; and, in the second place, he expressed, in magnificent terms of sympathy and moral feeling, his desire to do all that could possibly be done to serve the purpose of those hon. Gentlemen. The right hon. Gentleman's suggestion was acted upon. They had a speech from the Leader of the Irish Party, in which he took care to be as graceful and pleasant as possible in his reference to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and studiously kept out of view anything that could clash with the suggestion made from the Front Opposition Bench; and the Party opposite now declined to formulate their proposals to the House until they heard what the Government proposed. The fact was, they would wait to hear what the Government said, and what the right hon. Gentleman opposite would say, and then they would deal as seemed to them best with regard to this problem. Hon. Gentlemen opposite came to the House, being five-sixths of the Representatives of Ireland. He was not going to quarrel with the argument of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), as to their authority to represent the greater portion of the people of Ireland. The world was governed by facts, and not by explanations; and whatever might be the explanation of the presence of hon. Members opposite, it was a very serious fact with which Parliament had to deal. He should have thought that with 56 Representatives of Ireland there, with a Leader at their head who had been trusted for years past, and who, by his Parliamentary conduct, had well deserved the reward of their trust—he should have thought that Party

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would have been perfectly capable of formulating and putting forward a definite proposition. The straightforward course would have been to say through their Leader's lips what was the measure they asked the English Parliament to grant. ["No!" from the Irish Members.] They repudiated that suggestion, because they held that such a course would not be wise in a tactical point of view. They desired to hold the balance between the two great Parties in the House of Commons, waiting to know what the Government had to offer them, and whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian would not outbid that offer, and then their conduct would be guided by expediency. They might think that an astute and well-calculated policy; but he thought it a mistaken one. They could not consign to oblivion the statements made by their leaders outside the House, and they could not involve in obscurity the real objects for the accomplishment of which they had won their way into the House. In the debate yesterday the hon. Member for the Guildford Division of Surrey (Mr. Brodrick) had quoted from a speech said to have been delivered by the hon. Member for the City of Cork in 1882. The hon. Member for the City of Cork repudiated the quotation to a certain extent, saying that he was not in a position to speak in such a tone in 1882, as he was in another place, referring by that euphemism to the locality to which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) consigned him in 1881. The fact was that the hon. Member for the City of Cork went to America in January, 1880. ["No!"] He was sure he was correct; and from January 2, when he arrived at New York, until shortly before March 21, he was peregrinating in that country, and making speeches with a view to obtaining money. It was on the evening of February 20 or 21 he spoke at Cincinnati, and unless the newspaper reports were designedly incorrect he used the words which the hon. Member for the Guildford Division quoted as to separating the last link between this country and Ireland; and up till last night no repudiation of that quotation, which had been used over and over again in political controversy, came from the hon. Member for the City of Cork. But yesterday the hon. Member spoke of it as a quotation for

which no authority was given, and as having occurred, if it was uttered at all, in a speech delivered a considerable time ago. He had referred to speeches of the hon. Member for the City of Cork delivered at a later date. On the 25th of September, 1881, there was a great procession and demonstration in the streets of Dublin. In that procession the hon. Members for the City of Cork and Sligo were the two principal personages; and the hon. Member for the City of Cork was reported in *The Times*, in his speech on that occasion, to have referred to the

"Spirit which will never die until it sweeps that detested alien rule, with its buckshot and its bayonets, clear away over the Channel whence it came, never to return. We ask to rule ourselves: we ask that Irishmen shall make laws on Irish soil."

The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), speaking on the same occasion, said—

"To-night will be marked for ever as a memorable and glorious night in the history of Dublin and Ireland. The City of Dublin has broken loose from the Lion and the Unicorn, and has arrayed itself under the sacred banner of the Shamrock and Harp. Whereas Ireland poor has long been Ireland enslaved, I tell you that Ireland prosperous will soon be Ireland independent."

The hon. Member for Sligo had said that night that there was nothing in the desires of the Irish people inconsistent with the limitations laid down by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. The sentences which he had read to the House were in direct opposition to those limitations. [*Cries of "No!" from the Irish Members.*] There was the phrase "The independence of Ireland."

MR. SEXTON: Legislative independence.

MR. O'KELLY: Like Australian independence.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE: No; "the independence of Ireland." Nothing was said about legislative independence.

MR. SEXTON: That was quite understood.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, that it was such phrases as "The independence of Ireland," "Sweeping away the alien rule," and "Severing the last link that binds the two countries," that had given the Irish Party subscriptions in America and votes in Ireland. Those declarations could not, by any stretches of ingenuity, be brought within the compass of those laboured ambiguities to

which they listened last night from the Leader of the Opposition. But hon. Members did not choose to avow and to ask the support of the House for the programme which they had proclaimed in the country. No doubt they were exercising a wise judgment, as a matter of tactics, in not seeking a division; for he imagined there were very few Liberal Members who would venture to go into the Lobby with them. If they put upon the Notice Paper a Motion declaring that the time had arrived for reconsidering the existence of the Legislative Union between this country and Ireland; if they really meant what they had said; if all this fine language was an expression of a real and deliberate determination, and was not merely a bid for political and pecuniary support, why did they not take the first opportunity of putting their proposals before the House, and of letting their Leader expound the reasons by which those proposals could be defended? The fact was that the moment they began to make speeches about the Legislative Union of the two countries, they furnished the House with the best reasons why that Union should never be severed. That very night the speech of the hon. Member for Sligo with regard to the landlords of Ireland and the practice of "Boycotting" afforded the strongest warning which could be given to an English Parliament against allowing an Irish Parliament to be set up in Dublin. If such a Parliament were set up, those who would guide its policy and direct its debates would be the very men who represented Ireland in the House of Commons now. By them the system of "Boycotting," which was a social tyranny of a most intolerable kind, was not only extenuated, but almost justified, as a mild but effective substitute for outrages; and the words uttered that night by the hon. Member for Sligo with reference to landlords, if spoken in a Legislative Assembly in Ireland in which the hon. Member and his Friends wielded a commanding influence, could not but have a deplorable result. The hon. Member and his Colleagues were possibly miscalculating the general tone and temper of Parliament. He had spoken of the presence of 16 or 17 Ulster Members who would not allow the present Government to do anything in the way of concession or justice to

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Ireland. The hon. Member misunderstood the position and desires of those Ulster Members. They were, at all events, just as deeply interested in the welfare of Ireland as a great many of the hon. Members on the opposite side of the House. They had been attacked as the Representatives of that landlord class, three-fourths of whose estates were said to be in the hands of English usurers. If that was the case, they had manifestly an immense interest in the welfare of Ireland. Men in their financial position would be the very men to whom it would be of intense importance that Ireland should be law-abiding and prosperous. He did not believe that the interests of the Irish landlords would be safe in the hands of an Irish Parliament. Was there ever a Parliament which made more sacrifices of time and energy, of traditions and of prejudices, of the principles of political economy, and of justice and equity, than the last, in the vain and futile hope of satisfying those who made each successive concession a ground for coming forward with further demands? He believed that if they were to deal with the interests of all classes in Ireland, protecting the rights and interests of the majority, while considering and carefully desiring to serve the interests of the great body of the people, it was in that House that that work could and would be accomplished, and that it would be accomplished far better there than by any Parliament assembling in Dublin. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had thrown out a hint that if his Party assisted or allowed the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition to carry an Amendment against the Government, the Liberals might themselves be subsequently thrown out by the votes of the Irish Members. In that case, he (Mr. Clarke) was, he believed, expressing the feeling of a very large number of those who sat on his (the Conservative) side, that if the Government which took the place of the existing one was a Government in which the opinions of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) and the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen) were sufficiently represented, and in which they held authority, hon. Members from Ireland would be quite mistaken if they thought the Conservative Party would join them in any attempt to eject such a Government from

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Office. The immediate necessity of the moment was the good government of Ireland; that was the object of the House; and the great body of the House, without distinction of Party, would be prepared to support any administrator of affairs in Ireland who showed himself determined not to yield to the invitation to establish a separate Legislature for Ireland, but who, subject to that limitation, proceeded to endeavour at once to enforce the law of the country as it should be enforced, and to study the interests of the people. It was possible there might be a change of Government; and it was precisely because those who sat on the Conservative side and spoke without dread, without anxiety, and without bitterness of the possibility of a change of Government, that a Government which, while refusing legislative disunion, would steadily endeavour to serve the interests of Ireland, would have the steadfast support of many on his side of the House. They had had the advantage in that debate of a distinct avowal from the hon. Member for Sligo of the aims of his Party. If this debate went on to its end, if no Amendment was moved, if the Address was agreed to, the country would have the satisfaction of knowing that underground influences or intrigues had not hitherto sapped the fidelity of the Liberal Party to that which he believed was essential to the cause of good government of the Empire—the maintenance of the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland.

Mr. MATHER said, he must apologize for interrupting the debate upon the Irish Question; but, taking advantage of the presence of the Vice President of the Council on Education, he must say that he was painfully struck with the remarks of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth), in seconding the Address yesterday, on the proposed Royal Commission to consider the operations of the Education Acts, inasmuch as he, in a position almost official, strongly denounced the operations of the Act of 1870. He felt that the remarks of the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) might possibly be justified, when he said that the Commission would not be a Commission fairly representing the opinions of the House and of the country, if the definition of the hon. Member for Manchester of what it was to do and to consider was accepted. The hon.

Member had declared that the operations of the Education Act had been unjust to a large number of voluntary schools in the country, and that that injustice was extremely detrimental to the welfare of the nation. He (Mr. Mather) took exception to that statement as being a gross exaggeration of the case; and he differed from hon. Gentlemen who cheered the hon. Member for Manchester. The operation and administration of the Education Act in the larger towns of the country—he spoke from experience—and in Manchester had been conducted with the most sacred—he thought that was not too strong a word—regard to those institutions which existed before the Education Act of 1870 came into force. The efficient, well-managed voluntary schools then existing in Manchester and other towns had been immensely benefited by the operations of the Act, by the education given in them being made of a higher and more far-reaching character than it formerly was. There was not in the whole country a voluntary school that had suffered in the least from the Education Act of 1870 that was worthy of existence at all; but such had been put into a more efficient condition, and only those schools had gone to the wall which were inefficient and cumbered the ground. He wished it to be understood that the hon. Member for Manchester did not represent the entire feeling of that large industrial community. Their constituencies were contiguous, and they represented much the same class of people; and he (Mr. Mather) spoke with some authority, having served on the Salford School Board for 12 years. The hon. Member for Manchester declared that the Act required revision, and its operations carefully examined, for the purpose of restricting and taking some power and control from the boards which they had previously exercised. He ventured to say, from his experience, that the control and powers which the boards had exercised during the last 12 years in Manchester and Salford had never been used except in the cause of education, both in board and voluntary schools. On both boards the majorities had been continuously composed of the Conservative and Church Parties, and had, therefore, represented the sectarian, or so-called religious interests in education. He

looked forward to the work of this Royal Commission with far greater expectation than if he thought it would merely take into consideration no wider question than that of a few decrepit voluntary schools. The working classes ought to have still greater power of exercising their faculties by being taught to be more scientific and more artistic in industrial and technical schools. Then they would have every reason to believe that in the immediate future the working man would take a different and a higher rank than at present, in comparison with the highly educated artisans of some other nations. The hon. Member for Manchester had told them of new markets to be opened up for our trade in Burmah; but, in his own opinion, what they had to look forward to was a consuming power continually increasing at home, effected by an improvement in the condition of our working classes. The policy with regard to the annexation of Burmah would be judged on the issue whether it was just or unjust, and not with reference to the opening up of new markets. His opinion was that the best markets for English industries were those which were nearest home. The wants of civilization, rather than those of semi-civilized or barbarous countries, were those which best suited the manufactures we ought to produce; and if we would only endeavour to satisfy those wants by providing for the improved education of the children of this country there need be no fear for our industrial future.

MR. BARTLEY said, he thought that with regard to Ireland they had come to where two ways diverged. The one was a road on which each step required the greatest caution, and which was dark and difficult, but which, if boldly taken, would lead to safety; the other seemed easy, but was dangerous and treacherous, and would lead them into an abyss of revolution and disaster. He believed that the right way was firmly and distinctly to maintain the law as it stood, and that anything else would only tend to promote and foster the idea of disloyalty. They must, undoubtedly, make up their minds, first of all, to maintain the law in its present state, before they thought of reforming and improving. During the first three years of the last Parliament Ireland had monopolized a great part

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of the attention of Parliament. In what way had the heroic legislation which had then been passed tended to promote the well-being of Ireland? They had had the Disestablishment of the Church, the two Land Acts, the Ar-rears Act, and others, none of which had done the good to the country which was confidently predicted. Since 1868 she had been going backwards; why should another sop be given in the form of County Government? Would it tend to promote justice in that country, or the welfare of the people, in handing over the government to what would practically be the National League? These concessions had been made to Ireland simply and solely because, from time to time, each side of the House had competed for the Irish vote. The late Government had in 1880 refused to renew an Act which was absolutely necessary to enable the law to be maintained in Ireland, and had had to retrace its steps; and in 1885, he regretted to say, his own Party had done the same. Those who depended upon the Irish vote depended upon what could not be trusted; the Party which had given so much to Ireland had not gained one seat in that country at the last Election. The Irish Party wanted separation, and nothing less. The hon. Member for the City of Cork spoke plainly outside the House; while, from his mild speech in that debate, it appeared that they would be satisfied with a few millions for the present. The policy of always giving to Ireland was the greatest possible mistake. The first principle was to maintain the law. He considered that the perpetual saying "that something must be done for Ireland" was one of the great curses of our relationship with that country. Ireland, at the present time, had no practical grievance. Ireland had all the advantages which this country enjoyed. No doubt, Ireland had had a bad agricultural time. [*Ironical cries of "No, no!" from the Irish Members.*] Well, he was glad to hear that; but if she had had a bad time she was no worse than England and other countries. It was said that Ireland wanted capital. Was that to be wondered at with the legislation which had been going on? Ireland was as free as England, and certainly freer than America. For was it to be supposed that any State

in America would be tolerated if it treated the United States with dynamite as the Irish had treated this country? All he could say was that America would have found a short way to put a stop to it. The only grievance of Ireland was a sentimental one—that she formed part of Great Britain and Ireland—and this grievance many greater nations than Ireland would like to share; but it was one which England would never allow to be removed. The only power of this agitation consisted in the 86 votes; and he trusted that both Parties in that House, leaving aside, of course, a few "faddists," would unite to uphold the Constitution, and to oppose all idea of separation. The integrity of the Empire was of greater importance than the triumph of Party. What Ireland wanted was a firm and decided maintenance of the law, which was the primary condition of government; and he hoped that the powers necessary for that purpose would be embodied in what should be called an anti-Coercion Act, which might be made applicable not to Ireland alone, but to the United Kingdom. When, under the provisions of such an Act, the maintenance of the law in the country was restored, the power of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) would fade away.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, a great deal might be urged on this important question of coercion *pro* and *con*; but there was a much more important subject before the country than the mere question of inserting fresh clauses in a Criminal Law, or whether this or that measure should be passed. It was undoubtedly the case that for the last five or six weeks the whole country from one end to the other had been disturbed by this question of Home Rule, which, in his opinion, was one of the greatest questions that had arisen within the last generation. He regretted to say that in the new House of Commons they had not had in the two days' debate that amount of leading which they had a right to expect. The whole country had been ringing with one subject. The Press had been full of it; and yet they had but one speech, and that from their great Leader, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. He should like to hear a great deal more than that from the Leaders of the Liberal Party. The

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question of Home Rule was not so prominent when they were before the electors as it was now; but they had discussed the question of Home Rule to some extent, and he should like hon. Members to say in the House of Commons what they had said to their constituents. He remembered that a few months ago he sat below the Gangway with several of his hon. Friends. There were the two hon. Members for Manchester (Mr. Slagg and Mr. Jacob Bright), and there was his hon. Friend (Mr. Hopwood). Better and steadier Members of the Liberal Party never sat in that House than those with whom he used to sit in that part of the House. Where were they now? He should like to ask why they were not there? The reason, he believed, was this—that those hon. Members followed in their policy the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. If they had had any idea in their minds that any policy of this kind was to be suggested, they would have been bound, as honest men, to tell the electors. The views of the Liberal candidates were not concealed during the battle of the General Election. The noble Lord the Member for the Rossendale Division of North-East Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington), who was not now in his place, went over to the North of Ireland during the very height of the contest, and, personally, he was very glad he did go over. What did he say, with the full sanction and approval of the Liberal Party—because not one Member of Parliament, not one leading statesman on their side, ventured for a moment to throw doubt or discredit upon the views held by the noble Lord? The noble Lord told the people of Belfast that the differences between Conservatives and Liberals, important no doubt, were as nothing to the differences which divided loyal men from disloyal men. That kind of language was held not only by those who, like the noble Lord, were Whigs—a name certainly not to be ashamed of—but also by other hon. Members of a very different type, such as the right hon. Gentleman Mr. John Bright, who had been so long identified with Birmingham. That was the way in which they of the Liberal Party went to the country, and now what did they find here? He hoped he did not find any departure from the line recently

taken; but he was bound to say that if there was to be no departure from it they should be told there was to be no departure. He, for one, could only say that if this debate came to an end without a speech, and a speech expressing such views as he had indicated, from the noble Lord and from the right hon. Gentleman in whom he had very considerable faith, the more youthful Member for the town of Birmingham, he could only say that they, the Liberal Party, were left in that House in the position of a helpless crowd. However admirable the selection of the constituencies might be, they were nothing better than a crowd unless they were led. What they wanted was leading, and leading of a definite and certain kind. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, for whom no one had a higher respect than he had, was a little too humble in the way in which he had described his position in that House. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that unless he was occupying the position of First Minister of the Crown he had not any gigantic responsibility. For his part, he thought the position which the right hon. Gentleman held and his great abilities and eminent services to the country made the responsibility weigh upon him wherever he sat. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the Government as being responsible; but was he not one of those who governed the country as much as any who sat in that House? [*Cries of "No, no!"*] Hon. Members said "No;" but he did not think they quite followed his meaning. In the House of Commons they were often rather narrow and limited in their views of the word "Government," for those who governed the country, in fact, were very often men who sat upon the one side of the House as upon the other. He hoped they would have clear and plain language. The Gentlemen whom he saw around him on the Liberal Benches were a mere perversion of the Liberal Party. And those who thought that these Benches at present represented the Liberal Party would some day or other find themselves uncommonly mistaken. He, for one, had read with immense satisfaction those words in Her Majesty's Speech—

"I am resolutely opposed to any disturbance of that fundamental law,"

that was, the Legislative Union between Ireland and Great Britain—

"And in resisting it I am convinced that I shall be heartily supported by my Parliament and my people."

He had no hesitation in saying that with that paragraph he thoroughly and entirely agreed, and he wished to congratulate Her Majesty's Advisers that that appeal had been made to Parliament, which, at all events, had not been made in vain. They had heard some explanations asked for as to why no Amendment was moved. His hon. Friend the Member for Northampton had said the Speech bound no one; but he thought that it did, because if they differed with that they were certainly bound to come forward and say so. They knew what the real reason was; it was that not a single Member below the Gangway dared move such an Amendment. For his part, he was prepared to vote for that paragraph in the Speech, and he believed the greater part of the Liberal Party would support it. ["No, no!"] If the hon. Member who said "No" believed that, let him put it to the test. This question was important, and the views of the Liberal Party should be declared before the debate came to a close. The whole country was waiting for it. There was no closer attendant upon the House of Commons than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, but he was not the only right hon. Gentleman; and he wanted to hear—and he knew that the majority of the Liberal Party wanted to hear—what other right hon. Gentlemen had to contribute to the debate. Owing to the hesitation which seemed to have come over so many, they were in some serious danger of drifting to he knew not what. This was not the time to discuss in detail the merits of the Home Rule Question; but what they had to do, as reasonable men, was to bear in their minds what it was that Home Rule really meant. The Government had described it as severance of Legislative Union; but it would not hold good for a moment. They heard a good deal about good policy and management, and how to manage their own affairs; and he could only say he honestly believed that the country was in want of outspoken, simple honesty, and he hoped as this debate went on there would be no lack of that quality. He did not think there

would be from those who sat on those (the Liberal) Benches; but those sitting there now were not the Liberal Party—they were the Irish Members who were attached to the Liberal Party. In conclusion, he would appeal to hon. Members and right hon. Members to come forward and tell them what they thought the policy of the country ought to be. It was the function of the Leaders to lead them; and he said without any hesitation that if any Leader of the Liberal Party came forward, and appealed to them—and not only them, but the whole country—to maintain the Legislative Union of the three countries—he cared little whether it was the noble Lord or the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham—he felt sure that whichever of these Gentlemen it might be who spoke for the country and desired to maintain the Union, he would rally at his back those who would make him the principal Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. GREGORY said, he hoped that some expression of opinion would be got from right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench in regard to this important subject. As for himself, he would give an independent support to any Government that would maintain the integrity of the Empire.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS observed, that an hon. Gentleman had that evening compared their fellow-countrymen in Ireland to highwaymen and wolves. That did not seem to him to be a particularly conciliatory spirit in which to approach the great question between the two peoples. His hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. Elliot), with an audacity which he hardly expected from a Scotch Member, had forgotten the very fundamental rule which had always governed Constitutional opposition in that House, and which was laid down by so great a Conservative as the late Sir Robert Peel—namely, that it was not their business to announce a policy until they were called on. It was not just, fair, or generous, to the Front Opposition Bench to demand of them that they should explain before their imitators and their enemies what policy they intended to adopt with regard to Ireland. The House had been told that there was a great deal of crime prevailing in Ireland. That had been denied by Irish Members; and he frankly told the House that he would as soon believe

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them as he would believe the Dublin Correspondent of *The Times*. Nothing had done more harm to the good relations between the English and Irish peoples than the incessant trumpetings of those Solomons of the day—the daily papers. He regretted that Her Majesty's Speech held the threat of coercion over the Irish people. He believed that no greater political blunder could be committed by any Government than the establishment of a special Criminal Law, and he repented very much that he had ever supported coercion. Nothing could be baser than the temporary alliance of the Tory and Irish patriot. That alliance had borne its fruits, and one result of it, at any rate, was to convert him for the future against supporting, under any circumstances whatever, a single scintilla of special criminal legislation for Ireland. That legislation had been tried over 85 years, and it had failed. If they adopted it again over a similar period they would only embitter still more the Irish people, who ought to be our natural allies and our friends. The present state of things brought dishonour upon this country. The hon. Member for Roxburghshire had told them about the sentiments of the people of England. Had he ever reflected that there were 2,000,000 Irishmen in England, and had he ever found the slightest bitterness, the slightest hostility, on the part of the English working men towards their Irish fellow-countrymen? He had not, except on the part of some foolish persons. Did they believe that if Scotland was governed by Englishmen on the lines on which they had governed Ireland they would not have rebelled? If he, an Englishman, had been governed in the same way as the Irish had been, he confessed that he should have been a rebel, and, perhaps, a village ruffian. Those who were distinctly responsible should endeavour to settle this great problem, and not claim from Her Majesty's Opposition anything more than the high duties and the great privilege of criticizing that which Her Majesty's Ministers might submit.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That the Debate be now adjourned."
 — *Mr. Hunter.*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH): I understand that the hon. Member makes

this Motion with the view of proceeding with his Amendment at the next meeting of the House. With that understanding, and being aware that there are not a few hon. Members who desire to introduce Bills of which they have given Notice without being compelled to sit up till a late hour, I willingly yield the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate further adjourned till Monday next.

MOTIONS.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Connolly, Bill to amend "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," ordered to be brought in by Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. PARNELL, Mr. TIMOTHY HEALY, Mr. SEXTON, and Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 1.]

COUNTY GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. John O'Connor, Bill to provide for the better government of Counties in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR, Mr. TIMOTHY HEALY, Mr. SEXTON, Mr. DILLON, Mr. REYNOLDS, and Mr. SMALL.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 2.]

POLICE FORCES ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Bill for the complete enfranchisement of the Police Forces of the United Kingdom, ordered to be brought in by Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON, Lord CLAUD HAMILTON, Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE, Mr. COWEN, and Sir GEORGE RUSSELL.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 3.]

CHURCH PATRONAGE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Rylands, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Sale of Church Patronage, ordered to be brought in by Mr. RYLANDS, Mr. LEATHAM, Mr. HENRY FOWLER, and Mr. BRINTON.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 4.]

POOR LAW GUARDIANS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Edward Harrington, Bill to amend the Law relating to the election and constitution of Boards of Poor Law Guardians in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON, Mr. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, Mr. SEXTON, Mr. TIMOTHY HEALY, and Mr. JORDAN.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 5.]

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring

in a Bill to declare the Constitution of the Church of Scotland.

*Resolution reported:—*Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. FINLAY and The Marquess of STAFFORD.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 6.]

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (IMPROVEMENT EXPENSES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dodds, Bill to amend the Public Health Acts in relation to Private Improvement Expenses, ordered to be brought in by Mr. DODDS, Sir EDWARD REED, Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY, Mr. WILLIAM COOK, and Mr. BULLARD.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 7.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS EXPENSES) (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Tuite, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Expenses of Returning Officers at Parliamentary Elections in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. TUITE, Mr. CHANCE, Mr. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON, Mr. MAURICE HEALY, and Mr. ALEXANDER BLAINE.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 8.]

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James O'Brien, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Municipal Franchise in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. JAMES O'BRIEN, Mr. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON, Mr. RICHARD POWER, Mr. MAYNE, and Mr. PETER M'DONALD.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 9.]

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mayne, Bill to amend the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. MAYNE, Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR, Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN, Mr. SEXTON, and Mr. SHERRY.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 10.]

TENURE OF TOWN HOUSES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Crilly, Bill relating to the Tenure of Houses in Towns in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. CRILLY, Mr. SMALL, Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN, Mr. PETER M'DONALD, and Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 11.]

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. William O'Brien, Bill to amend the Law relating to National School Teachers in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN, Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY, Mr. SEXTON, Mr. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, and Mr. CONWAY.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 12.]

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dillon, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Registration of Voters in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. DILLON, Mr. MAURICE HEALY, Mr. CHANCE, Mr. TIMOTHY HEALY, Mr. HARRINGTON, and Mr. SMALL.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 13.]

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lalor, Bill to amend the Law relating to University Education in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. LALOR, Mr. DILLON, Mr. SEXTON, Mr. JOHN REDMOND, Mr. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, and Mr. CLANCY.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 14.]

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hooper, Bill to amend the Law relating to Salmon Fisheries in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. HOOPER, Mr. TIMOTHY HEALY, Mr. SEXTON, Mr. LANE, Colonel NOLAN, and Mr. LEAMY.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 15.]

BUTTER SUBSTITUTES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Conway, Bill to regulate the importation, manufacture, and sale of Butter Substitutes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. CONWAY, Mr. LANE, Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR, Mr. LEAMY, Mr. FINCANE, and Mr. BIGGAR.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 16.]

CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of The Marquess of Stafford, Bill to amend the Law relating to the tenure of land by Crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; and to make other provisions for improving the condition of the Crofters, ordered to be brought in by The Marquess of STAFFORD and Dr. FARQUHARSON.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 17.]

TECHNICAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. P. J. Power, Bill to promote Technical Education in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. P. J. POWER, Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. LANE, Mr. A. O'CONNOR, and Mr. EDMOND DWYER GRAY.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 18.]

HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES IN TOWNS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. O'Kelly, Bill to provide for the better Housing of the Working Classes in Towns in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. O'KELLY, Mr. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. HOOPER, and Mr. JOHN REDMOND.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 19.]

MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES (DUBLIN) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chance, Bill to provide for the Extension of the Municipal Boundaries of Dublin, ordered to be brought in by Mr

CHANCE, Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN, Mr. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, Mr. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON, and Mr. MURPHY.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 20.]

RATES (DUBLIN) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Sheehy, Bill to amend the Law relating to the collection of Rates in Dublin, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. SHEEHY, Mr. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, Mr. MAYNE, Mr. HENRY GILL, and Mr. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 21.]

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Sellar, Bill to amend the system of Private Bill Legislation in the United Kingdom, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. SELLAR, Sir LYON PLAYFAIR, Mr. RAIKES, Mr. JOHN MORLEY, and Mr. ROBERTSON.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 22.]

BOUNDARIES OF TOWNS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Reynolds, Bill to extend the Boundaries of certain Cities and Towns in Ireland, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. LANE, Mr. SMALL, Mr. TUITE, and Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 23.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (POLLS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Joseph Cowen, Bill to provide that at every General Parliamentary Election all the Polls shall be taken on the same day, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. JOSEPH COWEN, Mr. LABOUCHERE, and Mr. AGNEW.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 24.]

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT (1884) EXTENSION BILL.

On Motion of Sir Robert Fowler, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Representation of the People, by amending and extending the Service Franchise, *ordered to be brought in by Sir ROBERT FOWLER, Mr. LIONEL COWEN, Mr. HURVY, and Sir ROGER LETHBRIDGE.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 25.]

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Charles James, Bill to amend the Copyhold Acts, and for the Enfranchisement of Copyhold and Customary Lands, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. CHARLES JAMES, Mr. GREGORY, Mr. STAFFORD HOWARD, Mr. FRASER, and Mr. MELLOR.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 26.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

On Motion of Sir Joseph Pease, Bill for Closing Public Houses on Sunday, making exception for the sale of beer during certain hours, and for the Metropolitan District, *ordered to be brought in by Sir JOSEPH PEAKE, Mr. PALMER, and Mr. ISAAC WILSON.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 27.]

POLICE CONSTABLES' PENSIONS BILL.

On Motion of Lord Claud John Hamilton Bill to make provision respecting the Pensions, Allowances, and Gratuities of Police Constables in Great Britain, and their widows and children, and to make other provisions respecting the Police of Great Britain, *ordered to be brought in by Lord CLAUD JOHN HAMILTON, Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBRETON, Mr. RAIKES, and Sir GEORGE RUSSELL.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 28.]

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Carew, Bill to amend and extend the Fishery Piers and Harbours (Ireland) Acts, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. CAREW, Colonel NOLAN, Mr. WILLIAM CORREY, Mr. O'KELLY, and Mr. BARRY.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 29.]

TREES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Gilhooly, Bill to encourage the Planting of Trees in Ireland, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. GILHOOLY, Mr. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON, Mr. MARUM, Mr. PYNE, and Mr. O'HANLON.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 30.]

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (FIRE BRIGADE EXPENSES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Tatton Egerton, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Expenses of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. TATTON EGERTON, Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, and Mr. RIDER COOK.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 31.]

TOBACCO (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Bill to permit the growth of Tobacco in Ireland, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR, Mr. PYNE, Mr. BARRY, Mr. CONDON, and Mr. O'HANLON.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 32.]

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS REPEAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Stuart, Bill to repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts, 1866 and 1869, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. JAMES STUART, Mr. STANSFELD, and Sir ROBERT FOWLER.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 33.]

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (WATER SUPPLY, &c.) BILL.

On Motion of Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Bill to confer further powers upon the Metropolitan Board of Works with respect to the Supply of Water, *ordered to be brought in by Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, Mr. BRYCE, Sir GEORGE RUSSELL, and Colonel HUGHES.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 34.]

LICENSING LAWS (AMENDMENT) (LOCAL CONTROL) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Licensing Laws by establishing Licensing Boards to exercise Local Control and to reduce the number of existing Licences.

Resolution reported: — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. STAFFORD HOWARD, Mr. HOULDSWORTH, and Mr. C. T. DYKE ACLAND.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 35.]

FAIRS AND MARKETS (TOLLS) (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Sexton, Bill to amend the Law relating to Tolls at Fairs and Markets in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. SEXTON, Mr. HAYDEN, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. J. P. O'BRIEN, Mr. CHANCE, and Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 36.]

QUARTER SESSIONS (BOROUGH) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Powell Williams, Bill to repeal certain provisions relating to Quarter Sessions (Boroughs) of "The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS, Mr. JOHN BRIGHT, Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, and Mr. HOULDSWORTH.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 37.]

TENURE OF LAND (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Barclay, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Tenure and Occupancy of Land in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. BARCLAY, Sir GEORGE BALLOCH, Dr. FARQUHARSON, and Mr. ENSLEMONT.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 38.]

PROBATION OF FIRST OFFENDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howard Vincent, Bill to permit the conditional release of First Offenders upon Probation in certain cases, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HOWARD VINCENT, Sir HENRY SELWYN-IBBETSON, Sir ALGERNON BORTHWICK, Mr. LAWSON, and Mr. MOLLOY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 39.]

PORT AND HARBOUR AUTHORITIES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Matthew Kenny, Bill to amend the Law relating to the constitution of Port and Harbour Authorities in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. MATTHEW KENNY, Mr. BIGGAR, Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY, Mr. PETER M'DONALD, Mr. JAMES O'DONERTY, and Mr. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 40.]

LAND PURCHASE FACILITIES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. M'Laren, Bill to amend the Law relating to the compensation of owners of Land acquired for undertakings of public

utility, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. M'LAREN, Mr. JOSEPH BOLTON, Mr. HOULDSWORTH, and Mr. JESSE COLLINGS.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 41.]

SITES FOR SCHOOLS, &c. (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jordan, Bill to facilitate the acquiring of Sites for Schools and Churches, and for Residences for Clergymen and School Teachers in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. JORDAN, Colonel NOLAN, Mr. CHANCE, Mr. REYNOLDS, and Mr. FLYNN.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 42.]

LANDLORD'S RIGHT OF DISTRESS

ABOLITION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Crompton, Bill to abolish the Landlord's Right of Distress for the rent of agricultural holdings in England, and his right of priority over the other creditors of the tenant in England, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. CROMPTON, Mr. WINTERBOTHAM, Mr. ARTHUR ELLIOT, and Mr. BRUNNER.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 43.]

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS

(THEATRES, &c.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Rider Cook, Bill to confer further powers upon the Metropolitan Board of Works for inspecting Theatres and Music Halls, and granting certificates, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. RIDER COOK and Sir JAMES M'GABRIEL-HOGG.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 44.]

BURIAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the further Amendment of the Burial Laws.

Resolution reported: — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN, Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER, Mr. RICHARD, and Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 45.]

EXPLOSIVE SUBSTANCES ACT (1883)

AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bill to amend "The Explosive Substances Act, 1883," *ordered* to be brought in by Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, Lord ALGERNON PERCY, Mr. LONG, and Sir ROBERT FOWLER.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 46.]

BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Peter M'Donald, Bill to amend the Law relating to Bankruptcy in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. PETER M'DONALD, Mr. HENRY GILL, Mr. CLANCY, Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR, and Mr. O'HANLON.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 47.]

LAND (HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Gavin Clark, Bill to amend the Law relating to the tenure of Land in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Gavin Clark, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Jesse Collings, and Mr. Burt.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 48.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Heneage, Bill to alter and amend the Law as to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Heneage, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Paleston, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Arch.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 49.]

MARRIAGES (NONCONFORMIST CHAPELS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Shirley, Bill to amend the Law relating to Marriages in Nonconformist Chapels, *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Shirley, Mr. M'Iver, Mr. Newnes, Sir George Stowell, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Leicester, Mr. Johns, and Mr. Channing.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 50.]

BEER ADULTERATION BILL.

On Motion of Baron Dimsdale, Bill for the better securing of Purity in Beer, *ordered to be brought in* by Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, Mr. Halsey, Mr. Round, and Mr. Abel Smith.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 51.]

SPIRITS IN BOND (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill dealing with the Bonding of Spirits in Great Britain and Ireland.

Resolution reported. — Bill *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Flynn, Colonel Nolan, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Peter McDonald, and Mr. O'Hanlon.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 52.]

ALLOTMENTS AND SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jesse Collings, Bill to facilitate the creation of Allotments and Small Holdings of Land, *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Captain Verney, Mr. Arch, Dr. Foster, Mr. Flower, Mr. Cobb, and Mr. Newnes.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 53.]

CHURCH BOARDS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Albert Grey, Bill to provide for the establishment of Church Boards, *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Stafford Howard, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. M'Iver, Mr. Houldsworth, Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, and Mr. Gerald Balfour.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 54.]

MINING LEASES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Conybeare, Bill to regulate the granting of Mining Leases in the counties of Cornwall and Devon; and to amend the Law relating to the payment of wages of miners and the inspection of mines, *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Burt, Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Blake, and Mr. Saunders.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 55.]

SHOP HOURS REGULATION BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to limit the Hours of Labour of children and young persons in Shops, *ordered to be brought in* by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Burt, Mr. Macnaghten, Sir Robert Peel, and Mr. Rathbone.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 56.]

ALLOTMENTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Finch-Hatton, Bill to encourage and facilitate the provision of Allotments for Cottagers, *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Finch-Hatton, Mr. Birkbeck, and Viscount Newark.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 57.]

GAME LAWS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Menzies, Bill for the better protection of occupiers of land against injury to their crops and lands from Ground and other Game, *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Menzies, The Marquess of Stafford, and Dr. Farquharson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 58.]

BEER ADULTERATION (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Birkbeck, Bill for better securing the purity of Beer, *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Birkbeck, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Charles Hall, Mr. Fellowes, and Mr. Joseph Cowen.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 59.]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (1880)

AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Bill to amend "The Employers' Liability Act, 1880," *ordered to be brought in* by Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Dr. Commins, Mr. Sexton, and Mr. Jesse Collings.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 60.]

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (EXTRAORDINARY)

AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Norton, Bill to amend the Law relating to Extraordinary Tithe in respect

of any special cultivation of land, and to make reasonable compensation to the present Tithe owners, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Norton, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, and Mr. Pomfret.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 61.]

MARRIAGES (HOURS OF SOLEMNISATION)

BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Carvell Williams, Bill for extending the Hours within which Marriages may be lawfully solemnised, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Carvell Williams, Mr. Richard, and Mr. Ince.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 62.]

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (EXTRAORDINARY)

REDEMPTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Thomas Bolton, Bill to amend the Tithe Commutation Acts as to Extraordinary Tithe Rent-Charge on hop grounds, orchards, fruit plantations, and market gardens; and to provide for fixing the capital value thereof and the redemption of the same, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Thomas Bolton, Mr. Thorold Rogers, Mr. Borlase, and Sir John Lubbock.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 63.]

OATHS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to Oaths.

Resolution reported:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Serjeant Simon, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Charles Russell, and Mr. Channing.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 64.]

TITHE RENT-CHARGE AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Brookfield, Bill to commute Extraordinary Tithe Rent-Charge, and otherwise amend the Tithe Commutation Acts, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Brookfield and Mr. Farquharson.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 65.]

BEER ADULTERATION (NO. 3) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Quilter, Bill for better securing the purity of Beer, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Quilter, Mr. Duckham, Mr. Heneage, and Mr. Everett.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 66.]

WORKHOUSE CHILDREN BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Molloy, Bill to amend and regulate the instruction of Children in Workhouses, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Molloy, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and Mr. Howard Vincent.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 67.]

TURBARY MOUNTAIN GRAZING AND SEA

WRACK (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Small, Bill to amend the Law relating to Turbary Mountain Grazing Lands and Sea Wrack Beds in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Small, Mr. James O'Doherty, Mr. Conway, Mr. Crilly, and Mr. Alexander Blaine.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 68.]

THEATRES, &c. (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Bill for the better regulation of Theatres and Music Halls in the Metropolis, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Dixon-Hartland and Mr. Macfarlane.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 69.]

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION

TO WOMEN) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Woodall, Bill for extending the Parliamentary Franchise to Women, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Woodall, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Stansfeld, and Mr. Yorke.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 70.]

LAND CULTIVATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bradlaugh, Bill to promote the better Cultivation of Land, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Arch, and Mr. Burt.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 71.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND)

BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to enable owners and occupiers in burghs, wards of burghs, parishes, and districts in Scotland to prevent the common sale of Intoxicating Liquors, or otherwise to have effectual control over the Drink Traffic within such areas.

Resolution reported:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. M'Lagan, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Noel, Mr. Cameron Corbet, Mr. Jacks, Mr. Mark Stewart, Mr. Lacaita, and Dr. Clark.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 72.]

FISHERY ACTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jacks, Bill to consolidate and amend the Fishery Acts applying to Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Jacks, Mr. Dodds, and Mr. Beith.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 73.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON

SUNDAY (DURHAM) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Theodore Fry, Bill to prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sundays in the county of Durham, *ordered* to

be brought in by Mr. Theodore Fry, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Dodda, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Gourley, and Mr. Paulton.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 74.]

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) (NO. 2) BILL.

(On Motion of Mr. Johnston, Bill to assimilate the Municipal and Parliamentary Franchise in Ireland, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Johnston and Mr. De Cobain.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 75.]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (1880)

AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL.

(On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to amend "The Employers' Liability Act, 1880," *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Haldane, and Mr. Lockwood.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 76.]

UNCLAIMED DEPOSITS BILL.

(On Motion of Mr. Edmund Robertson, Bill to provide for the Publication of Unclaimed Stocks, Shares, Deposits, and Debentures in Trading Companies, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dr. Clark, and Mr. Watt.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 77.]

TRAMWAYS ACTS (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

(On Motion of Colonel Nolan, Bill to amend the Tramways Acts (Ireland), *ordered to be brought in by Colonel Nolan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Foley, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Milloy.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 78.]

ECCLIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(On Motion of Mr. Finlay, Bill to amend the law as to Ecclesiastical Assessments in Scotland, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Finlay and Mr. M'Lagan.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 79.]

SANITATION OF HOUSES BILL.

(On Motion of Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Bill for the better Sanitation of Houses in the Metropolis, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Dixon-Hartland and Sir Edmund Lechmere.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 80.]

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (KEEPING OF FIREWOOD) BILL.

(On Motion of Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Bill for the safe keeping of Firewood within the limits of the Metropolis, *ordered to be brought in by Sir James M'Garel-Hogg and Mr. Morgan Howard.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 81.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS BILL.

(On Motion of Mr. Conybeare, Bill to amend the Acts relating to the Registration of Voters and the conduct of Parliamentary Elections, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Hobhouse, and Mr. Shirley.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 82.]

LAND TENURE AND TRANSFER BILL.

(On Motion of Mr. Ince, Bill to amend "The Settled Land Act, 1882," and for the simplification of Titles, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ince, Mr. Courtney, and Mr. Stanhope Kenny.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 83.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS' EXPENSES) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(On Motion of Mr. Hunter, Bill to provide for the payment of the Expenses of Returning Officers at Parliamentary Elections in Scotland, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hunter, Mr. Barclay, Dr. Clark, Mr. Eslemon, and Mr. Edmund Robertson.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 84.]

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, That the House will, at the rising of the House this day, adjourn till Monday next.—(Mr. Akers-Douglas.)

House adjourned at a quarter after
Twelve o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 25th January, 1886.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*First Reading*—
Land Registry * (7).

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

BURMAH—THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES
— MILITARY EXECUTIONS — THE
PROVOST MARSHAL—QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he had received any answer with regard to certain proceedings alleged to have taken place at Mandalay under the orders of the Provost Marshal?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR INDIA (Lord HARRIS):
My Lords, I am able to inform the noble
Marquess on all the points raised the

other day except the first, which has reference to the question of the photographing of the men who were about to be executed. The reply received under that head is from the Chief Commissioner at Rangoon, and is as follows:—

"Rangoon, Jan. 23.—First point—namely, photographing prisoners at moment of execution. I am telegraphing to Mandalay for fuller information."

On the point as to a certain prisoner having been asked questions under fear of death, the reply from Mr. Bernard is—

"It is true that Provost Marshal did place a man suspected of treasonable correspondence in fear of instant death in order to induce him to give information which might have criminated two members of Burmese Durbar. On hearing of this, I pointed out to Provost Marshal that evidence extorted was valueless, and that it was contrary to all laws to extort evidence by moral torture, and I requested that similar proceedings might not recur. I believe Provost Marshal had done nothing of the kind on any previous occasion, and will not do anything of the kind again."

Then follows a telegram from the Viceroy—

"It is also clear that Provost Marshal has proceeded in most unjustifiable manner, at all events in one case. I have telegraphed to Prendergast direct, that if *prima facie* case is made out against Provost Marshal on one of the counts mentioned, he and any other officers implicated should be suspended from their functions, and, if proved guilty, visited with the severest penalty."

A telegram from the Viceroy, dated January 24, says—

"We have English Civil officers and Police officers in command in each of the five districts—Mandalay, Minhla, Ningyan, Pagan, and Myingyan. These officers are supported by troops, and they are working through local Wouns and Thagyas. Rest of country is nominally dominated by Hlootdaw or Burmese Supreme Council. At several points, Bhamo, Tagaing, Hwebo, Ava, Upper Chindwin, Lower Chindwin, Myodaung, we have military detachments stationed with Civil officers in attendance. At present country is still under military occupation. Though rebels taken in arms on the field day are liable to be shot, no one is to be shot or punished by Civil officers otherwise than after trial. Then, in districts nominally under Hlootdaw, sentences of death cannot be carried out by Native officials or otherwise than on responsibility of, and after trial by, Civil officer who may be nearest the ground. Prisoners punished under martial law by Provost Marshal or by commanding officers do not come under Civil officers' cognizance, while country is under military occupation. My hope is that within few weeks' time I may be in position to post Civil officers backed by troops in remaining districts of country."

Lord Harris

The map that the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley) alluded to will be placed in the Library; it is not a recent one, as it is dated 1875.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that the real point he had in view, in inquiring about the map the other day, was to ascertain the precise territory which had been annexed to Her Majesty's Dominions.

LORD LIEUTENANCY OF IRELAND.

RESOLUTION.

THE EARL OF KILMOREY, in rising to move—

"That in the opinion of this House the time has now come when the post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland may be abolished with advantage,"

said, the gravity of the question which he had the honour to bring before their Lordships at a time when anything connected with Ireland was of unusual interest would, he trusted, be a warrantable excuse for his asking at their Lordships' hands all the indulgence which the difficulties of his position required. He had been painfully conscious of the fact that, amongst the Members of their Lordships' House, there were no less than four past Viceroy of Ireland, two being present; and, no doubt, if the duties of his Excellency the present Lord Lieutenant did not necessitate his presence in Dublin, he also would have been present. It had been his original intention to move this Resolution last Session; but he was told the occasion was inopportune, and was advised to postpone it. At that time there was one more past Viceroy in their Lordships' House; but since then the hand of death had removed from their midst one whose place it would be hard to fill, and whose loss it would be difficult to make up for. It might be said of the late Duke of Abercorn that he had no enemies, for even his political opponents vied with his closest followers in the expression of their admiration and regard for him. Of him it might be said that, having arrived at the highest pinnacle of personal popularity, he never lost the charm which he held over his fellow-countrymen until the grave closed over him. He would miss the friendly criticism of the late Duke of Abercorn with regret, and he would look to others to supply similar criticism, especially to his noble Friend who had twice braved

the acknowledged dangers of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Earl Spencer). He yielded to no one in his admiration of the ability and the indomitable courage with which the noble Earl had served his Party. He not only spoke his own sentiments, but those of the entire loyal population of Ireland—though many of them were opposed to him in politics, and did not share the admiration of the noble Earl for the great Chief of his Party—when he said that they were ten times better cared for and ten times better off under the high pressure of that noble Earl's Administration than they were now under that of his amiable and more popular Successor. In this case they preferred the *fertiler in re* to the *suaviter in modo*. The subject of his Resolution, as their Lordships were aware, was no new one. The abolition of the Office of Lord Lieutenant had been before Parliament on many occasions. It was an Office which had existed, he believed, for 700 years; but that was no reason why it should exist for ever. Its abolition was moved in 1823, in 1830, in 1844, in 1850, and in 1858; and the opinions of many eminent statesmen, both for and against, were ventilated on those occasions. The history of Ireland repeated itself with the fidelity of a stock-piece at a Provincial theatre—the piece was always the same, and the only change was in the actors. The question had always been and was now a non-Party question; and, therefore, he would look with the more confidence to their Lordships for a fair and impartial hearing. In addition to the debates reported in *Hansard*, he had sought for information from *The Times*. He had also found a great deal of interesting information in *The Life and Letters of Mr. Croker*, and *The Memoirs of Mr. Grey*; but he would not presume to occupy too much of their Lordships' valuable time, nor to flood the House with a series of long and unnecessary quotations, inasmuch as they were within easy access for their Lordships, and it was more than probable that they were far better acquainted with them than he was. When he looked back to *Hansard's Debates* he saw that such men as Lord Althorp, Lord Grey, Mr. Shiel, Lord John Russell, Mr. Bernal Osborne, and Mr. Hume had taken part in the discussion. Once, and once only, the question of the abolition of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was mooted in

their Lordships' House, and that was in June, 1850, the year in which Lord John Russell introduced a Bill on the subject in the House of Commons. The Marquess of Londonderry of that day succeeded in anticipating the introduction of the measure by taking advantage of an opportunity given him of presenting various Petitions from the Lord Mayor of Dublin and others interested in the trade of that City. On that occasion, while all the Members of their Lordships' House admitted the desirability of raising a discussion, they one and all said they considered the occasion inopportune, and yet, with great inconsistency, insisted on debating the matter at considerable length. At the end of the Session of 1850 the Bill lapsed. Since 1858, so far as he could make out, the matter had never been before the attention of Parliament; and there was the fact that although in 1858 a Motion brought forward by Mr. Roebuck was thrown out, the one in 1850 was carried by a large majority. To keep the trade of Dublin going was the only excuse for maintaining the Office. There were other arguments for upholding the Office; but they were all more or less of a sentimental nature, and, therefore, all the less forcible. For instance, one distinguished Irishman, now a Judge, was heard to say in defence of the retention of the Office that it would be hard lines if an Irishman, who was precluded from basking in the sunshine of Royalty, should not have an opportunity occasionally of airing himself in the moonshine of the Viceroy. If that was the strongest argument that a great and distinguished lawyer could raise in that day, he thought there was not much to be said in its favour. The objection as to the difficulty of coming to London to attend a levée was merely a sentimental one. In these days sentimental objections had very little weight. These were days in which only practical objections had any weight. Sir Peter Teazle's views with respect to sentiment were very much like his. He believed they were extremely proper and popular. He did not think the Rules of their Lordships' House would prevent him giving a quotation from *The School for Scandal*; but it was unnecessary, since all their Lordships must be acquainted with the expressions made use of by that irascible Baronet. It was amusing to look

back and find even such a great and eminent statesman as Lord John Russell talking about the facilities of communication as they existed in 1850 in comparison with those which existed in 1805. He believed he was right in stating that Lord John Russell actually quoted from, if he did not lay upon the Table of the House, a copy of *Bradshaw's Railway Guide*; but if he (the Earl of Kilmorey) wished to quote from any publication to show the enormous strides which had been taken within the last 35 years, he would refer to the records of scientific institutions and papers read at scientific meetings; and, looking at the records of the marvellous inventions of the last 35 years, he found there were no inventions which excited more marvel and admiration than the telephone. What were the facilities of communication in 1850 to those in the present day? As the locomotive had superseded the old stage coach, so the telephone had cast into the shade other marvellous inventions which at one time it was thought impossible to supersede. In the present day it was not impossible for the noble Marquess in Downing Street to hold an animated conversation with the Secretary of State for Ireland in Dublin Castle, nor was it more difficult for His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief to give his order, *circa voce*, to Prince Saxe-Weimar. This disposed of the argument brought forward in their Lordships' House in 1850 by the Duke of Wellington. That objection was that in cases of disturbance, in the absence of the Lord Lieutenant, who could give orders to the troops? He saw no possible difficulty, in the absence of the Lord Lieutenant, of directions being given with regard to the Forces. He maintained that facilities for communicating were now so great that there was nothing to prevent the Lord Lieutenant answering with rapidity any question put to him by the Commander-in-Chief of the Forces. The same facility would enable him to transmit his orders to the Commander-in-Chief, and to take steps to see them properly carried out. Although science had done much to alleviate their sorrow and to mitigate their distress, it had not yet provided them with the same means of communication between England and Ireland that now existed between Birkenhead and Liverpool. There always had been, and he

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feared there always would be, one great and insuperable difficulty in the way of the realization of all the schemes of reconciling Irishmen to England; and that was the nauseating barrier that existed between the two countries—*hinc illæ lacrymæ*. It might be that the opening of the Mersey Tunnel the other day might give a fillip to science; and he trusted their Lordships would all live to see a submarine tunnel between England and Ireland constructed. But they had communication by means of some of the finest steamers in the world; and what was the journey from Dublin to London? What would their forefathers have thought of their making complaints of a journey of from 10 to 12 hours' duration, when they were accustomed to travel on a coach for days and nights together? As to the danger of travelling, although there were occasions on which outrages were committed in railway carriages, they were very few and far between when compared with the dangers which were run on the King's highway in the time of stage-coach travelling. What was the journey from Dublin to London now? Why, it was simply the rapid whirling along of their recumbent bodies, surrounded by every luxury and comfort. He regretted that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland was not present. His appearance was well known to their Lordships, and they would readily agree with him that the noble and learned Lord showed no signs of decay, although he was frequently subject to the fearful ordeal of these constant journeys. He was stating a fact when he said it was not unusual for the noble and learned Lord to take his seat in the Four Courts in Dublin on Monday, to run over by the mail to attend a Cabinet Council on the Tuesday afternoon, and to return to the Four Courts on the Wednesday as fresh as if he had not undergone the slightest fatigue. It was an acknowledged fact that science had now minimized the geographical difficulties between the two countries. He took leave to conclude that the position in which the present Lord Lieutenant had lately found himself, harassed and worn by the innumerable difficulties and unavoidable annoyances of Office, strengthened not a little his argument that the administrative and State functions of the Lord Lieutenant should no longer be combined in one man. That unfor-

fortunate combination ought never to have existed. It appeared to him to have been a great mistake in the Act of Union; and, as far as he could judge, it was acknowledged by the statesmen of that day that the combination was a mistake. Lord John Russell, on the introduction of his Bill, on the 17th of May, 1850, said—

“In fact, the Members of the present Government have for a very long time had in contemplation the measure I have now to propose, and when Lord (Larndon) went to Ireland he went there on a distinct understanding with me that the Office of Lord Lieutenant would, if Parliament should concur with us, be totally abolished.”—[3 *Hansard* [111], 171.]

Later on his Lordship said—

“It appears, however, at the time of the Union with Ireland the subject of the abolition of the Lord Lieutenantcy was taken into consideration by the Sovereign who then ruled the destinies of this country.”—(*Ibid.* 173.)

His Lordship then proceeded to quote from a letter from Mr. Addington; and he (the Earl of Kilmorey), from a general résumé of the speeches of that day, was led to the conclusion that it was an acknowledged difficulty, and that it was handed as a legacy from one Cabinet to another, where it was looked upon with so much distaste that when a memorandum on the subject came to the top it was at once put to the bottom. It was impossible for him to point to a stronger argument in favour of his suggestion than that 50 years after the Union an able statesman like the late Lord John Russell should have proposed to the House a Bill to carry out what he was now advocating, and left the matter in abeyance solely on the ground that more important matters were engaging attention. It was no secret that he (the Earl of Kilmorey) desired to see the Office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland abolished as at present constituted. He wished to see the administrative functions of the Lord Lieutenant transferred to a Secretary of State for Ireland, whilst those of ceremonial might very well be allowed to slip into oblivion as unnecessary and out of place. It should be remembered that, however vehemently he might attack the evils which arose from the Office of Lord Lieutenant, nothing should fall from his lips in any way to reproach those who had successively held that high Office, and discharged the onerous duties of Lord Lieutenant. What he

wanted to see abolished, was not the holder of the high Office, but the system which had imposed on so many Noblemen the thankless combination of political patronage and Viceregal State. He knew that Lord Lieutenants had conducted the social administration of the country with the greatest ability. But faithfully as they had discharged their duties in that respect—right royally as they had spent their money and distributed their favours—why were they weighed down by politics? He saw no reason whatever why the machinery of administration and the ceremonial of Royalty should be coupled in what was only a mock Court. It was well known that the Sovereign had no politics, and therefore he contended that the Representative of the Sovereign should have no politics. The principle had been broken through from the very commencement so far as Ireland was concerned, and he hoped the words of the late Lord President would be well considered when he said—

“However high-minded and well-intentioned the Lord Lieutenant might be, it is impossible for him to be anything else than a Party man.”

Now, these few words struck at the root of the evil of which he complained. He said that the Office, being a political appointment—however kind and humane the Viceroy might be, and however well-intentioned, it was impossible for him to administer the affairs of an unruly people with more than passing success. A new Lord Lieutenant's policy was invariably the reverse of his Predecessor's; and however anxious a Lord Lieutenant might be to strike out a line of his own, and to make a new departure, he inevitably found that his endeavours were hampered and rendered futile by the officialism of Dublin Castle. He believed more influence, more power, and more beneficent results would have accrued from the successive Administrations of Lord Lieutenants since the Act of Union if their number had been fewer and their term of Office longer. But, for his own part, he hoped sincerely he should never see a Lord Lieutenant again. He was not so careless, having regard to the wholesale abolition which he proposed, as to forget to make some suggestions as to what should be substituted for that which was abolished. To discharge some portion of the duties of the Lord Lieutenant, he had sug-

gested the appointment of a Secretary of State for Ireland, and he would award him such a salary as would enable him to keep up the customary grants of money, and to continue the customary patronage to the charitable institutions of the country; and, in relation to those other duties performed by the Lord Lieutenant, he should have a scheme to submit which he knew would not only meet with the approval of the loyal section of Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland, but which was the only one to soothe the savage breast of the Separatist and bring the rebel back to reason and allegiance. It might be said that the Dublin trade had had a great deal to do with this matter in the past, and that it might have a great weight in dealing with the subject in the future. He did not know exactly what Dublin trade consisted of. Some might say it was whisky; some might say it was poplin; but those who took the trade view of the case were really not those who carried on an Irish trade, but they were chiefly dressmakers and others who represented London and Paris firms. If there were a single Irish trade or industry which could be promoted, or which could be better kept alive by the retention of the Office of Lord Lieutenant, he should be the last man in the world to desire to see that Office done away with. But there was not a single trade, so far as he could discover, which would be affected one way or the other by the retention or abolition of the Lord Lieutenantcy. Who would be affected? It would not affect the hotel keepers; it would not cause less traffic on the railways; the tailors would make as many pairs of trousers, the boot makers as many pairs of boots, and the carriage builders would make as many carriages as they did now. The question of the abolition of the Lord Lieutenantcy, he was aware, could not be raised and passed over in a few words. There was, of course, that large question of the privileges enjoyed by the presence of the Lord Lieutenant, and his advocacy of the claims of the various charitable institutions and hospitals in Ireland generally, and in Dublin in particular, and which had done so much good for the country. He certainly would not think of submitting a scheme which would rob those institutions of any of their privileges. It

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was, as he had said, a scheme which would attach to the Secretary of State to be appointed such a salary as would enable him to meet the claims of charitable institutions in the future as they had been met in the past. He proposed to raise from the ashes of an anomalous Office the Phoenix of a new and more practical post, and to establish it altogether upon a more reasonable and responsible basis. That no injury should accrue to Ireland by the loss of the costly accoutrements of Viceregal glitter, he suggested that Her Majesty's Ministers should submit to Her Majesty the long-entertained and long-silent but now loudly-expressed complaint of her Irish people, and urge upon her gracious consideration their fervent prayer—namely, that as for many years past in England and Scotland where there were any public duties for Royalty to perform, and the Sovereign was not able to be present, she was officially represented by a Royal Deputy, so should the same course be taken with reference to Irish institutions. They desired that in great public ceremonies the Queen should be represented by Royalty, and not by a mock Court, which was a base imitation of the real thing. The Court in London had been considered sufficient for the extremes of England, Scotland, and Wales; and he thought that it should be quite sufficient for the extreme parts of Ireland. Irish people who were desirous of paying personal respects to Her Majesty would gravitate to the Metropolis if the Lord Lieutenantcy were abolished, and would help to swell the rank and file of those who constituted the retinue of the Court. During the recent visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales to Ireland, it was found that the ceremony of being presented to the Lord Lieutenant did not count as a presentation to the Sovereign, which he considered the climax of anomalism. He hoped that in any remarks he had made he had not said anything which would be painful to the feelings of those distinguished Noblemen who had occupied the Viceregal Chair in the past, or to any of their relations. He did not profess to be original; but he could not help making use of epithets such as "mock," after studying this subject in the books and papers which he had recently perused. Whilst on this subject he could not refrain

from quoting the words of an article in *The Times* in 1858, which was made to say that in conceding a mock Court to Ireland Englishmen only did so as they would give glass beads to savages. The language of the present day was pretty strong; but he thought that that far exceeded anything that was now written. When the late Lord John Russell introduced his Bill in the Commons, he held out what in vulgar parlance was called a "sop." He suggested that, to assist in the passing of the Bill, the Irish people should be led to understand that Her Majesty the Queen would pay them a visit not only once, but frequently. That, he thought, was a very unfair thing to have done. He did not know whether the bait took; but, at any rate, the Motion was passed. There was not, however, the slightest chance in 1886 of anything of that sort being placed before the Irish people, because they knew that it would be unreasonable to expect Her Majesty to so severely strain her health and time, neither would they for a moment expect His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, whose hands were already full, to undertake the duty. Although the Irish people might rejoice to see His Royal Highness, they would not expect to see in him the accepted deputy of their Sovereign; but what people in Ireland bore in mind was, that there was another of Her Majesty's sons, whose name and title lent themselves not a little to the occasion; and it would give the greatest pleasure all over Ireland, and considerably reduce what was now called disloyal feeling, if an announcement were made semi-officially that a Royal residence was to be purchased for the Duke of Connaught, who should represent Her Majesty. No particular duration of time need be named for the existence of the Office; it would do a great deal of good, and the people would always know that there was living among them one of the Royal Princes whom they could justly call their own. One of the objects he had before him was to impress upon their Lordships that the Act of Union was not complete, and that it was not too late to make it complete by taking these steps in the right direction, and, by assimilating the law of Ireland to that of England, to draw the two nations together. What he

wished to see was, that Her Majesty's Government should bring in a Bill to abolish the Office of Viceroy, and establish a Secretary of State, who should be an Irishman, if possible; if not, both the Under Secretaries should be taken from the ranks of resident Irishmen. Then a Bill should be introduced giving suitable salaries to these officials. What was even more important was that Dublin Castle should be thoroughly re-organized, placed thoroughly under the complete control of the Secretary of State, and put into proper touch with all boards of official administration throughout the country. At present there was a great complaint that there was not sufficient connection, in feeling or otherwise, between bodies like the Irish Board of Works and Dublin Castle. In the event of the changes he proposed being made, the Secretary ought, of course, to have a seat in the Cabinet; and it was also indispensable that he should have a private residence in Ireland, as well as an official one. It had always been a source of complaint that Ireland had been governed by Englishmen; and the only thing that could be said in its favour was that it was like the doctor who said that he could always prescribe better for his patients when he never saw them. With regard to the changes he had proposed, he was reminded of the saying that if you could not get what you wanted you must put up with what you could get; he hoped, therefore, that the noble Marquess, if he intended to reply, would, at all events, see his way to carry out some of the changes proposed. It was impossible, without possessing the power of prophecy, to conjecture, with the slightest degree of certainty, what the noble Marquess the Prime Minister would say, even if he condescended to notice the speech. Probably the noble Marquess would administer to him a rebuke for having dared to occupy so much of their Lordships' valuable time, and for having struggled to his feet into paths where statesmen feared to tread. If the noble Marquess, however, did administer a rebuke, he hoped it would be a kind one, and that he (the Earl of Kilmorey) should have sufficient spirit left to accept the rebuke with fitting humility, especially when he remembered that it came from such a distinguished statesman as the Prime Minister. But perhaps the noble

Marquess might say that, although it possessed some defects, there were some points in his scheme worth consideration, and that he might promise to take some action in the matter. If he did not succeed in impressing upon their Lordships' House the advisableness of abolishing the Lord Lieutenantcy in favour of a Secretaryship of State, at any rate he would have the consolation of knowing that he had given their Lordships a great subject for their careful and dispassionate consideration.

Moved, "That in the opinion of this House the time has now come when the post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland may be abolished with advantage."—(*The Earl of Kilmorrey*.)

EARL COWPER thought that a great deal was to be said in favour of the Motion which had been brought before them. After the exhaustive manner in which it had been treated he did not intend to make a long speech; but as he had had the honour of holding the Office of Lord Lieutenant he thought that he might be permitted to say a few words. He did not place the same stress as the noble Earl had laid upon the functions of Viceregal hospitality, or upon the effect of the Lord Lieutenant's Court upon the trade of Dublin. The functions of hospitality and the Court held at the Castle were, some time ago, matters of considerable importance; but now, owing to the rapidity of communication between Dublin and London, they were of very little importance. While he filled the Office of Lord Lieutenant he must say that he did so with very mixed feelings. The hospitable part of the duties he looked back to with great pleasure. There was something so essentially kindly, hospitable, and generous in the Irish nature, which made him look back with pleasure on that part of his experience, and made his duties very easy. The people were so generous and hospitable themselves, and so willing to respond cordially to any civility which one might attempt to show, that entertainments were very pleasurable things. At the same time, he could not deny that the people who attended drawing-rooms, balls, and other Castle entertainments were, as a rule, either those who were what might be called "the English garrison"—the people quartered there—a large number of officials and others who came because they thought that as long as a Court

was held in Dublin, it was their duty to show respect to the Representative of the Queen by attending. Of this last he had an example at the time he was in Ireland. At the beginning of his first Castle season the Government of the day was not at the time very popular with the upper classes in Ireland, and there was a feeling prevalent that there would be a general resolution not to attend his levées. But when the levée was held several gentlemen differing from him in politics made a point of coming to attend. Amongst these latter he might mention the present Lord Chancellor—whom he did not know personally at the time—he came over specially to Ireland, and remained only a few hours in Dublin in order to attend. There was however, nobody who wished to attend a drawing-room or a levée who could not do so by coming over to London. So much for this part of the matter. Of course, there was also the question of the trade of Dublin. In these days, when trade was everywhere very stagnant, one must be sorry that anything in Dublin or elsewhere should have the effect of taking money out of the pockets of the tradesmen. He and others, no doubt, would be very sorry for their sakes that any such thing should take place. But he thought that so far as the encouraging trade was concerned there was really not any serious importance to be attached to the question. There was absolutely nothing in the duty of the Lord Lieutenant which could not be performed by a Secretary of State, who would have power as Lord Spencer had power. He could not see why Lord Spencer should not have been called Secretary of State for Ireland. Mr. Smith had now gone over to Ireland, and he was a Member of the Cabinet; and anyone appointed to the Office of Lord Lieutenant with the Chief Secretary in the Cabinet would find himself in a very unenviable position. It was always disagreeable to have nominal responsibility, and to be the nominal head, when the man who was supposed to be your subordinate had the real power. He thought Her Majesty's Government would have some difficulty in finding anyone to fill the Office under the circumstances. In times of disturbance men were ready to serve the Queen and country; but, however anxious they

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might be, he thought it would be asking too much of them to expect them to occupy that position. If there was a Secretary of State appointed in substitution of the Lord Lieutenant, he would have an Office in London and in Dublin. He would go backwards and forwards. In quiet times—if, indeed, they were ever to have quiet times again—certain advantages would be occasioned by having a great deal of the business concentrated in London. He thought—judging from his former experiences in Ireland—that there was a great deal too much of a disposition to refer everything to the Central Authority of Dublin. Not only what in the ordinary course of business was submitted to the Castle, but everybody who had anything to do with Ireland would acknowledge that there was a tendency on the part of the people, or of a class of them, in that country to trust too little to themselves, and too little to local action, and to come up to the Castle at every little difficulty—in former times he would have said for every little job, though he hoped it did not exist now. Everything that might be wanted caused these people to come up to the Castle, and have it done. If they could transfer the business to London in these days of telegraph, railways, and steamers, this condition of things could be broken down and done away with. The Chief Secretary or Secretary of State could go backwards and forwards, and everything could still be done in Ireland which could not be done in this country. He knew, of course, that the question of abolishing an Office that had existed for 600 years was most important and difficult. It was impossible not to consider it in connection with the existing state of things, or how it should be regarded in connection with the question of Home Rule, which, after all, was the great question of the day, and one which was concerning and occupying the minds of all men, and on which everybody's thoughts were fixed more than on anything else. Now, there was no doubt that the Irish Members—the great bulk of them—were not disposed to have a very close union with England, and they had taken up the question of abolishing the Office of Lord Lieutenant. He could not help thinking that those Members did so at a time when they thought that Home

Rule was altogether out of the sphere of practical politics. If, however, they really thought there was a chance of getting Home Rule, they would feel that there would be, as in Canada, a Governor or Lord Lieutenant absolutely necessary. He was one of those who considered Home Rule impossible, and that they could never grant a separate Parliament to Ireland. It could not be too soon thoroughly known that it was not the intention of any Party to do this; and feeling that, and as a great deal of the business connected with the Office of Lord Lieutenant could be done in London, the announcement that the Government intended to do away with the Office would be as good as a deliberate statement that they did not intend to do anything to sever the Union. He considered the present a very opportune moment to declare that this last vestige of what was once a separate Constitution should be done away with.

THE EARL OF HOWTH said, that notwithstanding the many objections to the proposal he could not refrain from supporting it. At the same time, he thought that the importance of trade in connection with the Viceregal Office had been somewhat overlooked; and he trusted that if the Lord Lieutenancy was abolished a Representative of Her Majesty would still hold a Court in Dublin. Two Viceroys had lately ruled in Ireland—one with uniform firmness, and the other with uniform kindness, and it remained for history to record which was most successful. He agreed that in reference to the expenditure, immediately the result of the Viceroyalty, the question was a very small one; but it was one which could not be entirely overlooked. His principal objection to the Viceroyalty was based on the fact that it was a political office. If they looked to India, Canada, and the Colonies, the Viceroy or Governor General continued to hold the Office in spite of any change of Ministers. In Ireland if the Office was continued it should be the same. The Office of Viceroy was now in abeyance; and what they desired to know was, how long it would remain so before something was done in connection with that part of the Administration in Ireland? There was a sum of about £20,000 a-year which was granted for the upholding of the Office of Lord Lieutenant; and he strongly maintained

that although that Office was in abeyance the sum ought to be available for the purpose of defraying the expenses of what might be termed a Royal residence in Ireland. He sincerely trusted that if another Lord Lieutenant was not to be appointed there would be every one or two years a visit paid to Ireland by an illustrious Prince representing Her Majesty; and he believed that those periodical visits would be an effective substitute for what he hoped was the defunct Office of Lord Lieutenant.

EARL FORTESCUE said, that two and a-half years experience in holding the Office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had convinced his father that the maintenance of that Office was not only unnecessary but undesirable. Not only that, but what he (Earl Fortescue) himself saw there during the same time, acting as he was as his father's private Secretary, led him to the conclusion that the Office ought to be abolished. He should support the Motion, believing the time to be very appropriate for carrying out the object at which it aimed. In securing that object they would efface, as far as possible, all reminiscences, and discourage also all hopes, of the revival of a separate Parliament and a separate Administration in Ireland.

LORD FITZGERALD said, that it would be difficult for any Government in future to appoint a new Lord Lieutenant if the House passed a Resolution against the continuance of the Office. He considered it inexpedient in the face of the Resolution that they should bind themselves in this matter before they had a definite proposition before them. It was quite true the noble Earl who had introduced the Motion had made suggestions; but they must fall to the ground, as they were not the suggestions of the Government. Indeed, he did not know whether the Government had any plan upon the subject; but he knew this—that the Motion came by surprise to the whole of Ireland, which country as yet had had no opportunity to express any opinion whatever upon the matter. If they were to affirm the Resolution he saw no way out of it. There were great difficulties in connection with this subject. It was not merely the abolition of an ancient Office that should be considered. There was another question—namely, the substitution of something

else in its place; and they were now asked to vote in favour of the abolition of the Office of Lord Lieutenant before they knew what was to be given in return for it. If the Office was to be abolished no sentimental views should be allowed to prevent its abolition. There was no law or statute requiring the appointment of a Lord Lieutenant. The government of Ireland might be carried on without one; but it would be exceedingly awkward to have the Office abolished before they knew what scheme the Government had in store in substitution, and before they had had an opportunity of considering and discussing it. When Lord John Russell brought forward this question, it was by Bill, and not by Resolution. The difficulties of the subject were so great that the Bill was abandoned, although it was carried through the Commons by a large majority. It should not be forgotten that if they abolished the Viceregal Office another important Office would fall with it. He referred to the Office of the Lord Chancellor for Ireland. What Dublin precisely wanted was to be let alone. He believed if she had no legislation for many years to come they would find that there would not be a more prosperous or happy city in the United Kingdom. He felt it was very undesirable, and very unadvisable, before the country was in any sense in a contented state, to entertain such a proposal. He believed, moreover, that the country ought to have time to consider the proposal before their Lordships committed themselves to an abstract Resolution which really there had been as yet no opportunity to consider.

LORD WAVENEY said, he thought it should be laid down as a distinct principle that there was no need for this change; and he ventured to say that the opinion of the country was not favourable to the abolition of the post of Lord Lieutenant. He was aware that, on his side of the House, at all events, it was a tradition of their policy that the Lord Lieutenantcy should be abolished. A substitution, however, was so difficult—touching so many tender and subtle webs—that there must be a remedy of some other kind. He believed the remedy for the present state of things would be found in making the Office more or less of a permanent character. The first thing to do, in his opinion, was to lift

the Lord Lieutenantcy above the level of Party politics, and so change the position of the Lord Lieutenant that he should become, in a certain sense, a Constitutional Sovereign, and not merely represent, as he now did, the Imperial Parliament of this country. Thus, for instance, he would appoint him to the post for a term of five years; and, as the Representative of no school of politics, he would be able to vindicate that law which the Irish only required to know was being steadily and persistently enforced to obey.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, my noble Friend at the Table made an able and interesting speech, a speech which I am sure will do much to stimulate opinion and discussion upon the important question to which it relates. If we were merely dealing with a speculative subject from an historical point of view, I confess my sympathy and my assent would be completely at the service of my noble Friend. But my impression is that there is no maxim of politics which has been more generally accepted by statesmen during the last 30 years than that the Lord Lieutenantcy of Ireland was superfluous; but, on the other hand, there has been no conclusion more usually arrived at than that it was necessary to postpone the practical consideration of the subject. When that course has been followed out by men of different minds and of different opinions in various circumstances, it appears to me that there must have been some very good reason for doing so. Nobody can doubt but that the Lord Lieutenantcy is, what is called in these days, only "a survival." It arose in very different times and circumstances. It represented the difficulty of reaching Dublin from London at a time when adverse weather might make the difficulty of communication between the two countries an affair of weeks. At that time it was necessary that there should be a Representative of the Sovereign in Ireland. But that necessity has entirely passed away. My noble Friend went at some length into the scientific facilities which exists for governing Ireland from London. My impression is that he exaggerated them a little. But the thing which he proposes could no doubt be done if we had no past history, no present feeling, no danger of misconstruction, and no disturbance of the normal condition of

things to take into account. I will go further. I think that the Lord Lieutenantcy is not only anomalous, but in some respect it is inconvenient. The noble Earl, who has been a former Lord Lieutenant, dwelt on this inconvenience in strong language. He spoke of the future; but I understood him to be referring to the past. He said it was very inconvenient for the Chief Secretary to be in the Cabinet and have all the power, and for the Lord Lieutenant to be without power altogether. And he went on to say, in effect, that the position was so degrading that he did not understand how anyone could accept it.

EARL COWPER: I did not use the word "degrading."

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Perhaps not. That was my impression. I hope he will forgive me for saying that the observation has not made it more easy for the Government to provide another Lord Lieutenant; and if there is any delay in appointing that useful officer, I hope the person who is impeached will be the noble Earl opposite. Undoubtedly there is a certain anomaly and inconvenience in the fact of the officer who is nominally subordinate to the Lord Lieutenant sitting in the Cabinet and settling the policy which the Lord Lieutenant is to pursue, and the orders he is to obey; and it is possible that a little friction may sometimes arise in these circumstances. And more than that, where the Lord Lieutenant is taken into council, and where he has a share in fixing the policy which his Chief Secretary really directs, you always have the inconvenience of a double Government, and an occasional weakness in the direction of affairs in consequence. Therefore, I quite agree with my noble Friend that if we had to begin again it would not be desirable to have a Lord Lieutenant. But I am afraid I must follow the long course of precedents before me by saying that I do not think this an opportune moment for entertaining this question. After all, except for its inconvenience, the Lord Lieutenantcy does not do very much harm. And whom should we please by abolishing it? Is it the Loyalists who are very largely interested in the trade of Dublin? I very much doubt whether that excellent and patriotic body are very anxious for its abolition. Should

we please the Nationalists? I was exceedingly glad to hear the outspoken language of my noble Friend (Earl Cowper), a former Viceroy, as to the possibilities of Home Rule. I listened to that language with the most hearty sympathy, and I desire to re-echo it; but when he went beyond that and said that the best way to teach the Nationalists that you would not give them Home Rule was to give them a more centralized Government, that was going to the other extreme. I would rather put it in this way—that undoubtedly the substitution of a Chief Secretary, with his offices in London, for a Lord Lieutenant would be to increase, and not to diminish, centralization, and, therefore, would displease the Party known as Nationalist, as well as the Party known as Loyalist. I do not know that to increase the subjects on account of which Ireland is displeased with England would be precisely the wisest course to pursue at the present time. There is another point to which allusion has been made. I think it was my noble Friend at the Table who said that he looked forward to the time when everyone who desired to be presented would come to London for the purpose. Well, but that means a very considerable displacement of the class of persons who under ordinary circumstances, at least, add to the trade of the country and keep money in it, by giving employment to industry and prosperity to trade. Is the present condition of Ireland, especially with regard to trade, one which should be selected for the performance of an operation which would have the effect of diminishing the causes of prosperity and trade? On the contrary, the great evil resulting from past circumstances in the case of Ireland is that money is leaving the country too fast, and that it is very difficult to keep it there; and gratuitously to add to these causes of impoverishment seems to me to be very injudicious in the present state of things. I do not think on either side, on the side of the abolition or on the side of the retention of the Office, that the arguments are of that overwhelming importance that I should apprehend any great disaster either way. But weighing the arguments against each other, not with respect to their importance, but with respect to the time at which the Motion is made, I am com-

pelled to agree with the noble and learned Lord opposite that the time is not opportune; and that Her Majesty's Government could not, I think, without a derogation from their duty, give any countenance to the Motion of the noble Earl.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he also agreed very much with what had fallen from his noble and learned Friend behind him (Lord FitzGerald). This was by no means an easy question to settle. It could not properly be discussed as an abstract Motion, but only when there was a distinct and well-conceived plan laid before the House. There were a great many questions that had to be dealt with in considering the abolition of the Office of Lord Lieutenant, and they were of such a character that they could only be dealt with by the responsible Government. The noble Earl at the Table suggested that the proposed Secretary of State should permanently reside in Dublin; but, of course, he would have to be in London for a great portion of every year. In that they had before them the real difficulty in the matter, as, undoubtedly, the Chief Secretary, if in the Cabinet, was practically the superior of the Lord Lieutenant. Until all the questions that were involved in this matter were fully before the House—and before the House on the advice of the Government of the day—he maintained it would be exceedingly imprudent and hasty for the House to come to the conclusion that the Office of Lord Lieutenant should be abolished. It had been said that there was no Statute compelling them to appoint a Lord Lieutenant; but there certainly were Statutes providing that certain things should be done by the Lord Lieutenant; and, for this reason, legislation was absolutely necessary. He agreed with a great deal that the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) had said; but he could not detach the present proposal from the whole question of policy with regard to Irish affairs. The time might come when it might be expedient to abolish the Office; and as a personal opinion, looking at it from a general point of view, he should be inclined himself, providing that the administration could be satisfactorily arranged for, to take the view that there would be an advantage in abolishing

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THE EARL OF KILMOREY said, that having elicited the expression of opinion which would be useful in the country, and which he thought was not altogether hostile to the principle of his Resolution, he would ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND—MINISTERIAL POLICY.—RESOLUTION.

LORD WAVENEY, in moving—

"That the Ministerial plan for government of Ireland be introduced forthwith, and take precedence of all public business up to report,"—said, he must complain of the prolonged silence of the Government, and declared that the debate on Thursday evening had satisfied no one. This he knew from private communications he had received from Ireland. He had no desire whatever to interfere with the discretion of the Government, nor did he desire to promote a discussion upon this point by any remarks which he might make; but they had now, as it were, come into a new world, and they had a very altered state of affairs to face. It might be asked why he had brought the matter before their Lordships? It was, first, because he desired that in all Constitutional matters the House should reserve, exercise, and vindicate its rights in these Constitutional matters; and, in the second place, because he thought the matter could be dealt with in a calmer tone than "elsewhere." He wished

to put the matter plainly in a few sentences; and he assured the Government that people were waiting with great anxiety for their answer, and for the policy which it was intended to introduce. People in England had no conception of the excitable and exasperated state of the people of Ireland. The public mind there was in a condition he never knew before. Day by day the tide was rising, which he feared would saturate the country with even greater dangers than those which even now existed. He said in no exaggerated terms that even in the peaceable districts he knew, where they were desirous of carrying on quietly their home industries, a sensible alteration had taken place of late. The people were determined to have a reply which would satisfy them that peace and security would be theirs. He hoped the mission of Mr. W. H. Smith would be productive of good results; but he feared otherwise. Mr. Smith had been brought up in the English school of politicians, and he doubted if he would be able to obtain all the information necessary to form a sound judgment. Parliament had already neglected too much, and thought too little of their responsibilities with regard to Ireland. They forgot how great a difference there was not only in the character, but in the free way in which matters were looked at, and in fact had not the same political effect in both countries. For instance, the election to all offices of trust were dependent on public taxes in England. He remembered some years ago how a very powerfully constituted Committee of the House of Commons, sitting on the question of Elective Boards for Counties and its success, had so little evidence that no further proceedings were to be taken. There must be a combination which would mutually aim at the adjustment of the body politic; and he held that an experiment to be a success must be carried through all the adverse circumstances which might arise. The position which the Irish Members of the House of Commons hoped to attain was inconsistent with the maintenance of Imperial power; and he therefore cordially approved the firm words which were read from the Throne when Parliament was opened by Her Majesty. But those words were not enough by themselves. In the fevered and disturbed state of public opinion in Ireland at the present

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time it was of vital importance that the Government should give the country, without delay, a clear indication of their intended policy. It was the wish of many people in Ireland to subject the classes possessing most intellectual power to the rule of uneducated men, and the strange spectacle was there seen of the persecution of its own members by a particular class. He alluded, of course, to "Boycotting," which had wrought such evil as was difficult to conceive. To show how greatly this form of intimidation had spread it would be sufficient to tell the House that the heads of some of the most powerful banks in the country had hesitated to support resolutions of loyalty because they feared to imperil the money of their shareholders, having the example of the run upon the Bank of Ireland before their eyes. No one could have any conception of the state of things unless it came home to him. The matter was not confined to the banks, for they could not place their cattle on board ship, they could not drive them to market or perform any of the functions of honest industry without running the risk of being ruined or of bringing ruin to those with whom they were dealing. No time should be lost by the Government in putting down such a state of things. They could defy the world in arms; but it was impossible for them to defy the murder and burning which went on throughout the country. Never was there a time more favourable for bringing back the people to a condition in which they would respect the law. He had been perfectly astounded at the rapidity with which the corruption had spread. This was no time for tampering with the solid resistance to law which existed in Ireland. Where an example could be made without harshness let it be made. If a municipality showed that it was determined in its resistance to authority then take from it the charge which it did not deserve to have. With regard to one question which had been brought up—namely, that of a Royal residence in Ireland—he warned them that it would become a centre for all intrigues; but let the Constitutional Sovereign pass through her territories freely, unbidden, and spontaneously, and he was prepared to assert that Her Majesty would meet with a reception as warm and as hearty as any she had ever received in any part of her dominions.

Lord Waverley

He stood by the side of their Royal Highnesses when they visited Ireland, and was able to speak of the absolute sincerity of the reception they received. It appeared to him that the Office of Lord Lieutenant, above all others, should be outside Party politics. No doubt he should be a man in whom both Parties had confidence; but they had no difficulty in this particular in other directions, and would find none with regard to Ireland. In conclusion, he begged to move the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Moved, "That the Ministerial plan for government of Ireland be introduced forthwith, and take precedence of all public business up to report."—(*The Lord Waverley*.)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I suppose that the noble Lord does not propose to take the sense of the House upon the Motion which he has made, but rather regards it as the text of the interesting speech to which we have just listened, because the Motion itself is hardly applicable to the state of Business in this House. It asks—

"That the Ministerial plan for government of Ireland be introduced forthwith, and take precedence of all public business up to report."

If the Ministerial plan, as the noble Lord says, is introduced into this House, I do not imagine that there will be anything in the way of our ordinary Business which would make it impossible to go on with it. I think that this Motion rather looks like as if it were intended for the other House, and I am afraid that a Constitutional objection might be taken to it from that point of view. But the matter to which the noble Lord has referred is undoubtedly one of the gravest that can occupy us at any time, and I do not differ very much from many of the criticisms which have fallen from him. It is undoubtedly true that in addition to the positive and actual evils with which we have to deal—and they are very great indeed—we have also to deal with an excited state of public opinion in Ireland, and, perhaps, to some degree in this country, which I hardly need say enormously aggravates the task of those charged with the maintenance of public order and the preservation of peace, and increases tenfold the difficulties that lie before us. If it had not been for the excited state of public feeling I cannot imagine how such an interpretation of, and commentary upon, our intentions, as

appears to have affected the minds of the noble Lord and many others, could have come into circulation. We are unfortunately in the condition which was spoken of by a great American President—"We are changing horses at the moment of crossing the stream." We thought it essential that the Minister who would have the conduct of any propositions which we might make to Parliament should satisfy us and himself thoroughly on certain points by conference with the authorities in Ireland before we submitted to Parliament steps which we proposed to take for remedying the great evils upon which the noble Lord has dwelt. But to found upon that necessary act of circumspection the imputation that we had the intention of indefinitely delaying any explanation of our policy, or any action of the kind, is so exaggerated an interpretation that I can only attribute it to this very excited state of public opinion which conjures up dangers greater than those by which the community is actually surrounded. I imagine that there is no necessity for such a hasty Motion as this. I apprehend that we shall be very shortly in a position to make an announcement to Parliament; and I hope we shall be able to explain—it may be in a day or two—the steps which we think, at all events, will do much to remedy this terrible and scandalous state of things. I hope it will not be delayed more than 24 or 48 hours; and I hope, at all events, the noble Lord will acknowledge that in taking steps to perfect what we proposed, and to be fully armed—which, in dealing with Parliament, where everything is carefully questioned, is not least necessary—with all the facts by which our opinion is supported, we have not outstepped that Constitutional prudence which it behoves every Government to observe in a conjuncture so grave as this, and which is in no way inconsistent with the resolution firmly and promptly to meet the evils which we are responsible for meeting.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I think the noble Marquess has somewhat misunderstood the criticisms which have been passed on the proceedings of Her Majesty's Government. It is not that the proceedings of the Government have been somewhat vague, or that they are to be blamed for the appointment of a new Chief Secretary; but the

fault we find with them is that they, having been in Office for some six months, and having had all the opportunities of forming opinions as to the policy which should be pursued, have suffered Parliament to come together, and have informed us that they have not made up their minds as to the course they would pursue. And whilst I am glad to learn from the noble Marquess that a very short time is likely to elapse before they make known their policy, I own I am lost in astonishment at the mode in which that resolution as to policy is approached by the Government; because it appears now that after we have been informed that they have thought it necessary to wait until the Chief Secretary had time fully to examine the state of affairs in Ireland, in point of fact, after 48 hours, or even 24 hours' residence in Ireland, he is to be suddenly endued, by a kind of second sight I suppose, with the means of giving to the Government that advice which they have not yet been able to obtain, and enable them to announce a policy in what, I agree with the noble Marquess, is one of the gravest conjunctures which this country has found itself in for many years. When that policy is produced, I am sure, such is the keen sense on all sides of the difficulties of the situation, it will be fairly and I hope justly judged; but I cannot say that we shall come to it with an anticipation of a satisfactory policy being announced, so far as we can judge from the singular and most unsatisfactory mode of preparation for that policy which the noble Marquess has just announced.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

IRELAND (ELECTORAL STATISTICS).

MOTION FOR A RETURN.

Moved for Return—

1. Of the number of registered electors in each county, city, and borough, or division of a county, city, or borough, in Ireland returning members to Parliament;
2. Of the number of electors who voted in each of the above at the late general election;
3. Of the number of electors, voting in each of the above at the late general election, who declared themselves illiterate.—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

LORD DE RON said, Returns 1 and 2 could be granted. There would be no difficulty in supplying them; and as to the third, the Sheriffs must be referred

to; but, no doubt, no difficulty would be met with in obtaining it also.

Motion agreed to.

Return ordered to be laid before the House.

GREECE—COLLECTIVE NOTE OF THE EUROPEAN POWERS.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK: Before the House adjourns I wish to put a Question to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. It is a Question dealing with the reports which have appeared in the evening newspapers as regards Greece. The statement is that some despatch or communication has been made by Her Majesty's Government to that Power. Perhaps the noble Marquess is in a position to state whether there is any truth in the paragraph?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, there has been no isolated action on the part of Her Majesty's Government with regard to Greece; but six Powers—Russia, Austria, Germany, France, Italy, and England—have, at the instance of Her Majesty's Government, presented a Collective Note to the Greek Government intimating to them that, in the absence of any just cause for war between Greece and Turkey, any naval attack on Turkey will not be permitted.

LAND REGISTRY BILL.

A Bill to make temporary provision for the conduct of the business of the office of Land Registry—Was presented by The Lord Chancellor; read 1st; to be printed; and to be read 2^d To-morrow; and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with. (No. 7.)

House adjourned at Seven o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 25th January, 1886.

Several other Members took and subscribed the Oath.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Public Petitions, appointed and nominated.

PUBLIC BILLS—Ordered—First Reading—Lunacy Vacating of Seats* [85]; Sporting Lands Rating (Scotland)* [86]; Merchant Shipping Act (1864) Amendment* [87]; Sale

Lord de Ros

of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall)* [88]; Private Lunatic Asylums (Ireland)* [89]; Access to Mountains (Scotland)* [90].

Withdrawn—Mining Leases* [55].

QUESTIONS.

THE SUEZ CANAL.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can inform the House what is the present position of the question pending between the Egyptian Government and the Suez Canal Company, as to the consent of Egypt to the widening of the Canal?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BOURKE): The Suez Canal Company having applied to the Egyptian Government for their consent to an alteration of their Statutes in connection with the loan of £4,000,000 which they wish to contract for the purposes of the new works of improvement, the Egyptian Government have refused, on the ground that the project involves the widening of the Canal beyond the dimensions authorized by the original concession, and that the consent of the Khedive must be obtained to this feature of the plan. The Company hold that, as the works are to be executed within the limits of the land belonging to them, there is no legal or equitable ground for this contention. Her Majesty's Government has taken the advice of certain legal persons in respect to it, and Papers are now before the Law Officers of the Crown.

MR. SUTHERLAND: With reference to the reply now made, I would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would state whether he is aware that, so far from the Suez Canal Company requiring additional territory for the purpose of excavating, or rather enlarging, the present channel of the Suez Canal, it is a matter of fact that the Canal at present covers the ground which is now necessary for the purposes of enlargement, and all that is necessary is that a further excavation be made in the space already covered by the water of the Canal?

MR. BOURKE: In a matter of fact of this kind, raised by my hon. Friend, I should not like to give a definite answer which would be taken as official; but I know my hon. Friend is so very well acquainted officially with everything

connected with this question, and also with the details of the construction of the Suez Canal, that, in all probability, the assertion he has made is accurate.

ARMY (DISCIPLINE)—DISORDERS IN BELFAST BARRACKS.

MR. EWART asked, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to recent disorders in Belfast Barracks, in which a girl was maltreated, and a man unfortunately lost his life; and, whether any military investigation has taken place, or will be instituted, in respect to the same?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (MR. H. S. NORTHGOTE): Attention has been called to certain disgraceful transactions which took place at Belfast Barracks during the New Year festivities of a Highland battalion. The sergeant who maltreated a girl has been remitted for trial by the Civil power. The assailants of the soldier who lost his life have not yet been identified. A military investigation by the Staff officers sent specially from Dublin has taken place, and the matter is still engaging the most serious attention of the military authorities.

POST OFFICE—PARCEL POST.

MR. HEATON asked the Postmaster General, What impediment delays the connection of the English parcel post with the system in operation in France and Italy, in the same manner as has recently been done in Germany and Belgium; and, when there is a possibility of the impediment being overcome?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (LORD JOHN MANNERS): There has been no delay, so far as this Department is concerned, in pursuing the negotiations with the French and Italian Post Offices for the establishment of a parcel post with this country. An agreement on the main points has been arrived at; and I hope to be in a position shortly to put the whole scheme before the Treasury. It is understood that legislative sanction will have to be obtained both in France and Italy to what is proposed.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—PRIVATE PIERS—PIER DUES.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called

to an action brought by Sir John Orde, baronet, before the Sheriffs' Court at Lochgilphead, against a number of fishermen, to recover certain dues for the use of a pier; if he can say under what Act of Parliament, or other sufficient authority, the said quay was erected; if the quay is erected upon public or private property; and, if upon public property, if he will take steps to allow of the free use of it by the fishermen, or cause its removal, so as to leave the foreshore free?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. MACDONALD): The actions which took place some little time ago were not brought to my notice until I saw the Question of the hon. Member on the Paper. Actions were raised for dues at a pier called Kilmorey Pier, which was erected in 1813 by Mr. Campbell, of Kilmorey, who was an ancestor of Sir John Orde. From that time forward dues have been paid for the pier, amounting in the case of fishermen to the sum of 5s. per boat for the use of the pier during the year. The pier, so far as I can ascertain, was not erected under any Act of Parliament. It was erected as a private enterprise, in a similar manner to many such piers in that part of Scotland. It is erected partly on private property belonging to Sir John Orde, and he appears on the valuation roll as the proprietor of the pier, and is rated upon it. The pier cannot be used without the use of private property. I have no power to order its removal. I am satisfied that it is for the convenience of the fishermen, and I am not prepared to take any steps with regard to it.

MR. MACFARLANE asked if the House was to understand that it was the law of Scotland that the owner of a pier erected partly upon his private property and partly upon public property could levy dues from fishermen and others using it?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. MACDONALD): I believe it to be the law of Scotland that when a pier has existed for so long a period as from 1813 to the present time, without objection on the part of anybody, the proprietor cannot be by the Crown turned off and the pier taken down. Any person is entitled to raise the question of law; but I am satisfied it would not be wise on the part of the Crown to raise any such question.

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES (IRELAND)—TRAWLING IN GALWAY BAY.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can ascertain, through the Constabulary or otherwise, if the great majority of the fishermen and the inhabitants residing near Galway Bay would desire that trawling should be prohibited in the whole or part of the Bay, as it was formerly in Galway Bay and now is in Dublin Bay; if his attention has been called to the Report of Lord Dalhousie's Trawling Commission of last year, and if he is aware that this Report in general terms coincides with the views of the Galway fishermen, that trawling may be often hurtful in bays to other kinds of fishing; and, if he will endeavour to give effect to the wishes of a great majority of the fishermen, if their opinions are found to agree with the latest and best scientific evidence procurable?

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE (who replied) said: I have no doubt the fact is as stated in the first paragraph of this Question. From a Report which I have received from the Inspectors of Fisheries, I gather that in the course which they adopted, after due inquiry with regard to trawling in Galway Bay, there is nothing inconsistent with the views of the Trawling Commission of last year, as expressed in their Report. The duty of determining such matters is imposed by an Act of Parliament on the Inspectors of Fisheries.

POST OFFICE—OVERHEAD WIRES—THE RECENT SNOWSTORM.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked, Whether attention has been drawn to the failures of telegraph and telephone wires used overhead in the Metropolis during the recent snowstorm, and to the accidents which have been occasioned thereby; whether a Return of these failures and these accidents will be prepared and presented to the House; and, whether any steps will be taken to prevent this constantly increasing danger to all persons using the streets of the Metropolis?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Lord JOHN MANNERS): My attention has been drawn to the failure of telegraph wires during the recent snow-

storm; and I am glad to be able to state, in reply to the Question of the hon. Member, that no case of accident to any human being has been caused by the wires belonging to the Post Office. A large proportion of the overhead wires in the Metropolis do not belong to the Post Office; and the Department has no means, therefore, of furnishing the Return asked for. The policy of the Post Office for many years past has been to substitute underground for overhead wires in London, and also in other large cities, wherever the extra expense involved could be justified; and since my appointment I have given renewed instructions on this point. I may add that the mileage of postal telegraph wires in the Metropolis on the 31st of December was 9,832 miles, of which 9,005 miles, or about 11-12ths, were underground wires. In the Eastern Central and Western Central postal districts, which comprise the half of the Metropolis, there were only 44 miles of overhead wires the property of the Department. As the House is aware, a Select Committee was appointed last Session to consider the law relating to the control over telephone, telegraph, and other wires, and made a Report; but it has not been considered desirable to take action in the direction of the course recommended in that Report.

IMPROVEMENT OF LANDED PROPERTY (IRELAND)—LEGISLATION.

MR. MARUM asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce Bills to consolidate and amend the Acts for facilitating the improvement of landed property, and for the drainage and improvement of lands in Ireland, especially in view of the present depressed condition of the labouring classes in Ireland?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON): Yes, Sir; it is my intention to move on an early day for leave to introduce Bills for consolidating and amending the Acts referred to.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—MR. R. W. RENTON, PROCURATOR FISCAL OF EAST FIFE.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether Mr. R. W. Renton, Solicitor, of Cupar, has been appointed Pro-

curator Fiscal of the Eastern Division of Fifeshire; and, if so, if he would please state the date of the appointment and the salary attached to the office; and, whether Mr. Renton's commission contains any provision restricting him from engaging directly or indirectly in private practice?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. MACDONALD): Mr. Renton was appointed by the Sheriff Procurator Fiscal of Fifeshire. That appointment has not yet been confirmed. The salary is £600 a-year, and the Sheriff did not in his nomination debar Mr. Renton from private practice.

DR. CAMERON gave Notice that if Mr. Renton's appointment was confirmed, he should call attention to the conditions when his salary came before the House in Committee.

GLEBE LANDS (IRELAND)—PURCHASERS UNDER THE LAND ACT OF 1869.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in view of the distressed condition of the poorer classes of purchasers by right of pre-emption of glebe lands in Ireland, owing to the largeness of the purchase-price, fixed at a time of exceptional prosperity, and owing to the heavy depreciation of every description of stock and farm produce in recent years, arrangements can be made for their relief by enabling them to obtain loans from the State or from the Church Temporalities Commissioners of the fourth part of the purchase-money supplied by themselves (which was in most cases raised from money-lenders at exorbitant rates of interest), on the same reduced terms as to interest that they are now offered under the 23rd subsection of the Land Purchase Act, with respect to the three-fourths advanced by the Commissioners on mortgage; and, whether the benefit of the 23rd section can be extended to purchasers who hold short terminable leases of their holdings, and upon whom the agricultural depression has told with equal severity?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON): In reply to the first paragraph of the Question, I have to say that the question how far the terms allowed to purchasers of church lands under the Act of 1869 could be modified was most carefully considered by the Government when the Purchase Act of last Session was under

discussion; and it was decided that no change in these terms could be justified, except that embodied in the 23rd section of the Act of 1885. The Government see no reason to modify this conclusion, and are not prepared to propose the legislation which would be required to carry out the hon. Member's present suggestion. With regard to the second paragraph, the 23rd section of the Act of 1885 extends to—

"Any land which is held immediately from or under the Commissioners by virtue of any lease or tenancy,"

and this would seem to cover such cases as those now referred to.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—BOUNTIES TO ITALIAN SHIPPING.

MR. TOMLINSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether Her Majesty's Government have any information with respect to an Act lately passed by the Parliament of Italy giving a bounty to Italian ships; and, whether they have any objection to lay on the Table a Copy of the Act with a translation?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. E. STANHOPE): Yes, Sir; we have received a copy of the Act recently passed in Italy giving bounties to Italian shipping, and if my hon. Friend will move for it a translation of it shall be published. It may probably not be necessary to circulate the Italian version also.

TARIFF AND CUSTOMS ACT, 1876—FORFEITURES.

MR. KING asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the fact that Section 179 of "The Tariff and Customs Act, 1876," by providing that—

"Every person who shall be found to have been on board any ship or boat liable to forfeiture shall forfeit a sum not exceeding one hundred pounds, and may be taken before a justice to be dealt with,"

by its terms exposes innocent persons to conviction, the Government will consent, at an early day, to repeal or revise that section?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, in reply, said, his attention had been called to that matter by the Question, and he certainly was of opinion that the law as it stood at present could not be defended. He would communi-

cate with the Commissioners of Customs on the subject, to see what amendment should be made in the law.

TURKEY — TREATMENT OF CHRISTIANS.

MR. BRYCE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to reports which have recently appeared in the newspapers, of acts of religious oppression practised by the Turkish authorities upon Christian subjects of the Sultan, in violation of the engagements repeatedly contracted by the Sultan's Government for the securing of religious liberty within his dominions; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will inquire into the facts; and, if satisfied of their existence, remonstrate with the Turkish Government upon the subject?

THE UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BOURKE): The rumours in question have not escaped the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and are at the present time the subject of inquiry by Her Majesty's Representative at Constantinople, in communication with the branch of the Evangelical Alliance in that city. I may mention that of the 16 persons who were stated by the Evangelical Alliance to have disappeared, and were supposed to have been imprisoned, some have now been discovered to be at large. When the facts have been thoroughly investigated, Her Majesty's Government will be ready to make representations to the Porte as to any departure by the Turkish officials from the principles of the Hatt-i-Houmayoun of which there may be sufficient evidence.

ARMY—RICHMOND BARRACKS, DUBLIN.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON asked, Whether attention has been called to the insanitary state of Richmond Barracks, Dublin; and, whether any Special Reports have been made upon the drainage and other circumstances of the Barracks; and, in that case, whether any early steps will be taken to remedy the defects?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE): The attention of the War Department has been drawn to the insanitary state of Richmond Barracks,

The Chancellor of the Exchequer

Dublin; but their unhealthiness is believed to be attributable rather to the condition of the neighbourhood generally than to any special defects in the drainage or ventilation of the barracks themselves. It is under consideration whether any steps can be taken to improve the sanitary condition of Richmond Barracks.

MADAGASCAR — TREATY WITH FRANCE.

MR. JOHNSTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can communicate to the House the terms of the Treaty alleged to have been made between the Queen of Madagascar and the French Republic; and, if he is aware if freedom of worship for the native Christians is secured thereby?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had given Notice of a Question on this subject which the right hon. Gentleman might be able to answer now.

THE UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BOURKE): We are not in possession of the precise terms of the Treaty. Until the text of the French Treaty has been received, I am unable to state whether its provisions are inconsistent with the Treaty rights of Great Britain. As to the Consul, a new Consul has just been appointed, but has not left for Madagascar. Meanwhile, there is an Acting Consul at Tamatave, a paid Vice Consul at the capital, Antananarivo, and unpaid Vice Consuls at various points on the coast.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED CRUELTY TO A "BOYCOTTED" WOMAN.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked, Whether it is true, as stated on the occasion of a deputation to Lord Salisbury, that a boycotted woman in Ireland was held down by her neighbours, while a dog gnawed her legs; and, if true, whether any persons have been arrested for the outrage?

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: I will answer this Question, at the request of my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith). The statement in question appears to be based upon the following evidence which was given by a "Boycotted" man named Donoghue, in a case of assault upon his wife and child

by a neighbour named Mrs. Sullivan. The case occurred in the Mill Street district in County Cork—

“Heard Mrs. Sullivan call the names. I left my spade and came down. Saw my wife down, Mrs. Sullivan’s son holding her, and she flinging her with a stone. Saw the dog tearing my wife’s legs. The dog ran away. My wife lifeless against the ditch. Went to the police. Had to call in Dr. Leader. He has been attending my wife and son. She has not been able to walk since.”

Mrs. Donoghue swore that “the dog was set at her.” The magistrates imposed a sentence of two months’ imprisonment on Mrs. Sullivan for each assault.

MR. HEALY: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, as a matter of fact, this case, which was one of assault arising out of a dispute between two women, was not amicably settled out of Court and the sentence of two months’ imprisonment withdrawn?

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE said, that he must ask the hon. and learned Member to give Notice of his Question.

MR. HEALY gave Notice that he would repeat his Question on an early day.

NAVY—SHIPBUILDING ON THE TYNE.

MR. BROADHURST asked the First Lord of the Admiralty. Whether his attention has been called to the delay in the building of the naval vessels now in the course of construction on the Tyne; and, whether this delay is in consequence of an attempt, on the part of the firms intrusted with the work, to enforce a reduction of wages to a less rate than that which was paid at the time the estimates were made and the contracts entered into for the building of these vessels?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON): I am informed that there has been a difference between certain shipbuilders on the Tyne and some of the men whom they employ; but I do not know the exact cause of the dispute. The ships now building on the Tyne for the Admiralty are, so far as their construction is concerned, in advance of the Estimate made last year of their probable progress; and, in all probability, a Supplementary Vote will be required to provide funds for the payments the contractors can claim over the provision made in the Estimates of the present financial year.

BURMAH—THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES —MILITARY EXECUTIONS—THE PROVOST MARSHAL.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether, since the Annexation of Upper Burmah, the control of affairs is under the Chief Commissioner and the Military authorities are amenable to his orders in regard to the treatment of the Burmese; and, whether they exercise any uncontrolled power of life and death under any sort of Martial Law?

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN asked, whether the prisoners stated to have been shot by order of the Provost Marshal at Mandalay were subjected to any form of trial; and, if so, how and for what offences, and under what law, if any, were they tried?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL): I imagine that part of the Question of the right hon. and learned Gentleman is of a highly technical and legal nature, and as such he will hardly expect me to answer it without Notice. I can, however, give the House a good deal of information in answer to the Question which the hon. Baronet (Sir George Campbell) has placed upon the Paper, and, perhaps, will also to some extent answer the Questions put to me the other day by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron). With regard to the Question on the Paper, the Viceroy informs me that the original instructions to General Prendergast, who was at the head of the Expedition, and therefore responsible for everything that was done while the military operations were going on, were to this effect—that he and Mr. Commissioner Bernard were to establish a Civil jurisdiction as soon as the Military authorities could pacify the disturbed districts. Mr. Bernard has telegraphed to the Viceroy—

“The present state of affairs with reference to the Civil and Military jurisdiction is as follows:—We have English Civil officers and police officers in command in each of the five districts of Mandalay, Munkla, Ningyan, Pagan, and Myingyan. These officers are supported by troops, and they are working through local Womans and Thagyas.”

Of course, in these districts obviously Civil law prevails—

“The rest of the country is nominally dominated by the Burmese Supreme Council.”

I cannot pronounce the Native name for that body.

"At several points, however—Bhamo, Tagaing, Slwebo, Ava, Upper Chindwin, Lower Chindwin, and Myodaung—we have military detachments stationed, with Civil officers in attendance. At present the country is still under military occupation."

Mr. Bernard goes on to say that—

"The rebels taken in arms on the field are liable to be shot; no one is to be shot or punished by Civil officers otherwise than after trial. In districts nominally under the Burmese Supreme Council sentences of death cannot be carried out by Native officials otherwise than on the responsibility of, and after trial by, the Civil officers who may be nearest the ground. The prisoners punished under martial law by the Provost Marshal or any of the officers do not come under the Civil officer's cognizance while the country is under military occupation. My hope is that in a few weeks' time I may be in a position to post Civil officers, only backed by troops, in the remaining districts of the country."

That is all the information I have in my possession with reference to the Question of the hon. Baronet on the Paper. With regard to the Questions asked me on Friday, I am sorry to say that the information in my possession is far from satisfactory. The Viceroy telegraphs to me that it is clear that the Provost Marshal has proceeded in a most unjustifiable manner; at any rate, in one case. That alludes to the case where evidence was sought to be extorted by placing a prisoner apparently under the fire of soldiers. The Viceroy says he has telegraphed to General Prendergast directing that if a *prima facie* case is made out against the Provost Marshal on either of the counts mentioned, he and other officers implicated are to be suspended from their functions, and, if proved to be guilty, to be visited with the severest penalty. Mr. Bernard telegraphs from Rangoon to the Viceroy that he is still investigating or asking for information at Mandalay as to the allegations with regard to the Provost Marshal photographing prisoners under execution. With regard to the second point, Mr. Bernard says—

"It is true that the Provost Marshal did place a man suspected of treasonable correspondence in fear of instant death, in order to induce him to give information which would have criminated two members of the Burmese Durbar. On hearing of this, I pointed out to the Provost Marshal that evidence extorted was valueless, and that it was contrary to all law."

Lord Randolph Churchill

[*Cries of "Oh, oh!" from the House Rulers and cries of "Order!"*—I am giving the House the best information I can—

"to extort evidence by moral torture. I requested that similar proceedings might not recur."

The result of the Viceroy's telegrams would undoubtedly be that the Provost Marshal will be suspended, and the closest and most rigorous investigation will be made into the officer's conduct; and if it should turn out that he had so disgraced the Queen's Army, I make no doubt whatsoever that, in the Viceroy's words, "the most exemplary punishment will be meted out to him."

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, whether Burmese resisting the conquest of their country were to be treated as rebels—to be treated as rebels taken in arms; and, further, whether, in case of such a jurisdiction being exercised by the Military authorities, the noble Lord would direct some record of these trials to be kept, so that so-called rebels should not be shot without any record?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I imagine that when King Theebaw and the Burmese Army surrendered it was held by the Military authorities that regular military resistance had come to an end. The Military authorities are occupied now in putting down what is called dacoity, which is another word for brigandage. The dacoits are bands of armed men, who did not attack the British troops, but who attacked the Burmese villagers, burnt their houses, and plundered the towns. As long as the country was in military occupation the dacoits would be tried by Martial Law if taken in the field and red-handed; but in districts where the English Civil officer has troops under his command, then I imagine dacoity will be put down by the Civil officer's Court, according to the form of the English law. Records will, of course, be kept of all proceedings of this kind.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to give Notice that I shall take the earliest opportunity of calling attention to this very important question.

MR. O'KELLY asked, whether orders had been given to stop the shooting of prisoners taken in arms in Burmah?

MR. CONYBEARE: The noble Lord, in his first answer, spoke of "rebels," and in his second answer he spoke of

dacoits. I beg to ask whether dacoits and rebels are synonymous terms?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I believe I did not use the word rebels. With regard to the Question of the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly), Mr. Bernard telegraphs to the Viceroy in the following words:—

"Certain pretender had razed villages and committed other crimes. He was captured by Burmese officers, and sent to Mandalay for trial. The pretender admitted the truth of the charges, but said he was not aiming at the Throne of Mandalay, but at the Throne of one of the Shan States. The trial was conducted by the Burmese Supreme Court, and the prisoner was sentenced to death; but the British authorities had pointed out that if execution were to take place they must have evidence themselves, as they could not execute on the strength of the decision of the Burmese Supreme Court."

It was further pointed out that if the facts of the charges were proved, the life of the pretender would be forfeited. Colonel Sladen had agreed to conduct further inquiry personally. I have not heard the result; but I will make further inquiry.

DR. CAMERON asked, would the noble Lord consider the propriety of laying Papers on the Table on the subject?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I will lay all the information possible on the Table, and as quickly as possible.

INDIA—THE UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether any steps have been taken to remedy the grievances of the uncovenanted Civil Servants of India, as set forth in the Memorial presented by them to the Indian Government two years ago?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, in reply, said, he had not seen any Memorial from the Indian police, who, he understood, were the Civil Servants alluded to. If those officers had grievances, they would be included in the Indian Committee, which he wished very much to see appointed.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS—LEGISLATION.

MR. T. WATSON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, When the Government intend to introduce their measures dealing with the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors and the Licensing system?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Sir, any proposals which Her Majesty's Government have to make for the purpose of dealing with the sale of intoxicating liquors and the licensing system will be, so far as I know, embodied in the County Government Bill. I do not think I can give any further answer than that.

SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT—FOURTH INSTALMENT OF RATE—POSTPONEMENT OF PAYMENT.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, in consideration of the difficulties caused by the agricultural depression, he would permit such unions as might apply for more time to defer the payment of the fourth and last instalment of the Seed Rate for another twelve months?

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE (who replied) said, this was more a Question for the Treasury than for the Chief Secretary. He would ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman to postpone it for a few days.

INDUSTRIES AND SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND)—THE SELECT COMMITTEES—RE-APPOINTMENT.

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with regard to the recommendation made by the Select Committees on Irish Industries and Irish Salmon Fisheries at the close of the last Parliament, Whether the Government intend to move for the appointment of Select Committees to carry on and conclude the inquiries in question?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, in reply, said, the Government would be prepared to assent to a Motion for the re-appointment of these Committees.

ENGLAND AND GREECE—COLLECTIVE NOTE OF THE EUROPEAN POWERS.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I wish to put to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have not been able to give him Notice, but which I hope he will be able to answer. It is, Whether the telegrams which appear in this morning's papers to the effect that a communication has been addressed by Sir Horace Rumbold, our Minister at Athens, to the Greek

Prime Minister, on behalf of Lord Salisbury, in which there is alleged to be contained a threat in regard to the action of the British Fleet, are correct? Perhaps, also, the right hon. Gentleman will be able to give to the House the terms of such communication—if any such communication has been made; and, if not, perhaps he will say whether the telegrams are substantially accurate?

THE UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BOURKE): In answer to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I have to state that, at the instance of Her Majesty's Government, the six Great Powers presented a Collective Note to Greece yesterday, intimating that a naval attack by Greece upon the Ottoman Empire would not be permitted. No answer to that Collective Note has been received by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I wish to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that he has not answered my Question. The telegrams speak of a special communication presented by Sir Horace Rumbold on behalf of England, and not of a Collective Note presented by the six Powers. I wish to know whether any such special communication has been made by the English Minister; and whether, if so, it contains a direct threat that the British Fleet will be sent to Athens to prevent any naval movement on the part of Greece?

MR. BOURKE: I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman did not give me Notice of this Question. I do not think that, in a matter of this importance, I should be justified in stating more than I have done. What I have stated is perfectly accurate; and it contains all the information I am instructed to lay before the House at the present moment.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg to give Notice that I will repeat my Question to-morrow.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CONDITION OF IRELAND.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON: I wish to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer a Question of which I have given him private Notice—namely, Whether Her Majesty's Government contemplate proceeding *de die in diem* with the consideration of the New Rules of Procedure; or whether they will suspend any such discussions for the production of mea-

sures dealing with the condition of Ireland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: In reply to my noble Friend, I may remind him that when I stated it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to ask the House to give special facilities for the discussion of the New Rules of Procedure, I added that it was subject to the intervention of any specially urgent or important Business. Any legislative proposals in regard to Ireland of the nature referred to by me on Thursday last, which Her Majesty's Government might think it their duty to make, could not properly be delayed, as my noble Friend seems to fancy.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I wish to put a Question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of which I have given him private Notice, having regard to rumours which have been lately circulated as to the future control of the Police Force in Ireland. I beg to ask, Whether the Government will give an assurance that the Royal Irish Constabulary will be maintained as at present constituted—an Imperial force?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: In reply to my noble Friend, I really cannot understand how any doubt could have arisen as to the attitude or intentions of Her Majesty's Government on this subject. The Lord Chancellor of Ireland, speaking in "another place" a few days ago, denounced in the strongest terms any proposal to hand over the Royal Irish Constabulary to any other control or authority than that which at present exists. He spoke on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, and with the full concurrence of his Colleagues.

PARLIAMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

MR. RAIKES asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, having regard to the inconvenience that would arise in the conduct of Public Business in the event of the first Resolution respecting Parliamentary Procedure being affirmed, and the second Resolution being subsequently rejected by this House, he would consent to postpone the consideration of the former until the House had arrived at a decision upon the latter proposal?

Mr. Chamberlain

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I should wish to consider any suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman with that care to which it is entitled; but the Government has placed the Rules on the Paper in the order which they thought would be most convenient, and at present I see no reason for departing from that order.

MR. RAIKES: In the event of these Rules being proposed in the order in which they stand, I beg to give Notice that I shall move the Previous Question in respect to the first Resolution, and that I shall move the rejection of the second.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st January.]—See page 92.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

BURMAH (MILITARY OPERATIONS) —
INCIDENCE OF COST.

MR. HUNTER, in rising to move, as an Amendment, to add, at the end of the 6th paragraph, the words—

"But this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty their regret that the Revenues of India have been applied to defray the expenses of the military operations carried on in the Kingdom of Ava, without the consent of Parliament as required by 'The Government of India Act, 1858.'"

said, the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) made an appeal to the House on Thursday night to close the debate on the Address, and in the course of that appeal addressed a suggestion to him Mr. Hunter, that he should bring on this subject at a later stage; but the noble Lord spoke under a misapprehension of the scope and terms of the Amendment. The noble Lord seemed to him to speak under the impression that the Amendment was one to challenge the policy of the Government with respect to the war of annexation in Burmah. That was not the object of the Amendment. It related to only one of the questions which arose out of the ac-

tion of Her Majesty's Government in Burmah; but the question was wider than the Burmese Question, and raised an issue of the most important character with regard to the exercise of a real and effective control by that House over the foreign policy of the Government of India. What were the circumstances under which this question came before the House? When the last Parliament was prorogued, no indication had been given to the country of any difficulties in connection with King Theebaw, which were to end with the appropriation of his Kingdom; but when the new Parliament met, it was announced that a territory, the exact limits of which it might be difficult for Her Majesty's Government to define, but which was generally supposed to cover an area nearly as large as the whole of France—that that territory had been added to the Empire. He did not discuss at that moment the policy of the annexation. He did not ask whether it was in accordance with those principles of international morality that ought to govern the conduct of every great nation; but there could be no doubt that, whether it was right or wrong, it was one that involved grave and far-reaching consequences. He believed, when a union of two distinct races under one Government was attempted to be formed, that union would meet with the most happy results if it was a union founded upon mutual consent and mutual interest; but they had this remarkable fact—that a great territory had been added to this Empire without the consent of the people of Burmah, and without the consent of the people of England; nor did he think that the transactions which had recently taken place in Burmah were calculated in any remarkable degree to win the affections and love of her people. No doubt, there were expressions in the despatches of military officers, suggesting and indicating that they had the consent of the people; but these statements were not in harmony with the principles of human nature. It might be considered by some persons to show very bad taste on the part of the Burmese people; but the Burmese people, like all other peoples, would, he submitted, rather bear the vices of their Native Rulers than the virtues of foreign officials. This annexation had been carried into effect by a Government with respect to which he

would not employ any disparaging epithet; but of which it could not be denied that it did not possess, either in this or the last Parliament, that degree or kind of support which was the usual basis of a firm Administration. It was a Government that represented a minority in England, and that had met overwhelming defeat in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Those facts alone, he thought, would justify some objection; but his specific complaint was that this action had been taken in disregard of the very statutory provisions which were intended to secure to Parliament the control over transactions that might compromise the safety and well-being of the Empire. The words of the 55th section of the Act of 1858 were—

"Except for preventing or repelling actual invasion of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, the Revenues of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any Military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of such Possessions by Her Majesty's Forces charged upon such Revenues."

Let him remind the House of the circumstances under which that provision was introduced into law. When, in 1858, the Crown took over the direct Government of India, it was found necessary to permit a departure from Constitutional principles, and to sanction in the Indian Department a separate purse, not under the direct control of the House of Commons. That was a necessary exception, not entirely free from danger. The danger was perceived, and it was met by a proposal emanating from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and accepted by the late Lord Derby upon the part of the Government of the day, and that proposal was embodied in the section which he had read. The object of the section was thus described by Lord Derby, who said—

"The same constitutional check, therefore, was imposed upon the Crown with regard to troops serving in India which was imposed with respect to troops serving in every other part of the globe. If the clause were not agreed to, it would be perfectly competent for any unconstitutional Sovereign"—

and the right hon. Gentleman referred to, commenting on the speech, added, "or unconstitutional Minister"—

"to employ the whole of the Revenues and troops of India for any purpose which the

Crown might direct, without the necessity of going to Parliament for the advance of a single shilling."—(3 *Hansard*, [151] 1897-8.)

Two great interests were intended to be safeguarded by that provision. There was the interest of the people of England, and there was the interest of the people of India. It was necessary to protect the liberties of this country against what might occur under an un-Constitutional Minister. If that provision were not law, there would be nothing to hinder a Minister, of his own choice, without the knowledge or sanction of Parliament, from bringing over an Army of Sepoys, and bringing them, not only to the Mediterranean, but to this country, and also as far as Dublin and Tipperary. It was necessary, also, to protect the Indian Exchequer from the predatory attacks of selfish interests. They learned from the newspapers that the Native Press of India, with almost entire unanimity, condemned the action of Her Majesty's Government in Burmah. There could be little doubt that if the consent of the Indian people were required for the expenditure of their own money, not a single shilling could have been obtained for the purpose of the Burmese War. Was that not an important consideration for the judgment of that House, if it was called upon to sanction such an expenditure? But the money had been spent without giving to that House any opportunity of estimating the justice or wisdom of the course that had been pursued; and by-and-by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, or his Successor, would come down and ask the House to sanction that which had been done, and which could not be undone. The House might possibly, if the question were open to it, hesitate before, in the present unsatisfactory state of the finances of India, it would impose any additional burden upon the Indian people, either for the purpose of a war of annexation, or for the cost of administering a Province which it was now admitted would not pay its way. The Act of 1858, and, in particular, the provision to which he (Mr. Hunter) had alluded, had been the subject of discussion in that House. In the Autumn Session of 1878 his lamented Friend the late Mr. Fawcett moved an Amendment to the Motion to sanction an expenditure from the Revenues of India upon

Mr. Hunter

the war in Afghanistan; and in the course of that debate several hon. Members took occasion to point out that the Government, in that war, had pursued an illegal course, and it was illegal because it was without the sanction of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian seconded the Amendment, and stated that, in his opinion, the Government had clearly broken the Act of Parliament. That view was supported by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), and by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Denbighshire (Mr. Osborne Morgan), and generally by the Front Opposition Bench. But they were overpowered by numbers when it came to the vote; for the Government of that day possessed a large majority in that House. The Government were driven, in order to justify themselves, to maintain the proposition that the consent of Parliament need not be given before the expenditure was incurred, but that it was sufficient if that sanction was given afterwards. However, that contention was thoroughly pulverized in the speeches of the right hon. Gentlemen to whom he had referred. Such a construction took away from the Act all its virtue and effect. It would deprive Parliament of the power of control over the foreign policy of the Indian Government, and would leave them the barren privilege of consenting to an irrevocable act, or the equally barren privilege of dissenting from it. Moreover, the exceptions which were mentioned in the section itself clearly proved that previous consent—the only consent that had any meaning—was intended, because the section specified certain cases where the previous consent might not be required. There were exceptions provided for, such as to prevent or repel an actual invasion of Her Majesty's Dominions, or under other sudden and urgent necessity. When the Indian Empire was in danger the Government were empowered to act promptly, without waiting for the consent of Parliament. Had there been any danger in the present case? He thought not; indeed, it would be impossible to conceive any case where there was less danger to the Empire of India than from the Kingdom of Ava. It was a Kingdom separated from the sea by a

British Province, and all importations of arms or ammunition must pass through British Custom Houses. The Government of India, very properly, he thought, took advantage of its position, and prevented the importation of arms and ammunition. The consequence was that, in a military sense, for years past the Kingdom of Ava had been entirely at our mercy. With regard to the other exception, had there been any sudden or urgent necessity? The annexation of Burmah was not a new idea. It had not occurred to the minds of our officials in India for the first time since Parliament was prorogued. For many years there had been an Annexation Party, not only among the merchants of Rangoon, but also in the ranks of the Government Service. So far back as 1869 there was a protest addressed to the Chief Commissioner of Burmah, warning him not to pursue such a course of conduct with respect to the King of Ava as would result in annexation. This much was gathered from a letter addressed by Lord Mayo to the Chief Commissioner of Burmah, in which he warned him against aggressive tendencies. The letter was dated the 11th of January, 1869; and in it Lord Mayo said, from certain expressions he had observed in some of the letters of the Chief Commissioner, it occurred to him that it was possible that the views of the officers of the Commission as regarded British policy in Burmah did not altogether agree with those entertained by the Government of India. Lest there should be the slightest misapprehension, Lord Mayo said—

"I think it my duty to inform you that I am wholly opposed to any interference in the affairs of foreign States that can be by any honourable means avoided. The future annexation of Burmah, or any of its adjacent States, is not an event which I either contemplate or desire. On the contrary, I should view with extreme regret and disapproval any course of action that would impose upon the British Government the necessity of occupation, or of assuming, even in a temporary manner, the government of any of the States lying adjacent to the Provinces now in your charge."

In 1881 a more determined attempt was made by the Annexationist Party to force the hand of the Indian Government in order to bring about an armed intervention. The cry then was that King Theebaw had granted monopolies that were injurious to British trade. It turned out, ultimately, that the only

monopoly of any importance that was given was in the article of "cutch," and that that monopoly was in the hands of the Bombay-Burmah Trading Corporation, the very same Company which had now supplied the annexationists with that which they desired, in founding a good cry for intervention. The only other matter that was at all new in the position of Burmah was in respect to the controversy between the King of Burmah and this Bombay Corporation. He would not enter into that question, or express any opinion as to which party was right or wrong. But he would ask the House to consider that there was nothing in the transaction that could be construed into any sudden and urgent necessity for military operations. In the first place, suppose it had come to the worst, and that the decree of King Theebaw, of which the Bombay Corporation complained, had been executed, it could only have given rise to a claim for damages, which might probably have been properly pressed by the Indian Government; but that Government did not appear to have been very anxious to settle the difficulty. It was proposed by the British Government to refer this question to arbitration. But to what arbitration? The arbitrator was to be appointed by the Viceroy. That was a new idea of arbitration. He had never before heard of an arbitration in which one of the parties had the right to select the Judge. He could scarcely conceive with what object this form of arbitration was put forward, except with the certainty that it would be refused. If the manner in which King Theebaw had been treated was to be imitated, and the British Government was to act upon the principles which had been applied to Burmah in dealing with other States, they could not be surprised if the Sovereigns of other States took warning, and were chary of bestowing concessions and privileges upon British subjects. But, so far from this controversy coming within the category of a sudden and urgent necessity menacing the British Empire, it appeared that the controversy could have been settled. That was evident from a letter written by Mr. Jones, the agent or representative of the Bombay Company, to the Chief Commissioner of Burmah, dated the 21st of September last year. He

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said he could have settled the question, and it would have been in the interests of the Company, in a pecuniary sense, to have settled it; but, having been assisted in the way they had been by the Government, he was not going to do it.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL): The date of that letter, please?

MR. HUNTER: The 21st September.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Is it in the Blue Book?

MR. HUNTER said, it was a letter published in *The Times*. It was a letter addressed to the Chief Commissioner of Burmah, and was an official communication. He ventured to say that if an illustration had been desired to point a moral, and to show the necessity for the Constitutional safeguards that were provided by the Act of 1858, a better illustration could not have been found than this annexation. To make a military promenade up to Mandalay was an easy thing. To issue a Proclamation of Annexation was easier still. But that step, once taken, was very hard to retrace. If Parliament was to exercise its judgment on the important and grave issues that were submitted to it, it ought to be able to preserve that judgment unfettered by acts that could not be recalled. There could be no doubt that the presence of an English Administration in Mandalay closed some questions. But it opened other questions, which might, in the long run, prove more serious than those which were closed. No one could study the history of the conquest of Burmah by this country without being forced to this conclusion—that the same influence and forces which had driven the Government to Mandalay would not permit it to rest there; but these same influences and forces would sooner or later bring us into collision with the Chinese Empire. He said nothing with respect to the complications looming in the not distant future with European Powers. Surely a great question, so vitally affecting the interests of this country, ought not to be withdrawn from the consideration of Parliament. It was to secure this that Section 55 of the Act of 1858 was passed. It was a section of great value to the English people; and to the Indian people it was of the greatest importance that that House should exercise a jealous guardianship over their rights

and interests. The Act of 1858, and the gracious Proclamation of Her Majesty in the same year, were regarded by the people of India as their *Magna Charta*. The provisions of that Act had been violated. He, therefore, asked the House to adopt the Amendment he now moved, in order to maintain the law and to vindicate its own statutory rights and Constitutional powers.

Mr. CONYBEARE seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the 6th paragraph, to add the words—"But this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty their regret that the Revenues of India have been applied to defray the expenses of the military operations carried on in the Kingdom of Ava, without the consent of Parliament as required by 'The Government of India Act, 1858.'"—(Mr. Hunter.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) said, he was sure that hon. Members would be glad to welcome the hon. and learned Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) as a participator in their debates. There were many subjects on which the great experience and learning of the hon. and learned Member would be able to assist the House; but he (the Attorney General) must confess he was sorry that it should have fallen to the lot of the hon. and learned Member, as a new Member, to move the present Amendment; because he (the Attorney General) would venture to submit that the hon. and learned Member had somewhat misunderstood the restrictions imposed by the Act of 1858, and that, under existing circumstances, there could not be any substantial ground for the Amendment. He therefore proposed, with the permission of the House, to deal with the legal argument which the hon. and learned Gentleman had advanced, and then to say a word or two upon some of the general considerations by which he had supported his Amendment. The hon. and learned Member for North Aberdeen had been arguing before the House as though, by the action of Her Majesty's Government, it had already been decided that the expenses of the operations, the responsibility of which Her Majesty's Government fully recognised, were to be defrayed out of the Revenues of India. He (the Attorney

General) begged to point out that nothing of the kind had been decided. The question, no doubt, might be raised, as a similar question was raised in 1878 by the Motion of Mr. Fawcett, against charging the Revenues of India with the expenses of the operations in Afghanistan. He thought a few minutes' consideration would show hon. Members, even if they had not the advantage of the legal training of the hon. and learned Member for North Aberdeen, that the section to which the hon. and learned Member had referred imposed certain restrictions, not one of which had been in any way neglected by Her Majesty's Government. The hon. and learned Member had argued as though it were unjustifiable in the Government to go to war without the previous consent of Parliament. The same question was raised indirectly in 1878, and the then Attorney General (Sir John Holker) showed that that was by no means a correct construction of the Act of Parliament. The question was involved in the terms of the 54th section of the Act, that section providing that, when an order was sent to India directing the actual commencement of hostilities, the fact of such order being sent should be communicated to both Houses of Parliament within three months, if they were sitting, and, if they were not, within one month after the next meeting of Parliament. He thought he need scarcely point out that two alternatives were contemplated by the section—the commencement of war at a time when the House was sitting, and at a time when the House was not sitting. In the latter contingency, which applied to the present case, the responsibility of those who undertook the operations was to communicate the fact to Parliament one month after the meeting of Parliament. He submitted, therefore, that to anyone who was capable of appreciating the plain language of the section, it could not have been passed without it being in the contemplation of those who were responsible for the enactment that war might be declared without the consent of Parliament, otherwise there would have been no object in saying the fact should be communicated to Parliament within a month after its next meeting. Passing on to Section 55, he submitted that it provided for a state of things not within the purview of the hon. and learned Member's Amend-

[Third Night.]

ment. It enacted that, except for preventing or repelling actual invasion of our Indian Possessions, the Revenues of India should not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expense of any military operations carried on beyond the frontiers of such Possessions. The state of circumstances contemplated by the section was the preventing or the repelling of invasion; but what was the case which was to depend on this state of circumstances? It was whether the Revenues of India should or should not be applicable to defray the expense of military operations. The House would see, therefore, that it was not a question of whether war should be undertaken or not. The hon. and learned Member, no doubt, honestly wished to raise a great question; but he (the Attorney General) should like to point out that the question whether war should be, or should not be, commenced, and whether military operations should be undertaken, rested with the Advisers of Her Majesty at the time, and it was not a question of previously obtaining the sanction of Parliament. The hon. and learned Member, in his Amendment, which expressed the regret of the House that the Revenues of India were to be employed in the operations in Burmah, assumed that that question had already been determined which must be submitted to the House; and if he chose, when the debate arose on the question as to how the expenses were to be defrayed, he had the opportunity of raising any objection he thought proper as to the course of action pursued by Her Majesty's Government. But he (the Attorney General) trusted that he had shown the House that the responsibility of beginning the military operations was to be determined by Her Majesty's Advisers, subject to the condition that certain communications were to be made to the Houses of Parliament, with the addition that the question as to how such expenses should be borne should be governed by the decision of Parliament. When he remembered that this question practically formed the subject of a solemn debate in 1878, in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) took part, and when he remembered that the action of Her Majesty's Government on that occasion

The Attorney General

was supported by a majority of 110, and that it did not please the Party opposite to alter the law during the five years they had been in Office, he ventured to think that Her Majesty's present Advisers would have been shirking responsibility if they had hesitated to act under the circumstances, because they were afraid that some such Motion as this would be brought forward. While the hon. and learned Member disclaimed, at the beginning of his speech, any intention to call in question the general policy of the Government, he had thought fit to make certain statements which, if they remained unanswered, might seem to lead to the conclusion that the Government had acted indiscreetly or improperly. It was no part of his (the Attorney General's) duty to argue whether or not there was a sudden or urgent necessity in this case; but no one who would candidly read the contents of the Blue Book, instead of referring to letters in *The Times*, and other newspapers, which did not appear in it, could doubt that there was a sudden and urgent necessity which justified the action of the Government. The hon. and learned Member had spoken of the Bombay and Burmah Corporation as though it was a body which merely had some claim against the Burmese Government which might be made the subject of arbitration. For 20 years the Bombay and Burmah Corporation had been in intimate relations with the Burmese Authorities. The dispute began by suggestions being made that the Bombay and Burmah Corporation had bribed the present Governor of the Province of Ninghyan, with a very large bribe—namely, six lacs of rupees, in order to cover their frauds. Upon that suggestion being at once challenged the Burmese officials shifted their ground, and alleged that the Bombay and Burmah Corporation had not paid a sufficient amount under the leases of 1880, and that they had defrauded the foresters who had been in their employ. He would undertake to demonstrate to any hon. Member that there was no foundation for either of those charges. When the charges were made, they were only supported by the testimony of a few discharged servants, or of persons acting under the compulsion of the Burmese Government. The Bombay and Burmah Corporation courted, from the be-

ginning, a thorough investigation of the charges made against them; but they were unable to secure either the substantiation of the charges, or an investigation. But the matter did not, by any means, stop there. The hon. and learned Member had referred to the question as a mere money demand, which might be made the subject of arbitration, or an action for damages; but there were other considerations. In the end of 1882 and the beginning of 1883, a new lease having been arranged, the Corporation paid down in advance for the right of cutting wood in the forests no less than four and a half lacs of rupees. He wanted the House to understand that this, which was called by the hon. and learned Member a money claim, was something which was alleged by the Burmese Government as having happened with reference to timber in 1882. Having paid that large amount in advance, this Corporation had other considerations which ought to have influenced, and he trusted did influence, their minds. They had in their employ several thousand persons, of whom no less than 2,000 were British subjects; and instead of the Government of Burmah simply declining to accept the proposals for arbitration, or saying that some other tribunal must be devised, whereby the questions in dispute could be determined, on the 24th September, four days after the hon. and learned Member had told the House the dispute might have been amicably settled, they demanded payment of 23 lacs of rupees from the Corporation in respect of those alleged breaches. On the 24th of September this was the condition of matters, as stated in a telegram from the Bombay and Burmah Corporation—

"Burmese soldiers insist on stopping the rafts, notwithstanding the orders of the Governor of Ningham. He has no power to enforce his orders. Soldiers have fired on several of our rafts. Raftsmen are frightened, have been arrested, and put in the stocks by soldiers."

There were various degrees of opinion as to the extent to which Governments ought to forbear; but it seemed to him (the Attorney General) that Her Majesty's Government had some duty to perform towards the 2,000 British subjects who were in the employ of the Bombay and Burmah Corporation. The hon. and learned Member would have a further oppor-

tunity of criticizing the conduct of the Government; but he (the Attorney General) submitted that that conduct was not to be criticized by a side wind, on a Motion made by way of suggestion that some condition in an Act of Parliament had not been fulfilled before the operations began. He only desired to add that, having given his careful consideration to the matter, and looking at it not only as a lawyer, but also with the object of finding out which side was in the right, so far as he had been able to form an opinion, he had come to the distinct conclusion that there was no foundation whatever for the charges made against the Company, and that those who represented Burmah, knowing they were in the wrong, were at once proceeding to enforce their unrighteous and improper demands by force, which Her Majesty's Government could not allow to pass unnoticed. The general policy of the Government in matters of this kind rested in far wiser hands than his; but it was well known that prompt action in these matters did not, as a rule, lead to prejudicial results. They knew perfectly well that the expenditure of a few hundreds might prevent the ultimate loss of thousands, and that the expenditure of a few thousands might prevent the ultimate loss of tens of thousands; and when it was suggested that Her Majesty's Government ought to have stayed their hands before they undertook the responsibility of these operations, he ventured to point out that they were inviting criticism, because the question of how this expenditure was to be met was still open; and, in his opinion, Her Majesty's Government would have been entirely wanting in their duty to the country and the first principles of government if, having made up their minds that there was a case for prompt and energetic action, and in view of the interpretation of the law for which they contended, they had delayed to undertake these operations.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Like the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down, I do not feel it necessary to enter at any very great length into the question that has been raised by the hon. and learned Mover of this Amendment. But I must say, in passing, that this being the first opportunity we have had of hearing the hon. and learned

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Mover, I have listened, in two respects, with great pleasure to his speech. I thought the general principles he propounded were eminently sound; and otherwise he appeared to be a Gentleman who, in the course of his speech, proved to us, in the most satisfactory manner, his power to bear a very useful and distinguished part in the discussions of this House. But the hon. and learned Member the Mover of the Amendment is, in this respect, I think, unfortunate—that the Amendment he has moved does not cover the whole breadth of the ground he undoubtedly occupied in his speech. The Amendment only raises the question—one of grave importance, no doubt, but still the comparatively narrow question—of who is to meet the expenses that have been incurred? But a considerable portion of his speech undoubtedly touched what is a deeper matter—namely, the merits of the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in this very important matter. I would keep those two questions entirely distinct. The Attorney General, I am bound to say, has kept them entirely distinct. But, before referring to either of them, I must undertake to point out to the Attorney General that there is a palpable error in the proposition with which he concluded his speech, because he contended that the Parliament of 1878 passed a direct judgment upon this question. I, without hesitation, say that this is an entire mistake. I quite agree that the argument was made, and made with great decision, certainly by myself, with regard to the construction of the Act. I quite admit that the whole tone and temper of that Parliament was entirely the opposite to our contentions on that and on other matters which have been since dealt with in a somewhat different way. The issue was not raised on the Motion, and no decision was given by the Parliament, directly or indirectly, upon the construction of the Act. With regard to the second part of the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and which touched the same subject-matter as the second portion of the hon. and learned Mover's speech, I agree undoubtedly with the hon. and learned Gentleman to this extent—and it is a very important agreement—that I do not think the House is at this moment in a condition—even if the question had been raised by the Amendment,

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and it has not been—to pronounce that there was no sudden or urgent necessity in the condition of things in Burmah which led to the action of Her Majesty's Government. If there was a sudden and emergent necessity, then, by the confession of all parties, it was open to Her Majesty's Government to proceed without obtaining the prior assent of Parliament to the employment of Indian Forces, or to creating a charge upon Indian Revenues. In other times it has been in this condition—that questions of the most vital importance—questions of war, of conquest, far larger in their character even than this—were decided without the smallest hope or possibility that Parliament would exercise any control over them whatever. In this instance, I think I need only say that, as regards the merits of the question, I keep my mind entirely open. I noticed on a former night a sentence in the Speech from the Throne, not because I thought it conveyed a doctrine in distinct and intelligible terms, but because I thought it somewhat more savoured of a doctrine that this House ought to watch with considerable jealousy and reserve—namely, the doctrine that a civil wrong inflicted on British subjects constitutes a case on account of which we are to go to war. It is a very large and a very grave question. I am far from denying that the right of going to war may arise upon it; but the general proposition that warlike measures ought to be undertaken upon that ground is a proposition which we ought to hesitate, I think, to inscribe among our political axioms. The speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman, I may say, on this part of the question, I thought, was open to some exception; because he argued this war as though it had grown entirely out of the relations of the trading Company and the Burmese Government. There is no doubt that much more was involved than the question between the Company and the Burmese Government; and though I do not deny that there is force in the plea that the conditions and interests of the 2,000 persons employed by the Company were matters for consideration, yet I think if there is to be an ultimate defence and justification of the conduct of Her Majesty's Government with respect to making war and the annexation of Burmah—and at present I do not say whether there will or will

not be such a justification—that it certainly must be drawn from broader and deeper considerations than the mere relations of a Company with the Burmese Government. I do not know the hon. and learned Member's intention; but I doubt whether the House will approach this question satisfactorily by any division on the Amendment now before us. In asking the House to assent to this outlay, the Government will have to make a Motion, which will afford ample and legitimate opportunity for considering the question of the liability of the Indian Revenues; and with respect to the matter which constituted so great a part of the speech of the Mover of the Amendment, and which was not touched by the Amendment itself. I venture to hope that the House will not be called to decide anything by voting upon the Amendment. I must say a few words upon the more legal and professional portion of the speech of the Attorney General. He has stated his views to-night, as he has done during his short experience in this House, with great clearness and force; and he has referred to the argument made use of by the late Sir John Holker when he so honourably filled the position now occupied by the hon. and learned Gentleman. Though I differed much from Sir John Holker in politics, this I will say—that I appreciated and admired his legal knowledge. I never heard a legal argument from Sir John Holker, whether I agreed with him or not, without great pleasure and admiration for the masterly way in which he handled his subject. Therefore, I do not approach this subject under prejudice. But I must give fair notice to the hon. and learned Gentleman that I am prepared to contest to the uttermost his legal doctrine as to the construction of the Act of Parliament. The doctrine was advanced—I do not like to use the word extravagant—but in the most advanced form it was capable of assuming by the Earl of Idlesleigh; and, if I remember his contention, he argued thus:—He said there is nothing in the Act of Parliament to prevent the advance of the money from the Indian Treasury; and if Parliament subsequently determines that those advances shall be repaid, and the charge shall be finally borne by the Consolidated Fund, then the Act of Parliament has been satisfied. That I also understand to be

the contention of the hon. and learned Gentleman. If the hon. and learned Gentleman had sat as long as I have sat in this House during a multitude of Indian wars—during the first Afghan War, during the Sindh War, during the Persian War—[General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR: And the Chinese Wars.] Well, the Chinese wars are a very painful subject. As far as my recollection goes, I do not know that those wars raised this particular question. My recollection rather is that in the case of the greater of these conflicts, in the Chinese War of 1839, we had a perfectly free hand, and were able to pass judgment upon the question, irrespective of any financial embarrassment. But in these cases to which I have referred—and, perhaps, the list of them could be enlarged—what Parliament, and what successive Parliaments, felt was that they were reduced to a state of absolute impotence. The question came before them simply as a question of censure upon the Government, and in no other practical shape. The clause of the Indian Government Act of 1858 was intended to provide an effectual remedy for that mischief. Not in every case. That clause was much considered—I do not say it was much debated in this House. It was intended to provide a remedy; but not in every case. It was generally felt that where there was actual or meditated invasion, there you must be content to take the risks of compromising the authority of Parliament, and leaving the Indian subject practically without remedy. It was felt that the exception of invasion was not wide enough, but that another exception should be introduced, and that was the case of sudden and urgent necessity. These were words which, in the hands of the Government, might be elastic words; but, nevertheless, it was necessary, undoubtedly, to have a provision of that kind in the Act of Parliament; and so far I admit that it is not possible for us to exercise any previous control. But I affirm, in the boldest and most confident manner, that the purpose of Parliament was, setting aside the case of invasion, and the case of sudden and urgent necessity, to provide a prior control for Parliament in questions of this kind. What is the contention of the hon. and learned Gentleman? His contention is that the whole object of the clause was to reserve

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the question, who is to pay? Then, I can only say, most deplorable is the position, not only of the Indian taxpayers, but of the British taxpayers also. Because, according to the hon. and learned Gentleman, how stand the British taxpayers? In respect of wars and like operations conducted in all other parts of the globe, we have a tolerably effective control. I will not go now into the technical question; but, on the whole, it is well known that, although the prerogative of making peace or war is in the hands of Her Majesty, yet the wars made by this country are generally, through the privileges and rights of this House, practically under an effective prior control. But how stand we under the doctrine of the hon. and learned Gentleman in regard to these wars that can be made by the Indian Army? Under that doctrine we have no control whatever in regard to these wars.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER): Yes; we have.

MR. GLADSTONE: What control have we, then? Parliament usually prorogues at the end of July, and meets again six months after. The Indian Forces may be operating to any extent during the whole of that period; and then there is nothing for the House of Commons to do but to say in the subsequent Session whether they will or will not pay the bill. Under these circumstances, I say that we have no Parliamentary control whatever over these wars. We have no power remaining, except to condemn the Government. The hon. and learned Member may say that I have not been complimentary in my remarks to the Parliament of 1878; but he, in his observations, has been most uncomplimentary to the Parliament of 1858, and the Government of 1858, and, I may say, to a series of Parliaments which have groaned under the state of things that previously existed with regard to wars made from India, and by means of the Indian Army. Well, Sir, I would remind the hon. and learned Gentleman of what were the sensations in this country produced by the first Afghan War. He may remember that such was the belief in the responsibility, in the error, and perhaps almost in the crime, of that war—such was the universal sentiment of public opinion in respect to it, and, at the same time, the sentiment of the perfect helplessness of

this House and this Government in preventing a repetition of such things, that Mr. Roebuck, in 1843, under the Government of Sir Robert Peel, made a Motion to inflict retrospectively the severe censure of this House upon a Government that had been out of Office for two or three years; and it was only with difficulty that Sir Robert Peel, exercising all the skill and influence he possessed, could restrain the House of Commons, and the large majority that confided in him at that period, from pronouncing that censure. I do not wish to go further at this moment; or to enter into the details of the Act of Parliament; but I think the hon. and learned Gentleman himself will do me the justice to say that if his construction of this Act is right our position is this—Dividing the word geographically into those regions which are accessible to the Indian Army and those regions which are not, Parliament can control the military action of the Advisers of the Crown in the regions which are not accessible to the Indian Army. But with respect to those which are accessible, the Government are under no necessity or occasion whatever to come to this House for prior sanction—they can operate through the Indian Army, and then content themselves with presenting to us the bill after the whole matter is at an end. The hon. and learned Gentleman proposes, by his construction of the Act of Parliament, to convict the Parliament of 1858, and all those who had to do with it then, of the crime of what I should call political idiocy. ["Hear, hear!" and laughter.] I was obliged to say as much as this; because the general question involved is one of extreme importance. It is not now legitimately before us in connection with the present state of things. What is the present state of things? The noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) may undoubtedly, three or four weeks hence, if he thinks fit, raise the doctrine of 1878 in its full breadth—namely, that the Act of Parliament does not touch a case in which India pays, provided that she is subsequently repaid. That is the high doctrine on the subject. But whenever that high doctrine is broached, we on this side of the House shall be bound to meet and contest it. Then the noble Lord may have it open to him—and I hope he will take that course—to pass

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by that high doctrine altogether. If there were a sudden urgent necessity, then he would not require that doctrine at all. I know not which plea will be raised; but when the proper time comes undoubtedly we shall see. I leave my mind entirely open and unprejudiced with respect to this case, which involves many considerations of great difficulty and importance. I hold the construction of the Act of Parliament to be not only clear, but to be of vital moment to the preservation of the Privileges of this House. I hope that on the merits of the question we may not be driven to a division at present, especially on a Motion which would but imperfectly express its own purpose, and on which we should vote with very imperfect knowledge.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL): I imagine that the House will be inclined to follow the advice of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian (Mr. Gladstone), and will forbear discussing the general policy involved in the war with Burmah, and the annexation of that territory to the Dominions of the Crown. I imagine, moreover, that that course will be agreeable to hon. Members below the Gangway, and possibly to the hon. and learned Gentleman who moved this Amendment, as he is now aware that it will be my duty under the Act of Parliament, within a month from the first day of the meeting of Parliament, to place before the House a formal Resolution sanctioning the war by authorizing the payment of the expenses caused by it out of the Revenue of India. A legitimate and a more convenient occasion for debate will then arise. And I am the more confirmed in that opinion from the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman himself; because I am convinced that if there is one quarter of information to which he has not gone, and to which he ought to go, it is the official Blue Book, and the further record which has been placed before the House by the Government. It is obvious that the hon. and learned Gentleman, for some reason or other, has not been disposed even to consult that Blue Book, or, if he has consulted it, he evidently is not disposed to place the slightest reliance upon it; but I believe that the hon. and learned Gentleman has not studied it. I am not

surprised at this, because the time that has elapsed since it was laid before the House has been so short. That being so, I shall confine my remarks within a very brief compass, if the House will kindly grant me its indulgence. I wish to support, as far as I can, every word which fell from the Attorney General, and with great respect, but at the same time with perfect conviction, to contest every word which has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. I think that I shall be able to show the House that, in support of my assertion, I can call to witness acts of the right hon. Gentleman himself, and very recent acts. The right hon. Gentleman has advised me to avoid basing the action of the Government upon what he calls the high doctrine, that the proper interpretation of the Statute is the one placed upon it by the Attorney General—namely, that the Government, the Crown, and the Ministers of the Crown, have the undoubted right to declare war, to initiate hostile proceedings, without the prior sanction of Parliament, whether by the Indian Army or the Forces of the Crown. That was the doctrine of the Attorney General, and I believe it to be the Constitutional doctrine. In the case of making war by the British Forces in Europe, obviously the power of the House of Commons is very great; because, within almost a few hours of acts which lead to hostilities being done, the Government is bound to come to Parliament for a Vote of Credit, and Parliament has at once the power to arrest proceedings by refusing the credit. Therefore, there is no helplessness whatever of the House of Commons as far as hostilities in Europe by British Forces are concerned. But the right hon. Gentleman said that the House of Commons is perfectly helpless, if our contention of the interpretation of the Statute is right, in the event of war being made by Her Majesty's Indian Forces. In the first place, I venture to deny altogether that the House of Commons is helpless, even if the right hon. Gentleman is right; because the very remarkable illustration which the right hon. Gentleman gave of the action of Mr. Roebuck proves that the House of Commons is not helpless. [An hon. MEMBER: Two years after.] Well, if the House of Commons could, on the Motion of Mr. Roebuck two or three

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years after the occurrence, when another Government was in Office, take hostile action, that would almost have amounted to an impeachment of the servants of the Crown who were responsible for the course pursued; and if it required all the power and influence of Sir Robert Peel to restrain the House of Commons from taking that action, how can the right hon. Gentleman contend that the House of Commons is perfectly helpless with regard to the present Burmese War, either as regards censuring the Government, evacuating the country, or sanctioning the payment of the expenses of the war out of the Revenues of this country? The House of Commons can censure Her Majesty's Government, if it should be of opinion that its action in this matter has been immoral or wicked, and it can evacuate the country and replace King Theebaw on his Throne. The House of Commons can direct that the Revenue of this country should bear the charge, and not the Indian Revenue. There is only one thing which the House of Commons cannot do. It cannot go back upon the action which the Crown, in the exercise of its Prerogative on the responsibility of the Advisers of the Crown, has committed. It cannot prevent the expenditure from having been incurred. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen who laugh do not understand my contention, and I do not think they will laugh so loudly when they find that the very action I am contending for is within the power of the Crown; and the action which, as I am contending, is within the power of the Crown was actually performed by the right hon. Gentleman in the late Government. The contention of the right hon. Gentleman is that it is not enough that Parliament should be able to say afterwards whether Indian Revenue should be expended or not. That, he says, is not the construction of the Statute; the construction of the Statute is, that the Government intending to spend Indian Revenue or British Revenue must obtain the consent of Parliament before a single shilling of Indian Revenue can be expended. Now, as a matter of fact, that construction has never been adopted by any Government, Conservative or Liberal. I take the case of the third China War of 1859; and I am under the impression that at that time the right hon. Gentleman had a seat in the Government. I find that

the order for Indian troops to take part in that war was issued in September, 1859; and, of course, the cost of the Expedition from India was defrayed out of Indian Revenue. More than that, although certain portions of the extraordinary charge were paid out of Imperial Revenue, the ordinary charge was paid out of Indian Revenue. The expenditure began in September, 1859, when the right hon. Gentleman was a Member of the Government, and no Vote of Credit was taken from the House of Commons till March 16, 1860—five months after the commencement of the war. Now, why do not hon. Gentlemen opposite laugh? However, I am not going to rest on 1859, the evil days before the great Reform Bill, when the majesty of the people was not represented in this House. So I will take another case—that of the Abyssinian War. The order for Indian troops to take part in that war was issued from this country in August, 1867, a Conservative Government being then in Office; and the Resolution authorizing the payment of Indian Revenue towards the expenses of that war was not brought before the House of Commons till November 28, 1867—four months afterwards. Therefore, the Conservative record is a little better than the Liberal record. Then I come to the Afghan War of 1878. An order went for the commencement of hostilities on November 21, 1878, and the Resolution sanctioning the payment of the expenses out of Indian Revenue was brought forward in December, 1878—the Government, if I recollect aright, summoning a special Autumn Session of Parliament to sanction that war. Now, Sir, I come to the recent Administration of the right hon. Gentleman. It was the unhappy lot of the right hon. Gentleman to conduct more than one "military operation;" and in one of those "military operations" the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues very properly decided that Indian troops should bear a useful part, and that in the security and independence of Egypt the interests of India were very closely concerned. So Indian troops were ordered to take part in the Egyptian Expedition of 1882. Orders were sent from the India Office on July 24; and here I will admit that the Government acted with immense promptitude, and only the most microscopic criticism

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which ingenuity could devise can be passed upon their conduct; but, nevertheless, they broke the law. [*A laugh.*] I am not contending that they broke the law; I am contending that the right hon. Gentleman opposite contends that they broke the law. Well, orders had been sent on the 24th of July, preparations for those orders had been going on for some days beforehand, and considerable expenditure had actually been incurred in India; but the sanction of Parliament was not taken till the 27th of July. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] What about the contention of the right hon. Gentleman? How about the helplessness of Parliament? The money had been spent in India, and Parliament was utterly helpless to prevent its being so spent. What, then, is the contention of the right hon. Gentleman? Either it is that the prior sanction of Parliament must be obtained before a single shilling is expended—

Mr. GLADSTONE: "Before a single shilling is expended" are not my words at all. I know too well the uniform practice to which the British Votes and every other Vote is subject.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I understood him to argue *totidem verbis* from his contention of 1878; and if he will refer to *Hansard* he will find that he construed the word "defray" as containing and meaning the issue of money; and for the issue of money he contended that the prior sanction of Parliament was necessary. But there I admit that only a very fine-drawn criticism can be brought to bear on the right hon. Gentleman. I should not have thought of making such a criticism had it not been for the tremendously high-flown doctrine which the right hon. Gentleman laid down. It is obvious that the period of time, small as it was—three days—was a fatal flaw in the virtue of the right hon. Gentleman. However, I come to a case far more glaring, which utterly destroys the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman. I come to the second Egyptian War—the Suakin Expedition—and there I have been able to ascertain from the India Office exactly the amount of money which was spent before Parliament was asked to vote one shilling. Orders were sent from the India Office for Indian troops to go to Suakin on the 8th of

February, 1885, and the sanction of Parliament in the form of a Resolution was not demanded until the 5th of March—a whole month nearly. What becomes of the prior sanction of Parliament now? If the right hon. Gentleman would care to know—because, of course, his attention was so taken up with the general conduct of the Government that probably he does not know the details of the expenditure connected with Egypt—£350,000 of Indian money was disbursed before the sanction of Parliament authorized the expenditure. It was expended between the 8th of February and the 5th of March. Now, see to what lengths the Expedition had gone before the sanction of Parliament was obtained. The whole force had been embarked, and was aboard the transport. They could not possibly have prevented that force from being embarked, nor the transport being engaged. A transport had been engaged; troops had been embarked; 9,000 camp followers had been engaged; 5,500 camels had been purchased between the date when the Government was first instructed to prepare for the despatch of a force—namely, the 8th of February—and the date that Parliament was informed; in addition to which large liabilities were incurred by the Government of India for contracts for transports, although the actual payment did not, perhaps, fall to be made on the instant. Now, observe, I doubt very much whether the Burmese War up to the present moment has cost £350,000, well within the margin of the right hon. Gentleman. I ask the House after such habitual practice of Liberal and Conservative Governments with regard to wars in which Indian troops took part—and there is not a single instance on record in which the prior sanction of Parliament has been asked—I ask the House how it could really now be contended that that is the meaning of the Statute, and that the Statute is absolutely worthless, and that, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman, it "must have been drawn by idiots," unless it bears that meaning? Obviously, Sir, the persons who drew the clause in question were under the wing of the right hon. Gentleman himself. I am not saying that in the least degree in a jering way. I think it is a most valuable clause, one which does bring the Government under the control of Parliament;

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but which, at the same time, does not fetter the initiative of action on which the English Government, and far more the Indian Government, must depend. I contend, therefore, that the true construction of the Statute is this—that the Indian Government, acting under the instruction of the Advisers of the Crown, can undoubtedly declare war, and can use the Indian Revenue for the purpose. The declaration of war, if Indian troops are employed in such war, must be communicated to Parliament within three months, if Parliament is sitting; and if Parliament is not sitting, within a month after it meets. That is undoubtedly within the power of the Indian Government; on that interpretation of the Statute they have invariably acted, and on that they are acting now. As I said before, the object of the Statute is to prevent the Crown using the Indian Revenues without the consent of Parliament for carrying on warlike operations, and that the House of Commons can do. The House of Commons can arrest the whole of the military operations in Burmah. It can order the immediate evacuation of the country and the restoration of King Theebaw; it can order the payment of any indemnity almost that the House of Commons chooses, in case, in its philanthropy, it should determine that that benevolent Monarch has been wronged. That is the power of the House of Commons; and I cannot see how that great power can be reconciled with the expressions of the right hon. Gentleman, who threw his hands up to Heaven and talked about the utter helplessness of the House of Commons. I would not have taken part in this debate, after what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman, if it had not been for the extraordinary contention he has raised. I do hold that I have shown to the House that by the reasonable construction of the Statute and by the invariable practice the Government have acted within their legal and just rights. I shall be prepared, when the proper time arrives, to defend the action of the Government upon that subject. But I do believe that in the position which I have the honour to fill I should be utterly false to all that is absolutely essential to the discharge of the duties of my Office, and the immense responsibility that must ultimately repose on the Indian Secretary, if I had not at

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once contested the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman—a doctrine which I venture to say might, in the future, if accepted by the House of Commons, and ratified by Parliament, bring utter ruin on the Indian Government. I will not further detain the House to-night. At the first opportunity which will be most convenient to the House I will be prepared to move the formal Resolution sanctioning the Burmese War and annexation. I have no doubt whatever as to what the verdict of the House of Commons on that issue will be. If I could bring it on to-morrow I would be delighted to do so; because, I will own, I am more than proud to have had the responsibility of recommending to my Colleagues the action which has been taken in regard to Burmah; and I am proud of belonging to a Government which has added to the Dominions of the Crown, and the enterprize of British commerce, and which has added to the area of civilization and of progress so vast and so valuable a possession.

MR. HUNTER said, that in response to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and considering that the main issues on this question must come up for discussion at another time, he would ask leave of the House to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION.

MR. J. W. BAROLAY, in rising to move, as an Amendment, after the word "Agriculture," in the 11th paragraph, of the words—

"And humbly to represent the pressing necessity for securing without delay to the cultivators of the soil such conditions of tenure as will aid and encourage them to meet the new and trying circumstances in which the Agriculture of the Country is placed,"

apologized for introducing the question at this stage on the ground of its urgency and importance, and the small prospect there was of finding an opportunity for some months to come of discussing the subject of agricultural reforms. This question of Land Reform was discussed during the General Election as one of the most urgent questions for the consideration of Parliament. It was true that now Parliamentary exigencies had brought the Irish Question to the foremost consideration of Parliament; but

the Government had made no proposition to deal with the question, and meantime he thought the time of the House could not be better employed than in considering whether any measure might be introduced to relieve, so far as legislation could do so, the present condition of the agricultural industry. In discussing the question he would assure the House that he had no hostility to the landlords as a class. Few of them were free to manage their estates as they thought proper, even if they had the inclination to do so; and he was persuaded that if they knew their own interest they would as eagerly support the reforms he intended to urge as the cultivators of the land themselves. No one doubted the existence of agricultural depression. The Government referred to the subject in the Speech from the Throne, and, he was sorry to say, in a very hopeless manner. They did not make any suggestion whatever of any remedy. Unfortunately, the Government confessed themselves as incompetent and impotent to deal with this question as with the Irish difficulty. The agricultural depression was keenly felt by all classes. If it were of a temporary nature they would endeavour to bear it as cheerfully as possible, encouraged by the hope of better times; but, unfortunately, it had assumed a permanent character. In former times, if the crop was deficient in this country, the farmer was to some extent compensated by receiving a higher price for his produce. But for the last seven or eight years, although the seasons had been bad, the price of wheat had been falling; and within the last 18 months or two years the price of live stock had fallen somewhere about 30 per cent. During the last seven or eight years the development of the railway system had opened up the great wheat-producing centres of India and America; and, at the same time, the cost of transit by sea had been very largely decreased. The competition with the foreign producer had now reached an acute stage; and he was convinced that, under the present conditions on which they held their lands, it would be impossible for the farmers of this country to maintain the competition. He did not wish to go into any elaborate calculation as to the relative cost of producing wheat in India and America and this country; but in America the farmer

held his land at almost a nominal price. The price of land in the wheat centres was not, perhaps, more than 5s. an acre in fee simple, while nearer the centres of shipment the price would not, perhaps, be more than 50s. an acre. The farmer worked his land himself; and though the wages of labour might be higher, the cost of producing an acre of wheat was less than in this country. A great advantage enjoyed by the American farmer was that he could cultivate his land as he pleased. (On the other hand, the British farmer had to pay for his land a very considerable rent. He could not grow such crops as he pleased, and in many cases he could not dispose of his crops in the most advantageous manner. Then, if he intended to develop the resources of the soil, he had no security for his capital. How, then, was it possible for the competition of the British farmer to go on? Would it be possible for their manufactures to prosper if the manufacturers were obliged to carry on their business under similar conditions to those of the farmers? Of course, he should be referred to the Agricultural Holdings Act passed by the last Government; but that Act, as he had pointed out at the time, had been a delusion and a snare. There had been two or three years' experience of it, and there was a general consensus of opinion in England and Scotland that it failed to meet the necessities of the case. Farmers thought it safer to abstain from making claims under the Act, and to allow matters to go on as before, than to attempt to avail themselves of its provisions. One obstacle to their doing so was the clause which provided that tenants should not be compensated for any improvements that were due to the inherent capabilities of the soil. That was a very elastic phrase, which skilful arbitrators made to cover any improvement. Again, tenants under leases were estopped by heavy penalties, which might quadruple the rent, for varying the rotation of crops. Under the clause which enabled landlords to make counter-claims for compensation, landlords had turned to account unsuspected terms in the leases, and in some cases had succeeded in claiming much more than the tenants. In the face of such facts, it was impossible to regard the Act as meeting the necessities of the case. The great object to be aimed at was to stimulate

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tenants to make improvements by securing to them the advantages derived from them, and the Act altogether failed to do that. With the foreign competition, the decreased cost of transport, and other causes, the natural protection of the British farmer had been reduced by one-half in 20 years. He had no doubt that if the British farmers had fair rents, freedom to make the most out of their land, and security for their capital, they would be able to maintain their position against farmers in any part of the world. The British farmer had, in his proximity to markets, a natural protection equal to not less than 40s. per acre; and, at the same time, the best markets in the world. He held that they ought to be able to hold their position against farmers in any other country, provided they had fair conditions of tenure. An illustration of what might happen in this country had been furnished by the experience of America. Some 30 years ago, when the wheat fields in the Central States of America were opened up by the railway, and wheat from there was delivered in the Eastern States at a price at which it could not be produced in these latter States, it was supposed that the land in the Eastern States would become practically valueless, and no doubt there was a great amount of depression among the farmers for some time; but in almost every case in the Eastern States the farmers owned their own land, and had free scope. So, in a short time, those farmers turned their attention to dairy farming, to poultry rearing, and the produce of vegetables and fruit; and the consequence was that the State of New York was now yielding from two to three times the value of agricultural produce which it did 20 years ago. British farmers wanted the same freedom that had enabled the farmers of the Eastern States to meet their difficulties. Of dairy produce, poultry, vegetables, and fruit we imported not less than £20,000,000 worth annually. He did not say that all that could be produced in this country; but a very large proportion could, if the farmers had freedom to cultivate as they chose. Moreover, there would be a great development in the consumption of those articles if they were supplied in the large towns at a reasonable price. That was the example they had from the Eastern States

of America. He did not say that legislation could do everything to relieve the existing agricultural depression. The farmers must do much for themselves; but before they could be called upon to act for themselves they must have freedom of action; they must have security of capital; and they must have the raw material—the land—at a moderate price. He submitted that Parliament ought to secure to the man who cultivated the land a fair rent, and also such freedom and conditions of cultivation as would enable him to make the most of the land. He should, at the same time, have security of capital, so that he might be fully satisfied in his own mind that when he invested his capital in the soil of the country he would have the right to reap the full fruits of his industry, capital, and skill. These were the changes which, in his opinion, were absolutely necessary for any improvement in the condition of the British farmer. With such conditions as those he had enumerated, the farmer would be encouraged to put capital in the soil; and if his skill and experience were not fettered, as they were now, he could compete successfully with the foreign producer. Referring to the position of the farmers of Scotland under the lease system, he pointed out that Scottish farms were held almost entirely under the system of 19 years' leases. Of late years there had been a great fall in the price of agricultural produce, and the position of those farmers who entered into such leases four or five years ago was a very serious one indeed. They felt it to be impossible to make the rent out of the land, owing to the great reduction in the price of agricultural produce. The farmers of Scotland were very much in the position of a manufacturer who had contracted at a fixed price for his raw material for a period of 19 years, and who found soon after that there was a reduction of 30 or 35 per cent in the price of the manufactured article. The farmers asked either that they should have a re-valuation of their farms by independent and competent authorities, or, if that was denied, that the landlords would allow them to leave their farms. But it was said this would be an interference with contract, and no doubt it would be a great interference; but Parliament had interfered already when the necessity

Mr. J. W. Barclay

was shown, and of the necessity in this case there was no doubt. He hoped, therefore, Her Majesty's Government would express some opinion on this question favourable to the views which he had indicated. He could assure the House that this was a very serious question in Scotland. Few could look forward with equanimity to ruin such as was steadily approaching the farmers, and which would overwhelm them if the present rents were exacted. Much the same causes were in operation all over Scotland as prevailed in the West Highlands; and if this Constitutional appeal received no response from Parliament, a state of circumstance would arise with which it might be difficult to deal. He knew that many farmers were looking forward with the greatest anxiety to see what Parliament would do in the matter. Of course, he was aware that a great many landlords had given considerable abatements of rent. Those abatements, however, were unsatisfactory in this respect—that although they might afford temporary relief to the farmer, they did not secure a future reasonable rent, such as was necessary to induce him to make the exertion necessary to lift agriculture out of its present depressed condition. Some landlords were having their estates re-valued, and if the re-valuation was real and not a sham, it was creditable and wise. Landlords who made an impartial re-valuation had nothing to fear from any proposal of the tenants, and their conduct would not be interfered with by any action of Parliament such as he suggested. What he really asked from Parliament was to do what those wise and prudent landlords were doing for themselves, in order to put their estates in a safe position. In asking for the support of the hon. Member for Ipswich Mr. Jesse Collings, he said he was himself in favour of the increase of small holdings; and he should be prepared to ask Parliament, at the proper time, to co-operate in assisting landlords and tenants to break up the larger farms, in order to supply a large proportion of the people with land to cultivate. He contended that an increase of small holdings was very advisable in the interests of the landlords and the larger farmers themselves. He would next refer to the case of the agricultural labourer. If they were to maintain their position in farm-

ing a much larger amount of labour must be employed on the soil. In Scotland the married ploughmen with their families composed a most exemplary class. They were sober, industrious, and self-denying, and in bringing up their children they sought to equip them well for the world; but he was sorry to say that the house accommodation they had was not what it ought to be. For that the landlord was responsible. The farmer had not hitherto been in a position to do for the agricultural labourer what he would like to do; but when the farmer was made secure he would find it his interest and his duty to provide the labourer, if not with the "three acres and a cow," of which they had lately heard so much, with at least as much land as he could conveniently cultivate in his spare hours, and in many cases with the cow also. He could tell hon. Gentlemen opposite that the idea of three acres and a cow did not seem quite so impracticable or so absurd to the labourers as it appeared to be to them; and the extension of the system of giving small patches of land to the agricultural labourers by hon. Gentlemen opposite would probably secure more support for Conservatism than the establishment of a Primrose Habitation in every parish throughout the country. The question which he had brought forward was a pressing one. It might be delayed—it could not be evaded; and the longer it was delayed the greater would be the suffering. The hon. Member concluded by moving his Amendment.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

By inserting, after the word "Agriculture," in the 11th paragraph, the words "and humbly to represent the pressing necessity for securing without delay to the cultivators of the soil such conditions of tenure as will aid and encourage them to meet the new and trying circumstances in which the Agriculture of the Country is placed."—*Mr. Barclay.*)

(Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted.")

MR. MARK STEWART said, he was not surprised that the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) had addressed the House in the manner he had done. He recognized among the various platitudes which the hon. Member had given them some portions of

those numerous speeches which had been fully recorded in Northern newspapers. He did not think that the hon. Gentleman had adduced any new matter on a very important subject; and while deeply sympathizing with the agricultural interest, he (Mr. Stewart) could not agree with the various remedies the hon. Member proposed. For himself, he expressed the gratification he felt, in common, he was sure, with the whole House, at the sympathy manifested in the gracious Speech from the Throne with the deplorably depressed state of agriculture and trade. There was great distress in every branch of agriculture, and in none was there visible any symptom of revival. The dairying department, which had long striven to meet in some degree the difficulties of the times, was now suffering severely from the recent fall of prices. Representing, as he did, a purely agricultural county, he could state that occupiers of land who had hitherto braved that disastrous period could no longer rely on that system to pay their rent. If agriculture, the greatest industry of the British Isles, suffered, the whole country must suffer with it, and the well-being of vast numbers of people who were totally unfitted for any other employment or vocation in life was at stake. He had not perceived that much commiseration had been shown by hon. Members opposite for the hardships existing among the county constituencies which they were so anxious to represent. Even in the Manifesto and the speeches of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) the unfortunate condition of agriculture was wholly ignored. It was not fair to taunt the landlords with taking as much as they could get; because the tenants had held their farms, as a general rule, during prosperous times, and had made their money out of the land. The hon. Member had alluded to the state of Ireland; but that was not a very happy illustration, for they heard anything but glowing accounts of the working of the Land Act, fixity of tenure, and fair rent. These were matters to be settled, not merely by debates in the House, but by practical observation. It had been suggested that the system of yearly valuation by the Fairs Courts in Scotland might be extended to the rents of farms; and he might point out that something of the kind already existed in certain parts of the country, rents being in-

creased or diminished as the price of wheat rose or fell. That gave the tenant a fair chance of paying his rent, even though prices became exceedingly low. The prices of dairy produce, &c., might also be taken into consideration, and in that way some satisfaction was now given by perpetual abatement of rent. Landlords were not, as was sometimes represented, turning a deaf ear to their tenants' grievances. Those who were able were giving very large abatements of rent. Some were not able to do so. They were themselves in difficulties through no fault of their own. The class was, in his opinion, to be judged by those who had the means, and who were willing to distribute that means. The hon. Member had twitted the Conservatives with believing and propagating the story of three acres and a cow. Well, that was a story which served the Liberal Party a good turn during the early part of the late General Election, and the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) waited a long time before he repudiated its authorship. So long as it served the purpose for which it was originated, the three acres and the cow doctrine was held to be the pet child of the improvement of the agricultural labourer's social condition. Speaking as a landlord, and as one interested in the management of a large property, he might say it had been his desire and his practice to encourage the growth of small farms, although he knew how much the pocket suffered through the necessity for building suitable steadings. What landlords did not like was that their land should be compulsorily seized at the option of some Local Authority. He might also mention in this connection that he had known many instances where a labourer who had a garden attached to his dwelling allowed a part of it to run wild rather than cultivate it. Members on that (the Conservative) side of the House would be delighted if any way could be shown by which the agricultural labourer could be provided with the necessary capital to buy his cow, and sufficient plant to farm three or four acres of land. He would be the first to encourage in every possible way that spirit of self-dependence which was so much to be desired among the agricultural community. He trusted they would see many small proprietorships take the place of some of the larger farms; but it must be remembered that the forma-

Mr. Mark Stewart

tion of those large farms had been caused by the fact that hitherto it had been found impossible to make the small holdings pay. Even the large farmers found it difficult to make a living in these distressful times. It had been suggested that estates should be re-valued, and he had no doubt that it would come to that if these bad times continued. Many landlords who knew the impossibility of getting the present rents would take a reasonable view of the matter, and be satisfied with a thoroughly fair re-valuation, although it was no easy matter in the present condition of affairs, and with such large importations of grain and meat from America, to fix what a fair valuation was. The hon. Member (Mr. Barclay) found fault, to some extent, with the system of 19 years' leases; but although that system had not found much favour in England, it had been popular in Scotland, and had done a great deal of good until these very depressing times set in. The tenant had practically the entire control of the land for the 19 years; and although the landlord reserved certain conditional powers, he had never known a case in which they had been exercised. In conclusion, he expressed his disappointment with the working of the Arbitration or Referee Clause of the Agricultural Holdings Act. There was no sort of confidence in it, and it ought to be amended. He hoped the hon. Member would not deem it necessary to move his Amendment to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, he had great pleasure in seconding the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Forfarshire. The hon. Member who had spoken last had confined himself to deprecating the remedies which the hon. Member for Forfarshire had suggested, and had refrained from giving the House the benefit of his own knowledge and experience, as he might very well have done. It would have been useful, as well as interesting, to have heard the results from the 10,000 cows kept by the Dairy Company of which the hon. Member was Chairman. The remark had been made that there was great difficulty in saying what the causes of the existing depression really were. He would mention one cause. He believed that most of the landlords had the welfare of the farmers

at heart; but he said distinctly that one of the great causes of the evil was the inability of the farmers to pay their rent. In 1855 the farm rentals of England, Wales, and Scotland amounted to £16,000,000 per annum, and since that time they had gone on increasing till they reached a sum of no less than £58,000,000. In this way £12,000,000 of rental had been added to the farmers' burdens since 1855. That fact pointed to one way by which the farmers could be relieved; if they would bring back the rentals of 1855 they would in some degree enable the farmers to pay rents. It was far from his desire to advocate the ruin or unjust spoliation of landlords, because he well knew that no class could be injured without injuring all classes. His object was to enable landlords, farmers, and labourers to live. But whilst landlords had had high rents, farmers had suffered. He believed that the £400,000,000 of capital necessary for the cultivation of the land by the farmers had been nearly exhausted; but, nevertheless, he had great hopes that if only Parliament would give security to the farmers they would be able to find capital wherewith to carry on advantageously the agriculture of the country. It was essential that the farming should be so improved as to yield more produce to meet the high rents; but if the present system of poor cultivation were continued the tenants would disappear, and the fields already out of heart from insufficient manuring would be still further destroyed. Abatements of rent were only partial remedies, and there must be something more substantial. As to the labourers, he might say that in his part of the country they had shown a surprising degree of intelligence. Their dwellings, however, were quite insufficient for their comfort; and unless Parliament enabled the farmers to provide the necessary cottages they must look forward to still greater evils in the country. He advocated the conclusions of his hon. Friend (Mr. J. W. Barclay), and maintained that if no remedy were devised evils might occur the same as in Ireland. He urged that information should be obtained and published as to the value of the produce that was raised on the soil. As to the question of small farms, he had the conviction that small farms would be more successful and would pay better than

large ones. He strongly urged that the landlords should have more regard for the old farmers. Many farmers had gone away ruined, and their place had been taken by younger men by no means so well qualified to till the land as the old farmers.

COLONEL BROOKFIELD said, he was quite ready to second the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire (General Sir George Balfour) in advocating any moderate measures for the welfare of agriculture in general; but it was not right that the impression should get abroad that agricultural depression was confined to one part of the Kingdom only. Those who, like himself, represented essentially agricultural constituencies in the South of England were more alive to the facts of the case, and represented more persons directly interested in agriculture than even the hon. and gallant Member. The object of the present debate, he thought, was liable to be lost sight of, especially by new Members. That object was to send a loyal Address to Her Majesty in reply to the Speech from the Throne; and he did not believe that any particular agricultural interest would be advanced by further delaying the adoption of the Address. It was true that affairs had reached a desperate pass; but when the time came for discussing the grievances of agriculturists it would be found that those who were interested in the matter formed a much stronger Party than those who occupied the very sparsely filled Benches that evening. Speaking for the part of the country which he represented, he must say that one of the most essential measures which they looked forward to was the revision of the present system of local taxation. He was glad to hear that the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire avoided the general cant of the day, and admitted that it would be desirable that rents should be as high as in 1855. It was for the interest of all that we should have good rents, good prices, and good wages. There were some who seemed to grudge that their landlords should get good rents; but these gentlemen practically ignored the labourers as well as the landlords, and only thought of the tenants, with whom they happened for the moment to be identified. But the progress of democracy was so rapid—[“Hear, hear!”]—that Gentlemen

who said “Hear, hear!” would probably disappear from the House altogether in the course of time, and it might be the duty of the Speaker to preside over a House of Commons entirely composed of agricultural labourers; but as they advanced in that direction they would sooner or later have to consider whether they would not impose retaliatory tariffs. The tendency of thought in all classes of society was, he observed, moving in that way. Our present commercial policy was more or less suicidal. [Cries of “No!”] Well, he spoke his own opinion, and he believed they must sooner or later cease the custom of giving to foreign countries that which was meant for ourselves. He was unable to support the Amendment; but he cordially agreed with many of the observations that fell from the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay).

MR. ESSLEMONT said, two hon. Members opposite had sneered at the speeches which had been delivered from his side of the House; but he could assure them that those speeches represented the feelings of the agricultural interest in the North, and that they could not be ignored. The hon. and gallant Member who had just resumed his seat had assured them that there was a sentiment of co-operation on the part of hon. Gentlemen representing agriculture on the opposite side towards hon. Members on his side; but he would point out that it was against the omission of that sentiment from Her Majesty's Gracious Speech that they were now protesting. There certainly was an allusion to the depression of trade and agriculture; but he would tell hon. Gentlemen on the other side that more was wanted than sympathy. It had been said that the most practical way of giving evidence of sympathy was by landlords granting such a reduction of rents as would enable the tenant to tide over the prevailing depression until the arrival of better times. He wished hon. Gentlemen opposite to tell the House what were the tenant farmers and crofters to do who did not live under a beneficent landlord who had given a reduction of rent? But he would also ask whether it was fair, or consistent with a proper independence of spirit and of action, that the agricultural interest should be placed in the position of recipients of the mere charity of the land-

General Sir George Balfour

lords; and whether the circumstances were not such as entitled them to more than the charity of those under whom they sat? It appeared to him that nothing would so much depreciate the spirit and enterprize of agriculture as a sense of dependence on the charity and beneficence of proprietors. What the tenant farmers wished was that the regulations under which they held their farms should be such as to give to the proprietor his fair and equitable rights, and, at the same time, to prevent the possibility of their hard-won earnings being confiscated. The present Land Laws had been made entirely in the interests of the proprietors, and against the interests of the tenants. He did not blame former Parliaments for having passed laws in their own interests; nothing else could have been expected, when the agricultural labourers and the small farmers were unrepresented; but he would ask hon. Members opposite to give their best consideration to the present emergencies and circumstances, and say candidly whether, under the present Land Laws, a remedy may be found for the depression. He had heard with great pleasure from the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), the expression of his opinion that if there were a fair and equitable settlement of the important subject of the Land Laws a fair solution of a great part of the grievances felt in Ireland would be arrived at. As far as Scotland was concerned, he was quite satisfied that exactly the same feeling and sentiment prevailed there; and that if they were fortunate enough to see such a measure brought forward as would be satisfactory and fair and equitable both to the proprietors and occupiers of the land a large amount of contentment would be produced, and a great stimulus to enterprize and energy among the agricultural population would be afforded. An hon. Member on the opposite side had suggested that rents should be fixed upon fiat; but he stopped short in implying that the Government would give effect to that opinion. He (Mr. Eslemont) believed that if rents were settled on the principle of fiat it would, to a large extent, meet the present difficulty. The depression of prices had placed those farmers who were under leases in a position in which they were unable to pay the rents that they

had promised. It was quite true that farmers in Scotland had encouraged leases; but he would remind the House that leases of 19 years were all very well when land for 50 years was increasing in value at the rate of about 1 per cent per annum. Times were changed now; and it was not reasonable to say that the farmers ought to have foreseen the great factors which had recently come into play. The bringing of food from all parts of the world by the reduction of the cost of transit was a factor in itself sufficient to have upset all the calculations formed by either landlords or tenants. In the circumstances, he appealed to the Government to meet the emergency by such a remedial measure as would prevent the tenant—if he was obliged to continue his lease—from losing all his capital, and all his enterprize and spirit. They must not expect that the tenant farmers would be put off with a mere sentiment of sympathy. He must earnestly give it as his opinion, formed on long experience, and with an intimate knowledge of agriculture in Scotland, that if remedial measures were not proposed in the present Parliament, a state of things would arise which would be disastrous to the tenant farmers, and inimical to the best interests of the country. The tenant farmers and labourers did not wish any measure which would bring disaster to the landlords. An hon. Member opposite had asked why the landlord should not get a good rent if it was earned, and there was nothing against that; but what the tenant farmers of Scotland objected to was the giving to the landlord of a large rent which he had not earned, and had done nothing to earn, but which the tenant farmers and crofters and labourers had earned by their enterprize and industry. The country had been made rich, not by the landlords, but by the bone and sinew of the labourer and the farmer; and all they wanted was that the proprietor should, by law and justice, share in the depression. Beyond that the farmers and labourers did not want to go. They desired to deal generously and respectfully with the landlords; but they ought not to be asked to yield up the last penny they had earned to those who had, in many cases, contributed nothing—["Oh, oh!" *and cheers*];—yes; and, in most cases, very little to that

[Third Night.]

wealth and progress which had been so marked during the last half-century.

VISCOUNT GRIMSTON, in opposing the Amendment, said, he wished to call attention to the question of leases. They had had very strong evidence of their inutility in the case of the Sister Isle, where, only a short time ago, a law was passed, which practically gave a 15 years' lease, at what was then considered a low rent, to large numbers of agricultural tenants. But now, from the language of hon. Members below the Gangway on the opposite side of the House, it appeared that there was hardship in having to pay that rent, on account of the prevailing depression. But it would be a hardship on a landlord to give a reduction of rent on leaseholds, as he got no proportionate increase of rent in prosperous times. Therefore, he thought that leases were not good for agriculturists. Again, he did not approve of legislation as between landlord and tenant; for they all stood upon the same ground—landlord, tenant, and labourer—and must stand or fall together. It was necessary to promote that good understanding and good feeling which alone made a community prosperous and happy; and he was convinced that that great desideratum could only be attained by friendly action between the landlord and the tenant and by their assisting each other. In these hard times landlords had reduced rents, tenants were foregoing a portion of their returns, and even the poor labourers were receiving a less wage than a few years ago; but he was convinced, if they hoped for prosperity, they must not act one against the other, for they were all in the same boat, and would sink or swim together. The Legislature might take steps to aid those who were concerned in agriculture by relieving the pressure of local burdens, like the education rate and highway rate. He could not understand why the landlords should be the only sufferers from legislative action. If legislation, detrimental to the interests of the landlord, were passed for the benefit of the tenant, the labourer, in his turn, would very soon cry out against the farmer. He did not approve of legislative interference, when satisfactory results might with more facility be arrived at by mutual arrangement. In England, tenants could make almost what terms they pleased with

landlords, for there were more farms to let now than tenants to take them. He held that the landlord should recognize that his fortune was indissolubly bound up with that of the tenant and the labourer, and maintained that the interests of all parties would be best served by conducting their business as friends.

MR. JAMES ELLIS said, he quite agreed with many of the remarks that had fallen from hon. Gentlemen sitting on that side of the House during the course of the debate, and he should support the Amendment because he believed that, at the present time, the agricultural question, as a whole, was the greatest question that could occupy the thoughts of the Government. He thought, moreover, that the matter ought to be given due prominence in the reply to the Speech from the Throne. He would never have been in the House of Commons, and he should never have taken part in politics at all, if it had not been from the wrongs he had suffered as an agricultural tenant. When he was 21 years of age he was silly enough to take a farm on an annual tenancy. Thank goodness he had other things to do besides farming, or he would have been ruined. On that farm he planted trees, made improvements, and, he was sorry to say, built cottages, and what was the result? At the end of 14 years he received six months' notice to quit, and his trees, his improvements, and his property to the value of £800 were taken from him. That was how he had been treated; and from then to the end of his life he had determined that he would fight on the side of the agricultural tenant. This was not his case alone. It was the case of his ancestors, and the case of the people who were living around him, and who had been robbed. His father had taken a farm on an agreement that he should kill those vermin, the rabbits; but a young man came into the property, and when he grew up he was like the Israelites in Egypt, he did not know Joseph. He was eaten out of the farm; for when he attempted to kill the rabbits he was warned off the land. He had no freedom; and until they had free men on the farms, and in their villages, the same thing would happen. His ancestors for ages, on both sides, had been tenant farmers. [*Laughter.*] Did they think they would stop his speaking by laughing? He told them

Mr. Eslemont

his ancestors for ages were tenant farmers; and although he was not a tenant farmer now himself, he had got still a bit of land that he occupied, and he was sorry to say he lost money by it. Whether the Government or hon. Gentlemen opposite took up this question or not, hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House were determined to do so. The real question at issue was, whether the people who tilled the land were not the people who should own it? He should support the Amendment, although it did not in every particular meet his views.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. MACDONALD) said, he presumed that the Members of the House of Commons would not be led into the belief that the state of the country was that the landlords were combined together for the purpose of oppression and behaving unfairly to their tenants at the present time. He presumed that there was no relation of life in connection with which there were not to be found numerous instances of gross and scandalous injustice; but to bring up for purposes of argument, as fair specimens of the state of things in this country at the present time, these isolated illustrations adduced by the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. James Ellis) was manifestly unfair and misleading, and, in fact, reduced a subject of the most grave and serious importance to the level of the burlesque. He could not help noticing throughout the debate that the whole question had been treated by hon. Members who had spoken on the opposite side as if the whole depression at present oppressing this country related to agriculture alone. All would agree, on the contrary, that it was a time of great depression in all classes and positions of life; and when hon. Gentlemen considered the matter with care, they would come to the certain conclusion that they never could have a long and severe agricultural depression in a country like ours without that depression spreading its wave of misery beyond those who cultivated the soil. They could not possibly impose upon the landlords of this country more than their fair share of the general depression without affecting the interests of a great number of people, who were just as much labourers as those who cultivated the soil. It was quite certain that the landlords of this country did not use the rents they re-

ceived for the purpose of hoarding them up. They had a large expenditure of money, and many of them employed a large number of people. But it was equally certain that the moment it became necessary to give reductions of rents it at once became imperative to reduce their establishments, and thus, ultimately, the labouring classes would suffer. Therefore, these things could not be considered in a narrow spirit, or in reference to a state of depression applicable to one particular industry alone. Agricultural depression reacted, and must always do so, upon the welfare of the whole community. Now, if that was so, Her Majesty's Government took a proper step last Session in endeavouring to discover the cause of this depression, not merely in the agricultural interest, but in all other interests in which this country carried on its hitherto prosperous work. This step was wise and deserving of support. He ventured to ask whether, now that this agricultural depression was being pressed on the attention of the new Parliament, it had been wise or unwise of the Government to propose, last July, that a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into this subject; and if the right hon. Gentlemen who sat opposite, and whom he was sorry to see represented during this important debate only by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Lord Advocate and his hon. and learned Friend the late Solicitor General for Scotland—if those Gentlemen thought the proposal of the Government a wise one, he asked, if the Opposition deemed it a proper response to make to that effort to find a remedy for a very serious matter to practically "Boycott" it? He hoped before the debate closed to hear from them what practical suggestions they had formed in their own minds for the purpose of meeting this great difficulty; for he presumed they would not be told that the difficulties had arisen since the present Government took Office. The hon. Member for Forfarshire Mr. J. W. Barclay had told them that agricultural depression had existed for a period of about 10 years. If that were so, he (the Lord Advocate) wanted to know who it was who, during that time, had had the best opportunity of studying, and examining, and finding out the causes of that depression? He wanted to know what statistics, what information, the late Go-

[Third Night.]

carrying what undoubtedly was the first necessary sequel of the legislation of last Session, for the purpose of giving local Boards to the counties. The depression in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales and England was not one bit greater at that moment than it was at any time during the last Session. ["Yos, yes!"] Well, it was greater in this sense, no doubt, that it was still protracted for a greater length of time; but it was only greater in that respect. They knew how long it had prevailed; but he ventured to think that if it had lasted for 10 years they had some reason, when hon. Gentlemen rose up on the other side of the House and asked the Government to cure it in their first Session, to inquire why it was never dealt with before. The present Government had not before them the materials prepared by the late Government for dealing with it; and if they would supply the information which they did collect for the good of the country upon that matter, and show them that the Royal Commission appointed by the Government was unnecessary, then he thought they would have something to say on the question. The first duty of this Parliament was to carry out what necessarily must be the sequel of the legislation of last Session—namely, to confer a measure of local government upon those who lived in the counties. That was absolutely essential as their first duty; for the reason that whatever were the grounds that might be given for the course which was taken last Session, it was undoubtedly, in ordinary language, a putting of the cart before the horse. The natural course was to confer upon dwellers in the counties the management of their own affairs in the counties, as a training for the exercise of that more important franchise which required greater political education to enable them to use it with advantage to the State. In saying that he was only quoting the words of the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington), who, in speaking on the question before it was quite settled whether a Franchise Bill was to be brought forward, expressed a decided opinion that, in the first place, the people ought to be trained by the exercise of the local franchise before they received the franchise for the election of Members to Parliament. The result of that course would be that they would have a far better body of public

opinion bearing upon the great questions which were raised in the Amendment. They would have county councils, who could discuss these matters and bring great light to bear upon them, which would be most useful in any future legislation which might be thought wise. He feared he had detained the House too long on the question of the tenure of land. ["No, no!"] If not, he should like to say a word or two on the establishment of small farms, and on what should be done for the labourers. As regarded small farms, he knew of no landlord who had any objection whatever to the establishment of small farm holdings; but he ventured to say that no one could suggest a time at which it was more difficult to carry out any such excellent scheme than a time when everybody was short of money. They could not possibly establish a large number of new farms without an immense outlay in enabling the new small farmers to have a roof over their heads within reasonable reach of their farms, and to have proper farm buildings, proper approaches, and everything required to make farm work satisfactory. It was a most difficult thing to determine how that was to be done. Some people, possibly, might propose that a large sum should be given by the State; but the matter was one which required to be considered with the greatest and most earnest care, for fear they should make any mistake in the line they adopted. If they could at once, by the wave of a magician's wand, establish a number of small farms throughout the country, it might be of the greatest possible benefit; but it was a delusion and a snare if it were imagined that by any such means they could make the country carry a great increase of the population of the present time. ["Oh, oh!"] He repeated that it was a delusion and a snare to imagine that they could, by establishing a certain number of small farms, get rid of the difficulty that the population of this country increased so rapidly and so enormously, that the people from the country districts were constantly crowding the towns, and that labour in the towns was thereby made extremely cheap, to the benefit of the manufacturer. When people talked so much about the landlords, he thought it might be remembered also that there were certain things

The Lord Advocate

which happened in this country which were of the greatest benefit to the manufacturers in the way of getting cheap labour. One word about the labourers. As to them, he knew something himself of the Scottish labourer in counties. He used to spend the summer months in his youth in one of the best-farmed counties in the world, he supposed—the county of Berwick—and he could say that at the time to which allusion had been made—between 1850 and 1860—there was not a more comfortable set of people for their position in life than the hinds of Berwickshire, and, he believed, of the neighbouring counties. They were well off; their houses were clean and well appointed; their families were well cared for; and they themselves were contented, well-fed, and happy. He knew something of them, and did not speak from having merely driven along the roads. These men had no exceptional privileges, except through the farmer for whom they worked. They got their long run of potatoes in a field; they kept their cow; and the farmer gave them the grass for the cow. “Hear, hear!” Hon. Members cried. “Hear, hear!” but was it not perfectly obvious that that was given them as part of their wages? Do not let them suppose that a thrifty Scottish farmer was going to allow a cow to graze on his farm and not take account of it? The use of the field for the cow was an easier way of paying wages than by giving money, and the labourers also got a good deal in kind, which probably would be objected to now on the ground of being against the Truck Act. What was wanted in the case of labourers was continuous and reasonably-paid work. They never could have that if they had an overgrown population; and if hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway would transfer a large number of starving operatives from Birmingham, Manchester, and other large towns on to the soil in the counties they would find that a new difficulty would arise again in the course of half a generation. If they would devote all these men to celibacy they might do something with such a scheme; but people always forgot that putting down a certain number more of persons on a particular spot meant an exceptional increase of the population within a certain time, which necessarily must lead to emigration at one time or another before very

long. It must lead either to emigration into the towns where the workmen would compete one against the other, or to some land where there was less competition; and he ventured to say they would never get rid of the difficulty about the labouring population of this country as long as people went about pretending to them that they would not really benefit themselves by going abroad. [“Oh, oh!”] They could not possibly sustain surplus population when wages were low; and they could not raise wages until they had got work enough, and just the proper number of people to do it to get good wages. They might fight as they pleased against that law; but that law would defeat them in the end. As regarded emigration, they all in that House belonged to what were called the better classes in life, and they went in for emigration. There was scarcely a man with a large family who had not one son either in India, Australia, or America; and when men went about to persuade the population that it was cruelty to induce them to emigrate, they did a grievous harm to the ignorant people whom they deceived. He would conclude by thanking the House for the attention with which they had listened to him; and if he did not now allude to the Crofter question it was because there was an Amendment on the Paper which would give another opportunity of speaking upon that subject.

MR. DUCKHAM said, that in England farmers had the best market in the world in which to sell their produce; and yet on all hands a large area of land was in a sterile state, and much more was going out of cultivation. This must arise from a want of security. For many years tenants were ruined by the preservation of game; and even in times of comparative prosperity landlords did nothing to improve the homesteads and protect the valuable properties of the man from being washed away by the rains. Such a system had an inevitable tendency to reduce the number of tenants and the capital of the occupiers. The Lord Advocate had assumed that there was substantially no difference in the depression between last year and this; but since last year the prices of live stock had been reduced by 20 per cent, whilst corn was further reduced in price. No improvement in prices could be expected, with the immense vessels

[Third Night.]

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which happened in this country which were of the greatest benefit to the manufacturers in the way of getting cheap labour. One word about the labourers. As to them, he knew something himself of the Scottish labourer in counties. He used to spend the summer months in his youth in one of the best-farmed counties in the world, he supposed—the county of Berwick—and he could say that at the time to which allusion had been made—between 1850 and 1860—there was not a more comfortable set of people for their position in life than the hinds of Berwickshire, and, he believed, of the neighbouring counties. They were well off; their houses were clean and well appointed; their families were well cared for; and they themselves were contented, well-fed, and happy. He knew something of them, and did not speak from having merely driven along the roads. These men had no exceptional privileges, except through the farmer for whom they worked. They got their long run of potatoes in a field; they kept their cow; and the farmer gave them the grass for the cow.

"Hear, hear!" Hon. Members cried "Hear, hear!" but was it not perfectly obvious that that was given them as part of their wages? Do not let them suppose that a thrifty Scottish farmer was going to allow a cow to graze on his farm and not take account of it? The use of the field for the cow was an easier way of paying wages than by giving money, and the labourers also got a good deal in kind, which probably would be objected to now on the ground of being against the Truck Act. What was wanted in the case of labourers was continuous and reasonably-paid work. They never could have that if they had an overgrown population; and if hon. Gentlemen believe the Gangway would transfer a large number of starving operatives from Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester, and other towns on to the soil of Scotland, they would find that a new era of distress would arise again in the country. If they were to do anything with the population, it would be always done in a year and a day, and then the same thing would be done again. The prices of the stock had been reduced in 1865. No farmer could expect to make a large profit from his land.

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Mr. DUCKHAM said, that in England farmers had the best market in the world in which to sell their produce; and yet on all hands a large area of land was in a sterile state, and much more was going out of cultivation. This was due to a want of security. For many years the farmers were ruined by the depression of the market; and even in times of prosperity the property landlords did not allow the homesteads and cottages to be built on the properties of the farmers, but the system was washed away by the depression of the market. The system had an inevitable tendency to reduce the number of the capital of the occupiers. Advocates had assumed that there was a substantial difference in the position between the year and the year, but since last year the prices of the stock had been reduced by 20 per cent, whilst the prices of the land were reduced in the same proportion. No farmer could expect to make a large profit from his land.

[Third Night.]

that were crossing the Atlantic, bringing American produce that was distributed by our railways at preferential rates, while wages were rising and local taxation increasing. India, too, and even Australia were now sending large quantities of wheat to this country; in fact, successfully competing with America. Something must be done to enable the occupiers of the soil to compete with foreign producers. True, rents were being reduced; but the merely casual and temporary reduction of rents kept occupiers in a state of uncertainty; they felt that should an unfortunate outbreak of war take place, and prices rose, rents would be raised. Land ought to be let in such a way that the tenant could pay the rent from year to year without having to go hat in hand to the landlord. A sitting tenant now had no security, for he knew that as soon as there was any temporary advance in the value of the produce his rent would be raised, and he would have to pay an increased rent for the very improvements he had made with his own capital. Compensation ought to be paid before rent was raised, the same as it would be had he to quit his holding and an increased rent obtained from his successor. One of the worst clauses in the Agricultural Holdings Act was that prohibiting compensation for what were called the inherent capabilities of the soil. If rents were to be regulated by the price of wheat, as suggested, they would be low indeed. The increase of live stock was hindered by the withholding of compensation for corn consumed on a farm; and restrictions of this kind operated most prejudicially against the adoption of the measures called for by foreign competition. Relief from local taxation would aid a little. The burden of local taxation was felt by the farmers of England more than of Scotland. There half the rates were paid by the landlords. The Scotch tenantry had been shrewd enough, when they saw fresh impositions threatening them to make that arrangement; but in England the farmers had submitted almost without remonstrance until they were weighed down with the burden. It was remarkable that agriculture had been omitted from the reference to the Commission now sitting, for the Report of which the Lord Advocate suggested the House should wait before

dealing with the question; and he believed that no agricultural authority was asked to sit upon it. The question of valuation for rating purposes must come to the front; and he hoped that before long there would be a good and equitable system propounded. The farmer, further, had also to fight against preferential rates, which was most unjust, and formed one of the numerous questions affecting agriculture demanding earnest consideration.

MR. LONG said, that direct attacks had been made upon landlords as a class, and it had been denied that the remission of rents afforded any security to the tenants. But surely there was nothing better calculated to give a feeling of security to tenants than the fact that in hard times landlords were ready to meet them half way. There was no good to be gained by pointing out an evil unless they could suggest a remedy. It was said that the tenant wanted security; but surely the best security he could have was that he knew the landlord would do almost anything to keep him on his farm. He had great sympathy with the Amendment of the hon. Member, because it expressed to a very large extent his own feelings regarding the matter. He felt that the present state of agriculture demanded a greater attention than it had hitherto received from either Party in the House. The present depressed condition of agriculture was certainly grave enough to justify every word in which the hon. Member for Forfarshire had described it. The condition not only of the tenant farmers of the country, but also of the landlords, was so bad that it demanded the instantaneous and prompt attention of Parliament. But was there anything in the Amendment which would justify them in voting for it, thereby leading the House to believe that if it was passed the condition of agriculture would be improved, or that it would bring about a better state of things to the farmers? His opinion was that the tenant farmers desired to be placed on a fairer footing with those who at present competed with them; they wanted a fair field and no favour, and then they would be able to hold their own. At present the farmers were heavily handicapped with foreign competition; and it was absurd to say that their position would be materially improved if better security of tenure

Mr. Duckham

were only granted. There were, no doubt, instances in which landlords had lamentably failed to do their duty. The hon. Member for Leicestershire (Mr. Ellis) had detailed circumstances in which he and his ancestors had suffered at the hands of landlords. They could, at all events, congratulate him on the very satisfactory appearance which so distressed a farmer presented at the end of such a long record of unfair treatment. But it seemed to him that he and his ancestors must have walked very easily into a snare which must have been openly laid for them; and, with great respect for the hon. Member, he questioned very much whether the majority of tenant farmers would walk so blindly into a similar snare, or be so proud to talk about it afterwards. Did the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) believe that if tenants were given security of tenure it would induce them to spend more money in the cultivation of their holdings? Did the hon. Member propose a fixed rent and a fixed statutory term during which tenants should enjoy their holdings? How would the hon. Member be able to guarantee that in four or five years' time a similar fall would not take place, and leave the farmers much in the same position as they were in now? He was certain that if an appeal was made to the tenant-farmers of England as a body—he spoke not of Scotland, the circumstances of which he did not know—to state what they desired most they would express a preference to be left to the arrangements which they were able and competent to make with their landlords, rather than that legislation should be passed for them on the lines laid down by the hon. Member for Forfarshire. In many of the speeches which had been delivered that evening a strong feeling had been apparent that the landlords, as a body, were opposed to the well-being and the prosperity of the tenants. Putting on one side the question that the interest of the landlords must be bound up with that of the tenants, he believed, as a rule, it would be found that the landlords and the tenants were as good friends as any two classes in the length and breadth of the country. So far from there being, either in the Conservative ranks or among the landlords of the country generally, any feeling opposed to the real interests of the tenant-

farmers, he believed that if any hon. Member proposed measures which had a practical chance of clearly benefiting tenant farmers as a class he would find them supported from all quarters of the House, and by landlords as well as by tenant farmers. The hon. Member for Bristol (Mr. Cosham) the other day charged the Tory landlords and Tory parsons with having "Boycotted" those in this country who had voted for the Liberals. If that was his honest opinion it showed that his knowledge of the question upon which he spoke was very slight indeed; and if his information with regard to "Boycotting" in Ireland was as accurate as his description of the course he asserted had been taken by the Tory landlords and the Tory parsons in England, his remarks were not calculated to throw much light upon the subject. Above all, his remarks proved conclusively that the hon. Member did not know much about the question. He defied the hon. Member for Bristol to prove that the Tory landlords or the Tory parsons had, as a class, "Boycotted" the tenant farmers or anyone else. No doubt they might at times have done things which they would not like to defend in every particular; but had the Liberals done nothing of which they had reason to be ashamed? It seemed to him idle to make charges of this kind and attaching them to particular classes and to a particular Party. He had no doubt that the question of agriculture called for the immediate attention of the Government, no matter which Party happened to be in power at the time. Unless the Government, whether Tory or Liberal, realized that the agricultural question had reached very serious dimensions—unless they were prepared to put it in the forefront of their programme, and to deal with it not upon Party, but upon national lines—they would fail to do that which the country expected them to do. In this connection, too, the Government might well turn their attention to the subject of railway rates and charges. It seemed to him to be a monstrous state of things that railways in this country should convey home produce at double the rates which were charged for that coming from foreign countries. It was for the interest of the whole country that something should be at once done to stimulate the great industry of agriculture.

[*Third Night.*]

MR. J. B. BALFOUR observed that, having regard to the course the debate had taken, he did not think his hon. Friend the Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) owed any apology to the House for having brought this subject under its notice. His hon. Friend had set forth in the forefront of his speech the magnitude and importance of the depression which now affected the agricultural interest; and that depression had been painted in even darker colours by hon. Members who had spoken on the opposite side. The hon. Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. Mark Stewart) had complained, indeed, of the failure of Members on the Opposition Benches duly to appreciate the depression of agriculture, and the tone of the hon. and gallant Member for Rye's (Colonel Brookfield's) remarks had been somewhat similar. That was quite a mistake; but, at the same time, he must observe that if the state of the agricultural interest was so urgent and important, surely it might fairly have been expected that the Government would have indicated in the Speech from the Throne their view whether any remedy for the evil was possible by way of legislation. That was, however, exactly what the Government had not done; and it was on account of their omission to do it that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Forfarshire was brought forward. His hon. Friend did not desire to commit those who might give a general assent to his Amendment to any of the particular provisions that he had suggested. His hon. Friend had stated his own views, that was all; and he complained that the Government had nothing whatever to suggest. All that Gentlemen on the other side had urged in answer was only a recrimination against those who had declined to serve on the Commission on the Depression of Trade, as if their refusal implied indifference to that question. But all who had followed the course of the discussion on the appointment of that Commission must have been very well satisfied that those who declined to serve on it gave what most of them on that side thought very good and sufficient reasons for not serving. These reasons might be very shortly summarized in two sentences. In the first place, there had been, and was, a very prevalent idea that it was what was commonly called a "Fair

Trade" Commission ["No!"]; and, secondly, those who justly appreciated the magnitude of the agricultural question felt strongly that a Royal Commission would in this, as in so many other cases, prove a way of postponing or shelving it. The idea that it was a "Fair Trade" Commission derived confirmation from the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Rye, who had pointed out that the only remedial matter, after local taxation, related to hostile foreign tariffs. If the Government thought that nothing but an inquiry into the causes of trade depression generally, and all over the world, could be suggested by way of amending the condition of the tenant farmers and labourers of this country, it was well that that fact should be generally known. But surely while there was no doubt a connection between the cardinal industry of agriculture and all other industries and trades, there were also points relating to the occupancy and tenure of land which could be considered, and on which the judgment of Parliament could be taken quite apart from and independently of the inquiry before the Royal Commission. The hon. Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. Mark Stewart) had spoken of the very slender references made to that matter by Liberal candidates, and particularly by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone), at the late Election; but if that hon. Member had read the speech delivered by his right hon. Friend at Dalkeith, he would find that the question of the land had not been overlooked. The question of the land had been put in the forefront by the Liberal Party.

MR. MARK STEWART explained that what he had remarked upon was the almost entire absence from Liberal speeches of any allusion to the depressed state of the agricultural interest.

MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, if the hon. Member only meant that there were few expressions of barren sympathy with agricultural distress from Liberal candidates, he might be right; because those who aspired to seats in that House hoped to have something more practical to offer than mere commiseration. A great deal had been said about the Agricultural Holdings Acts. Well, no one who had had anything to do with the framing of those Acts considered that they were perfect. They were a very great step at the time; but they could

not shut their eyes to the experience they had had since the passing of those Acts. There was, by general consent, a variety of defects in them which, he hoped, it would be possible to amend. One of the points to be considered related to security for tenants' improvements. Again, while the case of the farmer was very urgent, that of the labourer, by universal consent, also required to be dealt with at a very early date. Why should they delay the introduction of a measure providing the labourer with an allotment, or a bit of land to cultivate as his own, until the inquiry into the general state of trade was concluded? Nothing like irritation or indignation against a particular class existed on his side of the House. What they desired was, that all the classes interested in the land, and certainly including the landlords, should each be placed on an equitable footing, by which they should all receive a just share in the products of the soil. He, therefore, hoped it would be clearly understood that there was not the least wish to deal unjustly with any class; and he would be sorry if any Government were to do anything that would have that effect. This was not the time or the place for those who were merely expressing regret that a particular matter had been entirely overlooked in the legislative proposals of the Government to table their own schemes. He thought no one who had followed the discussions throughout the electoral campaign could doubt that there were remedies, whether they might meet with the approval of this House or not, that the laws relating to the tenure and occupancy of land were not perfect, and that, not being perfect, and the magnitude and importance of the evil being recognized, it was the incumbent and urgent duty of those who had to frame the Speech for Her Majesty to make some suggestion by way of amendment which might, at all events, mitigate, if it did not entirely remove, those evils.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (MR. CHAPLIN): The right hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down has blamed Her Majesty's Government because while calling attention to the fact of agricultural depression we have not indicated a remedy for it. I admit that it is very difficult, at the present time, to suggest

a remedy for that depression. The real cause of the depression is to be found in the great depreciation in the price of agricultural produce which has taken place during the last few years. I do not suppose that the right hon. and learned Gentleman anticipated that either the present or any other Government would be prepared to come to Parliament with proposals for any artificial means of raising the price of agricultural produce; and unless such proposals were made it would be very difficult to suggest anything that would be a remedy for that depression. One of the great complaints that have been made by agriculturists for years past is that the land is heavily and unfairly rated. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman had taken the trouble to study the Speech from the Throne he would have seen that a measure dealing with County Government will shortly be laid before the House, and that measure will propose to give substantial relief to the land with regard to local burdens. The hon. Member for Herefordshire (Mr. Duckham) has suggested that the burden of the rates might be divided between the landowners and the farmers. That is one of the recommendations which was made by the Royal Commission appointed some few years ago by a Conservative Government; but although the Liberal Party have been in Office, with the exception of the last few months, ever since that recommendation was made they have taken no steps to carry it into effect. The hon. Member for Wiltshire (Mr. Long) has also expressed some anxiety that recommendations should be made for the relief of agricultural depression; but the only suggestion the hon. Member has made himself is one with regard to preferential railway rates, which is a subject that has already engaged the attention of Her Majesty's Government. Moreover, Her Majesty's Government had scarcely been 10 days in Office when they thought it was their duty to propose an Address to Her Majesty praying her to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into all the causes of the depression of trade. That Commission is now engaged in investigating the whole question; and it is no doubt considering, among other subjects, the question of preferential railway rates. I entirely agree with the Mover of this Amendment that this is a most important and

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grave question; but I am not surprised that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) in his speech made no reference to it, and suggested no remedy for the evil. The right hon. Gentleman no doubt laboured under the same difficulty that the Government do in proposing any adequate remedy for agricultural depression. One feature is encouraging. All classes throughout the country are becoming alive to the fact that it is a matter of great importance not only to those who are directly connected with agriculture, but to all classes of the community. The only danger I fear is that some of those who are not thoroughly instructed in the subject may be led into wishing to adopt some of those remedies which have been frequently proposed, and, if adopted, would prove to be wholly delusive. Indeed, their only effect would be to aggravate and increase the existing depression. What is the case of the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay), who has moved the Amendment on this occasion? I confess I have experienced some difficulty in finding out exactly what he wants. He has contrasted the position of a farmer in England with that of a farmer on the other side of the Atlantic. He talked about the general consensus of opinion on the part of the farmers of the country; but perhaps he will forgive me for saying that I altogether question his right to speak on behalf of the farmers of the country. He told us that, in his opinion, the Agricultural Holdings Act has proved a complete failure altogether. Finally, he said that the three essential requirements are freedom of cultivation, security for capital, and moderate rents. I should be disposed, generally speaking, to answer those three requirements in this way. It cannot be doubted that the farmer, at the present time, is absolutely master of the situation. The difficulty in these days is not for a farmer to get a farm, but for a landlord to find a tenant. In such circumstances, if a farmer fails to make an agreement, which gives him freedom of cultivation, security for capital, and moderate rent, he has nobody to blame but himself. I will give an instance which occurred only a few days ago. I was reading a letter, which was addressed by one of the best farmers in England to a man who was generally considered to

be an excellent landlord. It was a letter resigning his farm, which was a first-class farm, in admirable order, and thoroughly equipped with every modern requirement, and it was let at what the tenant admitted to be a reasonable rent. Well, what is the purport of that letter? The purport of the letter was, in the first place, to express the writer's grief at finding the time had come when it was absolutely necessary for him to give up his farm. A more kindly or more generous letter was never written by a tenant to a landlord; but what he says is this—

"I have had such heavy losses for many years that it is impossible for me to continue in this business. You have granted me everything I ask; you have made reductions of rent, which have been liberal in the extreme, and for the last few years I have never made a request which was not acceded to by you. If your farm is worth farming at all, it is worth a great deal more than I am paying you at the present time."

[*Opposition laughter.*] Hon. Members opposite seem to think that this is a matter for laughter and amusement; but I venture to think that they very much under-estimate the gravity of the position. So grave and serious is that position, that in treating it as a matter of amusement hon. Members are labouring under a great mistake. The writer of this letter winds up in this way—

"If your farm is worth farming at all, it is worth a great deal more than I am paying you at the present time; but so serious has the agricultural position become, that I must decline any longer to invest capital in anything of the kind."

The hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay), when he contrasted the position of the English farmer with that of the farmer in America, suggested that if there were more freedom of cultivation here, as in America, farmers might embark more largely on dairy business than they do at present. The fact is, that that has already been done in a great many parts of England, with this result—that the competition in that line of industry has already become so great that prices have depreciated, and some farmers have been obliged to give it up. Allow me to say a word or two on the subject of freedom of cultivation. "Freedom of cultivation" has a captivating sound; but there are two parties to be considered in the matter. Although it may be desirable on the one

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hand that farmers should have as much freedom of cultivation as can be allowed, and as is compatible with the interests of the landlord, I do not suppose that even the hon. Member for Forfarshire would desire to allow freedom of cultivation to such an extent that a farmer might hold a farm for three or four years, cultivate it as he liked, ruin it irretrievably for a number of years, and then hand it back to the landlord. What security would the landlord have for his own protection and fair treatment? Yet that is the meaning of freedom of cultivation unless precautions are taken for the fair treatment of the landlords; and on that point the hon. Member for Forfarshire had not one word to say. The hon. Member talked a great deal about security of capital. What did he mean by it? For my own part, I was under the impression that when the Agricultural Holdings Bill was brought in a few years ago absolute security was conferred upon the farmer. The general effect was either that the Act would be adopted by landlord and tenant at the same time, or else that where either landlord or tenant desired it, liberal arrangements would be made on terms mutually agreeable to those who entered into them. Although I have listened attentively to-night to every word that has been said, I cannot say that I heard a single syllable from any hon. Member which leads me to believe that at the present moment there is any real grievance on the part of the farmer, on the ground that he has no security for the capital he invests. The real object of the hon. Member began to crop out towards the close of his speech. The pith of the speech was a plea on the part of the hon. Member, on behalf of the Scotch farmers, for permission to break their leases before tribunals which should establish fair rents over the whole of the country. If there is one moral more than another to be drawn from this debate it is this—that the debate is a severe condemnation of the system of leases which, not many years ago, was exceedingly popular with Gentlemen on the other side of the House. I wish to say a word on the subject of leases in reply to the arguments put forward by the hon. Gentleman. Having made this proposition, the hon. Member proceeded to say that it would be de-

nounced at once as a great interference with the freedom of contract. The hon. Gentleman made a mistake. The proposal of the hon. Member with regard to leases does not involve so much interference with the freedom of contract as a distinct breach of existing contracts. But as that was the position taken up by the hon. Member let me say a word more. I want to ask the hon. Member whether, if the lease is to be broken in the interest of the tenant because times are bad, he will pledge himself to this—that the lease shall be broken in the interest of the landlord when times are good?

MR. J. W. BARCLAY: I did not advocate fixed rents.

MR. CHAPLIN: I am not talking about rents; I am talking about leases; and I ask if the hon. Member will pledge himself to the proposition that when times are good the lease shall be broken in the interest of the landlords?

MR. J. W. BARCLAY: I am quite prepared to accept re-valuation from time to time.

MR. CHAPLIN: From time to time!

MR. J. W. BARCLAY: The Bill which I introduced last year proposed that there should be re-valuation every seven years.

MR. CHAPLIN: Then the hon. Member, as I understand, proposes that in the interest of the tenant the lease shall be broken at any period when times are bad; but that in the interest of the landlord it shall only be broken every seven years! [MR. J. W. BARCLAY: No.] Then I should like to know what it is that the hon. Member does mean? I feel the deepest sympathy with tenants in Scotland, who are suffering from the fact that they have entered into a long lease in times of prosperity, and who are now suffering greatly because they hold these leases in depressed times. But I must confess it seems to me that unless hon. Members are prepared to adopt a course which would be manifestly unjust to one of the parties to the contract the only way of dealing with the hardship is to leave it to the generosity and good feeling of the landlords in Scotland to make such arrangements with their tenants as the necessities of the times may require. From all the information which has reached me from time to time, that is being done to a large extent at the present time, and it

will continue to be done. The hon. Gentleman also desired to have fair rents; but, to my great surprise, he illustrated his argument in that direction by a reference to Ireland. We all know what has followed from the adoption of that principle in that country. Will any hon. Member on that side of the House tell me that the institution of fair rents in Ireland has been either to the advantage and prosperity of that country, or that it has tended in any way to the development of agriculture in Ireland? All I can say is this—that if the same consequences were to follow from the adoption of the system of fair rents in any part of Her Majesty's Dominions as we witness, to our sorrow, in Ireland at the present time, God forbid that I should live to see the day when the system should be introduced into England! Does the hon. Member, or those who think with him, really believe that much advantage is to be gained by the adoption of that system? If so, I would venture, with great respect, to refer him to some observations made on that subject by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) not long after I came into the House, during the passage through Parliament of the Irish Land Act of 1870, in which he absolutely demolished the proposal of fair rent even as applied to Ireland, and proved conclusively, even to demonstration, that the adoption of the principle could only have the result of demoralizing the whole mass of the people in that country. Whether the right hon. Gentleman was right in his forecast or wrong, I will leave it to hon. Gentlemen opposite to decide. For myself, I can see no relief whatever for the present agricultural depression in the institution of fair rents proposed by the hon. Member. Neither do I believe in the further proposition which has been made by the hon. Member that the large farms of the country should be broken up. It seems to me a strange proposal that if men of capital, with the advantage of every appliance of science, have failed to make agriculture pay by breaking up the large farms and putting them in the hands of men who have neither capital nor the same means of turning them to account they will be made to pay. This system has been tried largely for years in the part of the country which I have

the honour to represent. There, great tracts of country, which formerly were large estates, have been broken up and divided into thousands of small holdings, which are occupied and farmed at the present time. What is the result? If hon. Members will sometimes take the trouble to refer to the Reports of the Royal Commission on Agriculture—and they certainly do contain a great deal of valuable information—I think a very brief study of those Reports will show them that among all the different classes engaged in agricultural pursuits, much as they have suffered, of landlords, tenants, and labourers, all put together, there is not one class whose sufferings can for a moment be compared to those of the freeholders of Lincolnshire farming these small holdings into which the hon. Member desires, in the interests of the country, to see the land generally broken up. I wish with all my heart that it was possible to say something more encouraging in regard to agricultural prospects than I am able to say to-night. There is only one gleam of hope under present circumstances which I continue to cherish, and it is this—that I cannot believe it is possible that foreign countries can continue for any prolonged period to send us, at a profit, their produce at the prices which prevail at the present time. If I am right in that, then, as a matter of course, prices would rise at once; and with a rise of prices for agricultural produce we may be sure that the relief of agricultural depression would commence. It seems to me that there is only one thing we can do at the present time; and that has been alluded to, in touching terms, by my noble Friend the Member for Hertfordshire (Viscount Grimston)—namely, that all classes engaged in agriculture must be prepared to make self-sacrifices, and do all within their power to help each other through this terrible and disastrous period of depression. I believe that has been done already to a great extent. We have heard much of landlords, and the rents they receive, and the terms upon which they ought to receive rent; and some hon. Gentlemen appear to think, from the tone of the speeches delivered to-night, that landlords have waited for their lectures before they adopted a course of reducing and remitting largely the rents paid to them by their tenants. It does not follow that because every

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landlord in the country does not think it necessary to advertise the fact whenever he makes a large reduction that he has been slow to take that course. If I were to tell hon. Gentlemen opposite all I know with regard to the enormous reduction of rent that has taken place already, and the enormous reduction of the incomes of hundreds and thousands of landlords throughout England, I think I should tell them something which I suspect would astonish a great many of them. If there is nothing to be condemned on the part of the landlords—and I do not think there is, for I believe they have behaved well and rightly, and have come forward nobly to do their duty in this time of agricultural depression—still less have I one word of complaint against the tenant farmers, who have shown singular patience, pluck, and energy in the most difficult and trying circumstances. Nothing is more remarkable, or does them more credit, than this—when after six or seven years of such bad seasons as were probably never paralleled, when it was impossible to do justice to their farms, and when it pleased Providence, at the end of that weather, to send them fine weather and fine seasons—nothing is more remarkable than the way they buckled to, and did everything in the power of men of business to restore the character of their occupation. Then with regard to the labourers. I should like to say one word on that subject. It is with great regret that I observe that they, too, at last have begun to feel the effects of agricultural depression. For several years they probably suffered less from the prevailing agricultural depression than any other class engaged in agriculture; but I regret to say that the time at last has come when it has begun to bear most heavily and disastrously upon them. Their wages have fallen to a degree which fills me with compassion. I know this—that in my own county, where eight or ten years ago the labourer was receiving wages at the rate of 3s. per day, he is now receiving not more than 2s. per day, and I have been told that even that rate will be reduced during the coming winter. That means much suffering not only to him, but to the family he has to support. I have often thought that it was wonderful how, upon such a miserable pittance as 2s. per day, an agricultural

labourer should be able to bring up his family and maintain his home so respectably and admirably as many of them do. But that is not all. Not only have wages fallen largely, but great numbers of labourers are out of employment altogether; and I am afraid, before this winter passes, that the number will be largely increased. What is to be the remedy for all this? How am I to be blamed, speaking on the part of the Conservative Government, because I am unable to submit measures, or to put before the House proposals, which are adequate to deal with so grave a position and so serious an emergency as the present is? Has anything fallen from any hon. Gentleman to-night which can be considered, for a single moment, as an effectual remedy for the agricultural distress? If there has been, or if there is anything to be said, I can only join with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wiltshire (Mr. Long) in saying that we would rally as one man in doing all that lies within our power, within legitimate bounds, to relieve the depression, and to help those who are suffering to tide over their difficulties until the time may come when we may look forward to happier and brighter times.

MR. LIONEL COHEN said, he would ask for that forbearance on the part of the House which was usually accorded to any Member who rose to address it for the first time. There were, besides, special reasons why he should ask for the forbearance and indulgence of the House in making a few observations upon this question. He was the first new Member who had risen to claim especial sympathy on the ground of his being a "Boycotted" individual, as a humble Member of the Royal Commission on Trade and Agriculture. It might afford some consolation to hon. Gentlemen who sat on his right, below the Ministerial Gangway, when they saw that in his case the process had not been attended with those unfortunate results ascribed to it in the Sister Island. Indeed, he might say that he looked with some degree of hope and confidence to the action of that much-maligned body, the Royal Commission on Trade; and he hoped it would have the effect, through the operations of commerce, of securing without delay those conditions of tenure which alone could fit both tenant farmers and labourers for the new and

trying circumstances in which they were placed. He thought he was justified in looking to the operations of commerce for a remedy. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), in his address the other night, attributed the difficulties in which his country was placed mainly to agricultural depression. The chain between commerce and agriculture was a close one, and rivetted by many links; and, as a commercial man, representing a commercial and artizan constituency, he had some cause to complain that, notwithstanding the closeness of the links of the chain between commerce and agriculture, the general discussion on the Address had all tended to enlist the sympathy of the House on the side of those engaged in agriculture, whereas those who were engaged in the large pursuits of commerce had neither received notice nor sympathy. What was the cause which brought about all these agricultural difficulties? In the first place, taking a wide range, it was, no doubt, the operation of political mistrust in different parts of the Kingdom. Capital was stagnant to an extent which, in the course of a long business experience, he hardly ever recollected. With that, enterprise became dormant, employment became difficult, and those engaged in commerce were unable to pay the prices formerly paid for agricultural produce. This acted and re-acted all over the world; and the result was shown both in the condition of the tenant farmer and of the labourer. Therefore, he maintained that the conditions were both direct and immediate in the operation of commerce upon the produce of the land. They had been told by the right hon. Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) that it was impossible to do that which was asked for by legislation. In that opinion he ventured humbly to concur; but it was not impossible, by confidence and by encouragement, to free our trade in some degree from the shackles which surrounded it, and to give an impetus to commerce. There were three modes by which the agriculturist and the labourer might be benefited. The first was by enabling better prices to be secured for articles of consumption. The second was by giving the producer better facilities for carrying his produce from one part of the country to another at fair and equitable rates; and the third was by so

regulating the incidence of taxation that no undue burdens should be laid upon the shoulders of those who were engaged in the cultivation of the land. He ventured to ask the House with confidence whether, if more attention were paid to these three branches of Economic Science, a speedier result would not be secured for the agricultural interests than by going into Committee or bringing in Bills with complex clauses dealing with a subject so difficult as the tenure of the land? The first way to secure better prices was to encourage traders to send their goods to all parts of the world. In connection with this point he must say that he had heard with apprehension the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) speak of their adventures in Burmah as treading on dangerous ground. That was not the way in which the merchants and traders of foreign countries were spoken of by the statesmen of those countries. It was the duty of the Government, no matter to what Party it belonged, not to present a cold shoulder to mercantile industry—he did not mean to operations that were improperly carried out, or subject justly to fine and penalty in the various countries—but to hold out an encouraging hand to those of their merchants who were engaged in commercial enterprise abroad. To the collapse which had attended some of the commercial enterprises of the country to a considerable extent the depression of agriculture was due. As a Member of the Royal Commission on Trade, it would not become him to say in what direction their inquiry tended; but he wished to observe that he repelled most emphatically the observations of the right hon. and learned Member for Clackmannan (Mr. J. B. Balfour) when he said that the Members of the Commission had entered upon their labours with a preconceived bias, and with prepossessions in favour of one set of economical doctrines over another as governing remedial measures. He had yet to learn from any Member of the Commission that he had entered upon the inquiry with any other object than the desire and intention of following it out for the benefit of trade and agriculture free from all prejudices in favour of any of those economic doctrines which some hon. Gentlemen wrongfully attributed to them. He came now to another

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subject—one of the most important questions which could occupy the mind of the Legislature. It was no Party question, and the difficulties attending it were very great, because it had large and powerful interests to struggle against—he referred to the question of the carrying trade for the purposes of home trade. The hon. Member for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) had done good service by calling attention in his able pamphlet, which ought to be in the hands of every hon. Member, to the difficulties which the producers of this country were subjected to in the carrying of their goods. Whatever the result of the Commission might be, that was a matter which would need all the attention it could receive from every section of the House, so as to secure to the producer that freedom in removing his goods from one part of the country to another which was enjoyed by producers in foreign countries, and also in their own Colonies. The third branch of the subject—namely, the incidence of taxation, was too large and too difficult a matter for him to venture to obtrude upon the House in a maiden speech at that hour of the evening; but he desired to say that local taxation was, in this country, placed almost entirely upon the shoulders of those who resided in the locality, whereas abroad it was placed, to a great extent, upon the consumer in the shape of *octroi* duties. The next question was the desirability of securing improvements without delay. There was no royal road to prosperity, as they would find out when they began to turn the corner, as he certainly hoped they would do shortly. Prosperity could not be secured rapidly, but only by the gradual process of time, and by studying these economic questions in no Party spirit. The collapse of the industry of the country was the cause of the low prices of produce, and the low prices of produce were the causes of the depression of agriculture. The whole thing worked round in a continual circle, the effect of depression both in trade and agriculture rebounding on the condition of the agricultural labourer and the tenant farmer. Already the words “too late” had brought grief and sorrow upon the country; and he sincerely hoped that the same words would not be made to apply to the commerce and agriculture of the country.

He trusted that due care would be taken not to apply the improvements of commerce too late. If they wasted their time in quarrelsome legislation it would be impossible to introduce the improvements that were necessary; and the result would be that commercial enterprise would leave the shores of this country, and trade would be directed into other channels. It was in the hope that this discussion would have a tendency to draw greater attention to the pursuits of commerce than they had already received that he had ventured to obtrude himself on the notice of the House. He had now only to thank the House for the patience with which they had listened to him.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE rose to address the House, but was received with loud calls for a division. The hon. Baronet said, that if he was in Order he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Debate be now adjourned.”
—(Sir Richard Temple.)

THE CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: My hon. Friend behind me is anxious to address a few words to the House on this subject as representing a great agricultural county; but he was received in a way which induced him to think that some Members of the House did not care to listen to him at this hour of the morning. I trust that my hon. Friend will withdraw his Motion for the adjournment of the debate, and that the House will be disposed to receive with favour the remarks he wishes to make.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE said, he was quite ready to comply with the request of his right hon. Friend; and he would, therefore, withdraw the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Question again proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE said, that it was all very well for hon. Gentlemen opposite to cry “Divide;” but it was impossible to divide until the remarks which had been made in the course of the debate had received a complete answer from that side of the House. As the Leader of the House had just observed, he (Sir Richard

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Temple) represented a great agricultural constituency. He was also personally connected with the land, and he had had the management of allotments which had been successful under the arrangements which had endured for many years. He therefore trusted that those who took an interest in the question would be good enough to listen to the remarks he intended to make, seeing that they came from a practical man. He would remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that they were asked to remodel the conditions of tenancy in reference to the cultivation of the soil; but the debate so far had been so inconsequential that he claimed permission to remind the House that the principal class among the cultivators of the soil was composed of the farm labourers. There was in the country plenty of land available for allotments if the labourers would take it; but something more was desired; because the truth of the matter was that when the land was offered to the labourers for allotments they sometimes refused to take it. The fact was that while allotments of limited area, favourable situation, and fertile soil answered well enough, on the other hand allotments of average soil were apt to fail. Instances of such failure were common in the West of England. Market gardening had been alluded to during the debate; and, no doubt, that was an industry suited to the allotment system. He was himself connected with a constituency which was one of the great centres of market gardening; and he was satisfied that he was only re-echoing the opinion of his constituents when he stated that market gardening might easily be overdone. If it were to be overdone by means of an allotment system artificially introduced, the prices of market gardening produce would be so lowered that the industry would cease to be profitable. Much was said about farms lying waste, and waiting only for labour. The meaning of that was that such farms should be cut up into allotments. But it was forgotten that such a parcelling out required capital—perhaps £500 for each allotment of three or four acres. The agitators who urged this never indicated how this capital was to be raised, or how the allotment holder was to pay the interest. Nor was it fair to compare, as was too often done, the rents of allotments having

specially good land with the average rent of farms having various sorts of land, good, bad, and indifferent. But, apart from these larger allotments on which the labourer was to subsist without working for wages, he was heartily in favour of small allotments—half-an-acre or so—attached to the cottages of farm labourers, whereby they could supplement their earnings, and whereon they could employ themselves for the good of their families when employment with the farmer might be slack and wages irregular. If this system could be rendered universal the farm labourers could never be the victims of enforced idleness and consequent want. He denied that the rents which were asked for allotments were at all too high.

SIR ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL asked the permission of the House, as the Representative of a constituency largely agricultural as well as commercial, to say a few words. Any person who looked round and saw the condition of agriculture or trade throughout the country must regard it with the very greatest amount of feeling. As far as his experience had gone—and it had been a pretty long one—as to landlords and tenants—at all events as to landlords and tenants in Scotland—it was felt there was great community of interest between the two classes. In Scotland there was a deep feeling that although the agricultural depression might become worse than it was at present, the best way they could get over it was by mutual confidence and concession. He was thankful to think that that confidence had not been misplaced, either by the landlords or by the tenants. The fact of the matter was that the land was only worth what it could produce. If produce came in from foreign countries in larger and larger quantities year by year, continually depreciating the prices of the produce and commodities which the tenants supplied, it was very clear that the profits on both sides must decrease. The landlords were willing to accept that position; but they asked that they should be allowed to make fair bargains, such as were made in all trades—that freedom of bargain and contract between landlord and tenant should be preserved. If they felt confident of that, and then made a bad bargain, they must take the consequences. They hoped and trusted, after

Sir Richard Temple

the experience they had had, that they might be able to hold their own, and that they might be able to make fair arrangements between themselves—between landlords and tenants—to keep up that great system of agriculture—one of the largest and, as had been well said, one of the oldest trades in the country. Landlords felt that their profits might be less; but they were willing to face the altered state of things, if they were only allowed to trust to confidence between man and man. Hon. Members had spoken of the necessity of cultivating a great deal of the land now lying waste. What was the reason that land was now lying waste? Some of this land might appear fair to those who looked upon it; but he was bound to say that when the matter was fully investigated, it would be found that the land would hardly pay the interest on the capital required to break it up. If the money which had been expended by the Duke of Sutherland had been laid out on other improvements, instead of on trying to improve land, the noble Duke and a great many of his people would have been much better off. Costly experiments like the cultivation of waste land could not be carried on without capital; and he asked whether it was likely, with the continual changes and the difficulties which had to be confronted, that capital would be put in the land if landlords did not expect to get some return for it? He knew that 2 per cent was considered very good percentage upon money invested in land. Landlords were willing to take less than that if they could only look for some fruit of their industry. He was perfectly certain that nothing was so mischievous as interference between those who were most interested in the better cultivation of the land—namely, the landlords and tenants. If they were only allowed to fight the battle out themselves, he felt perfectly certain that in his part of the country, at any rate, the good feeling prevailing would enable them to tide over the present depression. At the same time, if any measure could be proposed by which the local taxation could be made more equitable, he should be most happy to co-operate in such a measure. He thanked the House for the kindness with which they had received this, his maiden speech.

MR. KIMBER said, that a careful reading of the proposed Amendment would show that it involved a dilemma, either horn of which was either a political or a logical absurdity. Hon. Members would notice that the Amendment stated that Her Majesty's Government should have recommended Her Majesty to say that she would propose measures of law for the purpose of securing to one class of individuals—cultivators of the soil—certain favourable conditions of tenure, such as would encourage them to cope with their present adversity. Now, a law "to secure conditions of tenure" meant that the contract between the cultivators of the soil and the persons with whom they would have to make the contract—namely, the owners of the soil—would have to be made either voluntarily or compulsorily. If voluntarily, it was obvious that no law was required, seeing that it was competent for the cultivators and the owners of the soil to make any contract they pleased. To propose, on the other hand, that a measure of law should be passed which should impose a forcible condition on the landlords involved this—that one class of persons in the country, a very important one—the owners of the soil—should not be allowed to make a contract with that freedom with which other classes of Her Majesty's subjects were at liberty to make contracts. If Parliament imposed such a condition, it would, in fact, transgress one of those primary conditions upon which the prosperity of this and of any country which had any prosperity at all was founded—that was, the freedom and inviolability of contract. Whether the law which the Mover of the Amendment suggested was to be imposed compulsorily or not, there was involved that infringement of those commercial laws upon which this country had founded its greatness; and he Mr. Kimber, asked, if they were to interfere on behalf of one class because of the depression of the time, what was to be said about the other classes who were also suffering from the depression? Let them even take the case of the stockbroker who had bought Stocks at 80, the value of which had now been reduced to 60. Was he to have an alleviating law passed by which he was to have his contract subjected to re-valuation by reason of after-events which showed he had

[Third Night.]

suffered great loss? What was to be said of the merchant who had bought a ship-load of merchandize to arrive, and then found there was no market in which to sell the goods? Was he to be relieved, or to be entitled to relieve himself, at the expense of the other parties to the contract? Where was this relief to end if they were to cancel the power which now existed, and had existed in this country practically for all time, to buy and sell in a free and open market? The moment they cancelled that power, that moment they would interfere seriously with liberty of action; they would accept a principle which, if carried to its full extent, would deprive the people and commerce of the country of everything that could be called by the name "free." What would be thought of any Englishman or Scotchman—he believed the case of the Sister Island was exceptional—who, having made a bargain, wished to back out of it when he found it working disadvantageously to himself? Was not the fulfilment of a bargain a matter of honour? A man who did not face adversity when it befell him was no longer a man. A man was only a man when he stood by the bargains he had made; and when once there was a general disposition to escape from the ill-effects of bargains it would be found that the prosperity of the country had departed. He did not at all wonder that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) should make a sort of apology for the Mover of the Amendment by telling the House that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay) did not mean to propose any particular law of a hard-and-fast character, but that all he complained of was that Her Majesty's Government had not announced in the Queen's Speech their intention of introducing some measure of law to provide for these special conditions of tenure. He would like to know what would have been the result if they had all sat down together, and, as business men, attempted to frame a law such as the hon. Member for Forfarshire seemed to desire? How would they have described such a measure? He was not quite sure whether he would not have been entitled to have appealed to the Speaker whether, as a matter of Order, it was competent for Her Majesty's Government to advise Her Majesty to put a para-

graph in Her Gracious Speech which involved two such political absurdities as, on the one hand, the making of a law to permit people to do that which they could now do voluntarily, or, on the other hand, the making of a law to compel people to make contracts. In the great speech which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) made in Leeds in 1881, he described the Land Bill of 1881, which afterwards became law, as a great innovation upon the principles of freedom of contract—one which could only be justified in the case of Ireland by the most exceptional circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman thought it so great a sacrifice in favour of the exceptional circumstances of Ireland, and an innovation which was not to be treated as a precedent, that in a speech which he delivered after the Land Bill had become law he spoke of the time when the country might be able to revert to the old system of freedom of contract. What were the words he used? The right hon. Gentleman said—"Divide, divide!" He (Mr. Kimber) begged to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(Mr. Kimber.)—put, and *negatived*.

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The House divided:—Ayes 183; Noes 211: Majority 28.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)	Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)	Chamberlain, R.
Allison, R. A.	Chance, P. A.
Arch, J.	Channing, F. A.
Asher, A.	Clancy, J. J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.	Clark, G. B.
Barbour, W. B.	Cobb, H. P.
Beith, G.	Cobbold, F. T.
Biggar, J. G.	Coleridge, hon. B.
Blades, J. H.	Collings, J.
Blaine, A.	Commings, A.
Blake, T.	Compton, Lord W. G.
Bolton, J. C.	Condon, T. J.
Bolton, T. H.	Connolly, L.
Borlase, W. C.	Conway, M.
Brown, A. H.	Conybeare, C. A. V.
Brunner, J. T.	Cook, E. R.
Burt, T.	Cook, W.
Byrne, G.	Coots, T.
Cameron, C.	Corbet, W. J.
Cameron, J. M.	Cosham, H.
Campbell, H.	Cox, J. R.
Carew, J. L.	Cosens-Hardy, H. H.
	Craven, J.

Mr. Kimber

Crawford, W.
 Cresser, W. R.
 Crilly, D.
 Crompton, C.
 Currie, Sir D.
 Dalton, J.
 Deakham, T.
 Duncan, D.
 Ellis, J.
 Emmonde, Sir T.
 Emblemont, P.
 Farquharson, Dr. R.
 Farwick, C.
 Ferguson, J. E. J.
 Finlayson, J.
 Finucane, J.
 Fletcher, R.
 Flower, C.
 Flynn, J. C.
 Foley, P. J.
 Foster, Sir C.
 Foster, Dr. B.
 Fox, P.
 Gabb, T. E.
 Gailbois, J.
 Gail, H. J.
 Gail, T. P.
 Gladstone, H. J.
 Gossley, E. T.
 Gray, E. D.
 Grenfell, W. H.
 Grey, Sir E.
 Haldane, R. B.
 Harker, W.
 Harrington, E.
 Harris, M.
 Hayden, L. P.
 Hayne, C. Seale-
 Healy, M.
 Healy, T. M.
 Hopper, J.
 Hunter, W. A.
 Ince, H. B.
 Isaacs, W.
 Jenkins, D. J.
 Johns, J. W.
 Jordan, J.
 Kelly, B.
 Kenny, M. J.
 Kitching, A. G.
 Labouchere, H.
 Laclaire, C. C.
 Lalor, R.
 Lane, W. J.
 Lawson, H. L. W.
 Leahy, J.
 Leamy, E.
 Leicester, J.
 Macfarlane, D. H.
 Marican, F. W.
 McArthur, A.
 McCarthy, J.
 McCarthy, J. H.
 McDonald, P.
 McKenna, Sir J. N.
 McLagan, P.
 Marum, E. M.
 Mason, S.
 Mayne, T.
 Melloy, B. C.
 Montagu, S.

Moulton, J. F.
 Newnes, G.
 Nolan, Colonel J. P.
 Nolan, J.
 O'Brien, J. F. X.
 O'Brien, P. J.
 O'Brien, W.
 O'Connor, A.
 O'Connor, J.
 O'Connor, T. P.
 O'Doherty, J. E.
 O'Hea, P.
 O'Kelly, J.
 Parnell, C. S.
 Pickersgill, E. H.
 Pictou, J. A.
 Powell, W. R. H.
 Power, P. J.
 Pulley, J.
 Pyne, J. D.
 Redmond, J. E.
 Redmond, W. H. K.
 Reynolds, W. J.
 Richardson, T.
 Rigby, J.
 Roberts, J. (Carn. E.)
 Roberts, J. (Flint. Bgs.)
 Roe, T.
 Rogers, J. E. T.
 Russell, E. R.
 Saunders, W.
 Sexton, T.
 Shaw, T.
 Sheehan, J. D.
 Sheehy, D.
 Sheil, E.
 Small, J. F.
 Smith, W. B.
 Spencer, hon. C. R.
 Spensley, hon. H.
 Spicer, H.
 Stack, J.
 Stafford, Marquess of
 Stevenson, F. S.
 Stuart, J.
 Sullivan, D.
 Sullivan, T. D.
 Sutherland, T.
 Tanner, C. K.
 Thomas, A.
 Tuile, J.
 Verney, Captain E. H.
 Watson, E.
 Watson, T.
 Watt, H.
 Wayman, T.
 West, Colonel W. C.
 Westlake, J.
 Will, J. S.
 Williams, A. J.
 Wilson, H. J.
 Wilson, J. (Durham)
 Wilson, J. (Edinbgh.)
 Winterbotham, A. B.
 Yeo, F.

TELLERS.

Balfour, Sir G.
 Barclay, J. W.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, J. T.
 Ainslie, W. G.
 Allsopp, G.
 Amherst, W. A. T.
 Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
 Baden-Powell, G. S.
 Baggallay, E.
 Bailly, L. R.
 Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
 Balfour, G. W.
 Bartley, G. C. T.
 Barttelot, Sir W. B.
 Bates, Sir E.
 Baumann, A. A.
 Beach, right hon. Sir
 M. E. Hicks
 Beadel, W. J.
 Beresford, Lord C. W.
 De la Poer
 Bethell, Commander
 Bigwood, J.
 Birkbeck, E.
 Blaine, R. S.
 Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
 Bonsor, H. C. O.
 Board, T. W.
 Bourke, right hon. R.
 Bridgeman, Col. hon.
 F. C.
 Bristowe, T. L.
 Brodrick, hon. W. St.
 J. F.
 Brookfield, A. M.
 Brooks, J.
 Burdett-Connis, W. L.
 Ash-B.
 Burghley, Lord
 Campbell, Sir A.
 Campbell, J. A.
 Chaplin, rt. hon. H.
 Charrington, S.
 Coddington, W.
 Cohen, L. L.
 Commerell, Adml. Sir
 J.
 Compton, F.
 Cooke, C. W. R.
 Coope, O. E.
 Corbett, A. C.
 Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
 Courtney, L. H.
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
 Cross, H. S.
 Cubitt, right hon. G.
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dawson, R.
 De Cobain, E. S. W.
 Denison, E. W.
 Denison, W. B.
 De Worms, Baron H.
 Dimdale, Baron R.
 Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
 Duncan, Colonel F.
 Duncombe, A.
 Dyke, rt. hon. Sir W.
 H.
 Edwardes-Moss, T. C.
 Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
 Egerton, hon. A. de T.
 Ellis, Sir J. W.
 Evelyn, W. J.
 Ewart, W.
 Ewing, A. O.
 Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
 Fellowes, W. H.
 Ferguson, rt. hon. Sir J.
 Field, Captain E.
 Finch, G. H.
 Finch-Hatton, hon. M.
 E. G.
 Fisher, W. H.
 Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
 Fletcher, Sir H.
 Folkestone, Viscount
 Forwood, A. B.
 Fowler, Sir R. N.
 Fraser, General C. C.
 Gardner, R. Richard-
 son-
 Gathorne-Hardy, hon.
 J. S.
 Gent-Davis, R.
 Gibson, J. G.
 Giles, A.
 Goldsworthy, Major-
 General W. T.
 Gorst, Sir J. E.
 Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
 Green, E.
 Greenall, Sir G.
 Gregory, G. B.
 Grimston, Viscount
 Gunter, Col. R.
 Hall, C.
 Hallett, Colonel F. C.
 Hughes-
 Halsey, T. F.
 Hamilton, Lord C. J.
 Hamilton, Lord E.
 Hamilton, Lord F. S.
 Hamilton, right hon.
 Lord G. F.
 Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
 Hanbury, R. W.
 Hankey, F. A.
 Hardcastle, E.
 Hardcastle, F.
 Harrington, Marq. of
 Heaton, J. H.
 Heneage, E.
 Hervey, Lord F.
 Hickman, A.
 Hill, Lord A. W.
 Holland, rt. hon. Sir
 H. T.
 Holmes, rt. hon. H.
 Hope, right hon. A. J.
 B. B.
 Houldsworth, W. H.
 Howard, J.
 Howard, J. M.
 Hughes, Colonel E.
 Hunt, F. S.
 Hunter, Sir G.
 Hutton, J. F.
 Isaacs, L. H.
 Jackson, W. L.
 James, rt. hon. Sir H.
 Jennings, L. J.

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Johnston, W.
 Jones, P.
 Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir
 U. J.
 Kennaway, Sir J. H.
 Kenyon, hon. G. T.
 Ker, R. W. B.
 Kimber, H.
 King, H. S.
 Kinnear, J. B.
 Knatchbull-Hugessen,
 hon. H. T.
 Lawrence, Sir T.
 Lawrence, W. F.
 Lethbridge, Sir R.
 Lewisham, Viscount
 Llewellyn, E. H.
 Lloyd, W.
 Long, W. H.
 Macartney, J. W. E.
 Macdonald, rt. hon. J.
 H. A.
 Maclean, J. M.
 MacLmont, Captain J.
 Manners, rt. hon. Lord
 J. J. R.
 Marriott, rt. hon. W. T.
 Marton, Maj. G. B. H.
 Maxwell, Sir H. E.
 Mills, C. W.
 Morgan, hon. F.
 Mount, W. G.
 Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir
 J. R.
 Mulholland, H. L.
 Murdoch, C. T.
 Norris, E. S.
 Northcote, hon. H. S.
 Norton, R.
 O'Neill, hon. R. T.
 Paget, R. H.
 Pearce, W.
 Pease, Sir J. W.
 Pease, A. E.
 Pelly, Sir L.
 Percy, Lord A. M.
 Pilkington, G. A.
 Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
 Pomfret, W. P.

Powell, F. S.
 Price, Captain G. E.
 Ritchie, C. T.
 Robertson, J. P. B.
 Rothschild, Baron F.
 J. de
 Round, J.
 Russell, Sir G.
 Sandys, Lieut-Col. T.
 M.
 Saunderson, Maj. E. J.
 Selater-Booth, rt. hon. G.
 Selwin - Ibbetson, rt.
 hon. Sir H. J.
 Seton-Karr, H.
 Sidebottom, W.
 Sitwell, Sir G. R.
 Smith, A.
 Smith, D.
 Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
 Stanley, rt. hon. Col. F.
 Stanley, E. J.
 Stewart, M.
 Sturrock, P.
 Talbot, J. G.
 Temple, Sir R.
 Tipping, W.
 Tollemache, H. J.
 Tomlinson, W. E. M.
 Trotter, H. J.
 Tyler, Sir H. W.
 Valentine, C. J.
 Vincent, C. E. H.
 Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
 Waring, Colonel T.
 Watson, J.
 Webster, Sir R. E.
 White, J. B.
 Whitley, E.
 Winn, hon. R.
 Wodehouse, E. R.
 Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
 Wroughton, P.
 Yorke, J. R.
 Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
 Walrond, Col. W. H.

Main Question proposed.

Debate arising.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Jesse Collings*.)—put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed, to whom shall be referred all Petitions presented to the House, with the exception of such as relate to Private Bills; and that such Committee do classify and prepare abstracts of the same, in such form and manner as shall appear to them best suited to convey to the

House all requisite information respecting their contents, and do report the same from time to time to the House; and that the reports of the Committee do set forth the number of signatures to each Petition only in respect to those signatures to which addresses are affixed:—And that such Committee have power to direct the printing *in extenso* of such Petitions, or of such parts of Petitions, as shall appear to require it:—And that such Committee have power to report their opinion and observations thereupon to the House.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Sir CHARLES FORSTER, Mr. WILLIAM LOWTHER, Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK, Marquess of STAFFORD, Colonel BRIDGEMAN, Sir CHARLES TENANT, Mr. MULHOLLAND, Viscount LYMINGTON, Sir ARTHUR BASS, Mr. RICHARD POWER, Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, Mr. M'LAGAN, Mr. REGINALD YORKE, Mr. HENRY TOLLEMACHE, and Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Sir Charles Forster*.)

LUNACY (VACATING OF SEATS) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Cameron, Bill to amend the Law in regard to the Vacating of Seats in the House of Commons, *ordered* to be brought in by Dr. Cameron, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Puleston, and Mr. William Corbet.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 85.]

SPORTING LANDS RATING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Cameron, Bill to amend the Law as to the Rating of Lands occupied for Sporting Purposes in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Dr. Cameron, Marquess of Stafford, Mr. Mackintosh, and Dr. Farquharson.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 86.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. King, Bill to amend "The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. King, Mr. Kimber, Mr. Baggallay, and Mr. Fitzgerald.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 87.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (CORNWALL) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Borlase, Bill to prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday in Cornwall, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Borlase, Sir John St. Aubyn, Mr. Courtney, Mr. C. T. Dyke Acland, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Bickford Smith, and Mr. David Jenkins.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 88.]

PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. William Corbet, Bill to alter and amend the Law relating to Private Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, and to make other and more suitable provision for paying-patients, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. P. J. Power, Dr. Cameron, and Mr. Mayne.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 89.]

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS (SCOTLAND)

BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bryce, Bill to secure to the public the right of Access to Mountains and Moorlands in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bryce, Mr. Cheney Bolton, Mr. Haldane, Mr. D. Crawford, Sir Henry Roscoe, and Mr. Edward Russell.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 20.]

DOUBLE RETURN.

— o —

SCOTLAND DIVISION OF LIVERPOOL AND BOROUGH OF GALWAY.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received a Letter from Thomas P. O'Connor, esquire, returned as a Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, and for the Borough of Galway, making his election for the Scotland Division of Liverpool; and the said Letter was read as followeth:—

Jan. 25.

*Sir,
Having been elected for both the Scotland Division of Liverpool and the Borough of Galway, I beg to inform you that I elect to sit for the Scotland Division of Liverpool.*

Your obedient Servant,

T. P. O'CONNOR.

The Right Hon.

The Speaker.

House adjourned at a quarter before
One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 26th January, 1886.

MINUTES.]—Took the Oath—The Lord
Hendley.

PRINCIPAL BILL—Second Reading—Committee
reported—Third Reading—Land Registry
Bill, and passed.

NEW PEER.

William Buller Fullerton Baron Elphinstone in that part of the United Kingdom called Scotland, having been created Baron Elphinstone of Elphinstone in the county of Haddington—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

LAND REGISTRY BILL.—(No. 7.)

(The Lord Chancellor.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the measure had become necessary in consequence of the death of Mr. Brent Spencer Follett, Q.C., who had for some years been Chief Registrar of the Land Registry Office, and because no provision had been made in the Act of Parliament which constituted the office for the duties of the Registrar being performed by another Registrar, and it might be that any proceedings in the office in regard to titles of land would be void. It was therefore necessary that something should be done; but as considerable dissatisfaction had been expressed at the amount of business done and at the disproportionate expenditure of the office, it had been thought inexpedient to make a permanent appointment, especially pending the proposed alterations in regard to land transfer, which subject the Government hoped shortly to deal with. The Land Transfer Bill would include provisions for the registration of land generally, and for the discharge of duties by the Registrars. Under all the circumstances, the Government thought it would be desirable to make temporary provision for the discharge of the duties of the vacant office. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d."
—(The Lord Chancellor.)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^d accordingly; Committee negatived: Then Standing Order No. XXXV. considered (according to Order), and dispensed with; Bill read 3^d, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock,
to Thursday next, a quarter past
Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 26th January, 1886.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Standing
Orders; Selection, nominated.

Several other Members took and subscribed the Oath.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

PARLIAMENT—STANDING ORDERS.

Select Committee on Standing Orders nominated: — Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Twelve Members:— Mr. JOSEPH COWEN, Mr. DWYER GRAY, Mr. HALSEY, Mr. WILLIAM LOWTHER, Sir JOHN MOWBRAY, Colonel NOLAN, Mr. RAIKES, Mr. CRAIG SELLAR, Mr. STANSFELD, Sir CHARLES TENNANT, Mr. WHITBREAD, and Mr. YORKE were nominated Members of the Committee.—(*Sir John R. Mowbray.*)

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

NOMINATION OF COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee of Selection do consist of Nine Members."—(*Sir John R. Mowbray.*)

Dr. CAMERON said, the functions of the Committee of Selection were, under ordinary circumstances, not very important or responsible. They had the duty of appointing Members to serve on Private Bill Committees—a duty that involved no feeling of political partizanship; and the duty of appointment had, no doubt, been performed as efficiently and fairly as anyone could desire. Up to two years ago the nomination of Members to serve on Committees involved nothing in connection with Party politics or Public Business; but two years ago the Rule was passed to refer two classes of Public Bills to Grand Committees, and on that occasion the selection of Members to serve on these Grand Committees was entrusted to the Committee the appointment of which was now moved. On that occasion, when the Committee was nominated, it was considered that the change proposed to be made in its functions had so greatly increased its importance that its constitution should be reconsidered; and a long and somewhat acrimonious debate resulted in the number of Members of the Committee being augmented from five to eight. In passing, he might call attention to one circumstance he could not understand. He found that in the Standing Order it was provided that the Committee of Selection should consist of

the Chairman of the Committee on Standing Orders, who, *ex officio*, was to be Chairman of the Committee of Selection, and seven other Members, eight in all. That was the provision he found in the Standing Orders, in the edition so late as August last. If the action of the Rule, entrusting to the Committee the selection of Members of the Grand Committee, rendered it necessary for the House to reconsider the constitution of that Committee, then the nature of the new Rules of Procedure, which it was proposed to submit to the House in the present Session, rendered it doubly necessary to be vigilant in the appointment of the Committee. When the Grand Committees were appointed, only two classes of Bills were proposed to be sent to them, and when those Bills came back from the Committees the House was at liberty to reconsider any Amendments made, and re-open the whole subject; but, under the proposed new Rules of Procedure, it was proposed that a number of different Select Committees on Public Bills should be appointed, and that virtually the entire powers the House in Committee exercised over the details of the Bills should be entrusted to those Committees, so that, when the Bills came back to the House, the House would be deprived of that opportunity of thorough discussion it had hitherto enjoyed. When the Bills came back without Amendments they were to be set down for third reading, and it would be difficult to propose any Amendment—it would have to be done on a Motion for the re-committal of the Bill. When the Bills came back with Amendments the House was to have an opportunity of considering them; but, those being considered, then the question of third reading was to be put without debate. He would not now discuss the merits of the proposed new Rules of Procedure; but it became very evident that the Committee to whom it was proposed to entrust such powers should be very carefully selected. As he had said, in selecting Members to serve on Private Bill Committees, no Party questions were involved. From his point of view, the constitution of the tribunals before which Private Bills were promoted, and the means offered for discussion of Business, were utterly unsatisfactory, and it would be impossible by any contrivance to make them worse; but with that, for

the moment, he was not concerning himself. But now it was proposed to entrust to the Committee of Selection the selection of Select Committees, to whom all Public Bills, unless they were Money Bills, were to be referred. It was admitted, in connection with any Committee on a public matter, that it was necessary the existence of Party feeling should be recognized, the division of Select Committees was determined by the Whigs; so many Members to represent the Government, so many representing the Opposition, and so many the followers of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). But the appointment of these Committees was always made by the House; and if any unfairness was thought to exist in the nomination, it was open to any Member of the House to challenge the nomination. But when a Committee was appointed by the Committee of Selection the House had no opportunity of doing any such thing; the nominations were made by the Committee sitting in private, and the House was deprived of all jurisdiction in the case. He did not wish to impute to any Member of that Committee any but the highest conscientious motives; but it was obvious that a man entertaining particular political views would think that the best and most sensible Member likely to thrash out any subject would be a Member of his own Party. Thus, without any conscious bias, a Committee would be found constituted in a manner more or less reflecting the composition of the Committee of Selection. That rendered it very important to look to the composition of that Committee before placing it in a position in which it might be soon called on to exercise most important functions. He supposed it was no secret that certain differences of opinion existed in the manner in which they regarded political questions between the two wings of the Liberal Party. Probably there was as much difference as to the standpoint from which questions were regarded between Whigs and Radicals as between certain portions of the Conservative Party and the Whigs. That being so, it was but proper that the Radical element should be represented to an extent commensurate with its strength and importance in the House on that Committee, which would have to select the Grand Committees or the

Select Committees, as they were called, which would have to deal with all legislation that came before the House. In the proposed Committee of nine, only one Radical was nominated among the number. As for the followers of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, they were very well able to take care of themselves; they did take care of themselves on the last occasion, and were pretty certain to get what they desired. But another section of the House, in which he had the honour to be included, consisted of Scotch Representatives, who were not so pertinacious in ventilating grievances they might feel. Scotch Members were represented by a single name, and of course, in nine, they could not well expect a great many more; but the Gentleman selected was a Conservative; and if it was necessary to treat the composition of the Committee from a Party point of view he would point out that six-sevenths of the Scotch representation were Liberal, and therefore it was doing anything but reflecting the nature of that representation to nominate a Scotch Conservative Member. Scotch representation was only conceded, if he remembered rightly, after the vigorous remonstrance of his hon. Friend the Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay). So long as the duties of the Committee were unimportant, so long as they had to deal with Private and not Public Business, its composition was a matter of little importance. Its business had been to select Members almost in a sort of rota for service on Private Bill Committees, and the manner in which that was done left no ground for complaint. When it was proposed to entrust it with the selection of Grand Committees the question of the constitution of the Committee of Selection was naturally raised, and serious alterations were made in that Committee; and now, when it was proposed to entrust the Committee with far greater and more responsible duties, it was proper that the House should seriously consider the nominations. It might be said that the new duty to which he referred had not yet been imposed on the Committee. That was quite true; but if they allowed this Committee of Selection to be appointed without challenge, then, when the new Rules of Procedure came before the House, they would be told if they made any objection that the new Rules were

known to the House when this Committee was appointed, and no protest was made. At least he thought that a protest should be made; and to emphasize that protest he would move the adjournment of the debate, were it not that by doing so he should formally debar the right hon. Baronet from making explanations.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, the hon. Member grounded his objection to the appointment of the Committee on the hypothesis that under new Rules of Procedure new duties would be imposed on the Committee. But the new Rules were not yet before the House, and it was a rather strong hypothesis to assume their adoption as a reason for not appointing a Committee having necessary duties to perform. When the new Rules were before the House for discussion, then would be the time to consider whether, in view of new duties to be entrusted to it, the question of a reconstitution of the Committee should be raised. But there were present duties for the Committee to discharge; whether important or not, they were necessary for the conduct of Private Bill legislation. Undoubtedly, as the hon. Member said, in 1882, in view of the appointment of Grand Committees the Committee of Selection was enlarged, after an important discussion, to eight Members, subsequently raised to nine to meet the views of hon. Members from Ireland. In the nominations the object was to secure Gentlemen of known experience, and the House at large would admit that hitherto the Committee had well performed its duties. It would be invidious to go into the various shades of opinion represented; and he could assure the hon. Member that Party considerations were set aside by the Committee upstairs; but it would be observed that in the endeavour to secure Gentlemen of large Parliamentary experience there had been included from the Opposition side of the House the noble Lord the Member for West Derbyshire (Lord Edward Cavendish), the junior Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair), and the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread).

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY said, he regretted that the explanation of the right

hon. Baronet was not at all satisfactory. In the last Parliament he raised this question in consequence of the Scotch Representative being selected from the Conservative Party, and a concession was then made, another Scotch Member being added to the Committee, who, however, did not now represent a Scotch constituency. New Members should understand that important duties would devolve on this Committee. To it would be referred the selection of Members to serve on Private Bill Committees, and, in many cases, on Hybrid Committees; and, according to the proposal in the new Rules of Procedure, the Committee would be entrusted with the duty of selecting Committees on Public Bills. The right hon. Baronet retorted upon his hon. Friend that it would be time to raise his objection on the discussion of the new Rules; but he did not know that there was any urgency in the appointment of this Committee of Selection. It might very well be deferred for some time. The House appeared to be in a transition state, and might very well defer consideration of this subject for a time, in order to give the right hon. Gentleman and those who advised him time for consideration of their position, and to submit new proposals to the House. He did not object to the nominations, but he thought the number too few. It was all very well in former times, when the two Parties were very distinct and divided in the House, and the principle of equal representation was followed by appointing half from each side of the House; but Irish Members had secured recognition of their claims, and the old method was revised. He did not wish, and he did not think, that Party considerations should entirely determine the appointment of this Committee; he did not think that the question of nationality should decide it; but there were practical reasons why the Committee should be fairly representative of the House. It was obviously desirable that the Committee of Selection should, as far as possible, be acquainted with the general sense of the House, and with the special qualifications of Members; and there would be more probability of that in an increased and proportional representation of each country. Then it was obvious that if the Committee was to select Members who were to give decisions on Public

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Bills, the Members appointed should be selected from the various Parties. The Committee of Selection should be very considerably increased, securing better representation of the feeling of the House, and better qualification for its responsible duties. He did not wish to raise a point of Order; but the right hon. Gentleman had not explained why he had deviated from the Standing Order in nominating nine Members, the Standing Order providing that the number should be eight. That was a point to which he would direct attention; and for the purpose of giving the right hon. Gentleman the opportunity of explanation, and for the purpose of allowing time for further consideration, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That the Debate be now adjourned."
 —(Mr. J. W. Barclay.)

Mr. RAIKES said, he hoped the House would not adjourn the debate, seeing that the appointment of the Committee was a matter of ordinary business arrangement. The names now proposed were those of Gentlemen who would command the confidence of the House; and he would remind the hon. Member who moved the adjournment that one or two of the names were proposed expressly in recognition of a somewhat similar complaint made in the last Parliament. The names of the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) and of his right hon. Friend Sir Henry Wolff, who was then Member for Portsmouth, were added to give to the Committee a certain infusion of new blood. Having regard to the past services of the Gentlemen nominated, he could not but think it would be a rather bad example for a House anxious to earn a good name in the country for prompt attention to business if, on the threshold, they stumbled over the nomination of a Committee for ordinary business upstairs. He could not but think that the hon. Member, on reflection, would think there was hardly sufficient reason for postponement. The House was full; the names proposed were well known; and he could not believe the House at a future time would be better qualified than now to arrive at a conclusion.

Mr. THOMAS WATSON said, the right hon. Gentleman was addressing a

number of practical men. Would he, therefore, be good enough to explain why it was necessary to appoint the Committee to-day rather than a few days hence?

SIR ROBERT FOWLER said, as he understood one objection to the appointment of the Committee, it was that the right hon. Member for Leeds, who represented Edinburgh University in the last Parliament, was no longer a Scotch Member. But, though his right hon. Friend had changed his seat, he had not lost his knowledge of Scotch matters. It seemed absurd that the Private Business of the House, and some of its Public Business, too, should be delayed and thrown out of gear because his right hon. Friend had changed his seat from Edinburgh to Leeds.

Dr. CAMERON said, one reason for adjournment was that in 1883, when the Committee was in a similar position, the appointment was not made until the 27th of February, a month subsequent to the present date. Another reason for adjournment was that the right hon. Baronet had not answered the objection raised to the effect that the Standing Order provided that the Committee should consist of eight Members. That was the rule laid down in the last edition of the Standing Orders, August, 1885; and that prevented him from moving the omission of eight to insert a larger number. That being so, it appeared to him an irregularity that showed the rather loose manner of constituting the Committee, when the Chairman gave Notice of a Motion in direct contravention of Standing Order 98, to which he referred. For this reason, and because, two years ago, the Committee was not appointed until February 27, and no one suffered inconvenience in consequence, the appointment might very well be deferred for a few days.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, he could assure the hon. Member there was nothing irregular in the Motion. Last year, or the year before, the number was enlarged to nine, and the House agreed to the appointment. The House met earlier this year; Private Bills had to be grouped, Members had to be communicated with, and there must be delay and inconvenience if the appointment of the Committee was delayed.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he felt they should hesitate to interfere with the

regular course of Business in matters of this kind at the present stage, unless there were very strong and clear grounds for doing so. The objections were urged at an earlier hour than he usually attended the regular course of Business, and, perhaps, he had hardly heard them all. He could hardly think, in the interest of Scotland, there was any great reason to complain, or to found a Motion for postponing the nomination. He did not know whether any other substantial objection had been or could be taken; and when there were no objections of a solid or substantial character he, in matters of detail, felt a disposition to defer to the authority of old Members experienced in these matters, and to whose labours the House was considerably indebted. As at present informed, it might be imperfectly, he should be sorry to see the Motion pressed to a division.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 43; Noes 399: Majority 356.—(Div. List, No. 2.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY moved, "That the Committee do consist of fifteen instead of nine Members."

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has exhausted his right of speaking.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the name of Lord Edward Cavendish be placed upon the Committee."—(Sir John R. Mowbray.)

DR. CAMERON said, he had been careful to explain that he had not made his protest on any personal grounds, but purely upon general considerations. But, having made a protest, he desired to intimate that he should take action upon the matter when the new Rules were proceeded with, if ever they did come on for discussion. He should then have an opportunity of pressing his objection to the policy of placing such large powers in the hands of the Committee of Selection. Having made his protest, he would not consider it proper to obtrude himself further on the time of the House, or to waste time by challenging the various names upon the list. He

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should, therefore, not make objection to any of the names.

Question put, and agreed to.

LORD EDWARD CAVENDISH, MR. CUBITT, MR. HARCOURT, MR. ILLINGWORTH, MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY, MR. ORR EWING, SIR LYON PLAYFAIR, MR. WHITBREAD, and the CHAIRMAN of the SELECT COMMITTEE on STANDING ORDERS, nominated Members of the Committee.

QUESTIONS.

THE STATE OF IRELAND—LEGISLATION FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE—THE PROTECTION OF LIFE, PROPERTY, ORDER, &c.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH): Sir, I beg to give Notice, on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, that on Thursday next he will move for leave to introduce a Bill for the purpose of suppressing the National League and other dangerous associations, for the prevention of intimidation, and for the protection of life, property, and public order in Ireland. In the event of the debate on the Address in reply to Her Majesty's Gracious Speech not being concluded before Thursday, it will be my duty to move the postponement of the Orders of the Day in order to give my right hon. Friend an opportunity of bringing forward his Motion; and we shall ask the House to give precedence to this measure on every day on which it may be set down. It is our intention, Sir, to follow this measure by a Bill dealing with the Land Question, pursuing in a more extensive sense the policy indicated by the Land Purchase Act of last Session.

FORESHORES AND FISHINGS (SCOTLAND).

MR. MACFARLANE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will cause to be prepared and lay upon the Table, a Return of all persons to whom the rights of the Crown to foreshore and exclusive fishing privileges have been granted around the coasts of Scotland; the date of such grants; the consideration for which they were originally granted; the

rent or other consideration now received for such rights; and their probable value to the grantees; also a Return of the same rights and privileges still retained by the Crown?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON): If the information desired were limited to time—say to the last 30 years—it would be possible to prepare a Return of all persons to whom any Crown rights to salmon fishings or foreshores in Scotland have been sold or leased, with the dates of grant and the consideration paid, whether in a lump sum, or as rent to the Crown. Such a Return would be mainly a compilation from Papers presented to this House by the Board of Trade and Commissioners of Woods and Forests. But it would not be possible to estimate the present value of these rights to the grantees; and it would be neither possible nor expedient to give a Return of such property still in the possession of the Crown. As to the last point, however, I believe that the presumption at law is that all foreshores and fisheries of the kind referred to belong to the Crown, unless an adverse title can be proved. If the hon. Member will communicate with me, I will arrange with him the form of a Return which can be given.

INLAND REVENUE—ILLICIT STILLS (SCOTLAND).

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table a copy of the Correspondence between Mr. Winans and the Commissioners of Inland Revenue relative to action of certain excise officers searching for illicit stills on land occupied by him as deer forest?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON): I think it would be contrary to practice to present Correspondence of this nature to Parliament. But the Board of Inland Revenue have no objection, and if the hon. Member will communicate with me I will arrange for his seeing it.

ARMY—THE TESTING OF SIDE ARMS —DEFECTIVE BAYONETS.

MR. HICKMAN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that the defective bayonets were made in Germany; and, if not, where they were made and of what steel?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. S. NORTHCOTE): The bayonets which, under the new and more severe test, have been found defective fall under two categories; the one long triangular Martini-Henry bayonets, and the other sword-bayonets. The former class have all been made in England, and, with few exceptions, at the Enfield Factory. They were manufactured of crucible steel supplied either by Messrs. Firth and Sons or by Messrs. Saunderson, both being Sheffield firms. The sword-bayonets were made many years ago, partly at Enfield, from steel supplied by the above-named firms, and partly in Germany. It is not known whence the steel came from which the German arms were made. The majority of the defective sword-bayonets are of German make.

MR. CARBUTT said, he wished to know how many years ago these bayonets were made, and whether the name of the firm and the date of their manufacture were stamped upon them?

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE: I cannot answer the Question without Notice; but a full Report is being made on the subject by Colonel Arbuthnot, and will shortly be presented to the House.

CAPTAIN FELLOWES asked whether Cavalry swords would be submitted to as severe a test as the bayonets had been?

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE: They will be submitted to a severe test; but whether it will be as severe as the bayonet test I will leave the Surveyor General to answer.

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH).

MR. RAIKES asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, having regard to the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the case of the Attorney General v. Bradlaugh, by which it was declared that, "as long as the defendant remained in his present state of mind, he would be incapable of taking the oath within the meaning of the Act," and also to the statement made by him in his letter to Mr. Speaker, printed in the Votes of this House of the 13th January 1886, that he was "advised that, as a matter of law, a state of facts once established is presumed to exist until the contrary is proved," Her Majesty's Government are prepared to

take immediate action in this House to prevent the honourable Member for Northampton from sitting and voting in this House until he has established his capability of taking the oath of allegiance, or until the judgment of the Court of Appeal is reversed by a higher tribunal?

MR. LABOUCHERE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he could state whether, when action was taken against the hon. Member for Northampton, the Government would also consider whether they should not also take action against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who had rendered himself liable to a fine of £500 and the loss of his seat by speaking before he took the Oath?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I am bound to say, in reply to the latter Question, that my opinion with regard to the action contemplated would be that it is extremely undesirable. In regard to the Question of my right hon. Friend, now that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) has, Sir, in consequence of your ruling, gone through the form of taking and subscribing the Oath, the validity of that form, in his case, now that it has been gone through, seems to me to be a question for the Courts of Law; and I understand that the hon. Member is now prosecuting in the House of Lords his appeal from the judgment of the Court of Appeal. Therefore, I am not prepared to take action in this House upon the subject.

RAILWAYS—FISH TRAFFIC RATES.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Government will consider the expediency of taking such action as will induce the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom to make such reduction in their Fish Traffic Rates as will enable the fishing population of our northern coast towns to bring their products into competition with those now being imported from the Continent of Europe?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. E. STANHOPE): Sir, we propose shortly to introduce a Bill dealing with the rates and charges of Railway Companies; and in the preparation of that Bill we have

undoubtedly taken into consideration the point brought forward by the hon. Member. I may add that we have lately received a numerous signed Petition from those interested in the fish trade in the North of Scotland; and I have sent copies of it to the Railway Companies concerned asking for their observations upon it.

LAND REGISTRY OFFICE—THE REGISTRAR.

MR. RYLANDS asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Government will postpone filling up the vacancy which has occurred in the office of Registrar of the Land Registry Office, until the House has had the opportunity of considering the constitution of the Land Registry Office with the view either of abolishing it altogether or of extending its operations, so as to justify the expenditure connected with it?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the office, of Registrar at the Land Registry Office with a salary of £2,500 per annum, has become vacant; whether the business of the said office is very slight; and, whether Government will abstain from filling it up until it can be ascertained whether said office can be abolished without inconvenience to public interests?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The duties of the Office of Land Registrar will be provided for without any fresh appointment. My noble and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor has introduced a Bill in "another place" to enable the necessary provisional arrangements to be made; and we hope that this House will assent to that Bill as rapidly as possible.

SPAIN—THE COMMERCIAL NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. PALMER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether this Government is negotiating a Treaty of Commerce with the Spanish Government so as to place the imports from this Country under the most favoured nation clause?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BOURKE): When Sir Clare Ford proceeded to Madrid he was

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requested to give early attention to the subject of the unsatisfactory position of the commercial relations between this country and Spain. Preliminary communications have taken place between him and the Spanish Ministers; but the new Spanish Ministry does not appear to be ready as yet to enter upon commercial negotiations. The hon. Member may be assured that this question will continue to receive the best attention both of the Foreign Office and of Her Majesty's Legation at Madrid.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he desired to know whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to include in these negotiations the commercial relations between this country and the Spanish Colonies?

MR. BOURKE: Yes, Sir.

THE MAURITIUS—MR. COCKBURN STEWART.

MR. HEATON asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Is Mr. Cockburn Stewart, late Colonial Secretary of Mauritius, still in the service of Her Majesty's Government; and, has this gentleman satisfactorily replied to the charges alleged against him at Mauritius?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Colonel STANLEY: Mr. Cockburn Stewart, Assistant Colonial Secretary of Mauritius, still holds that office. He is now on leave, but is about to return to Mauritius, where an inquiry will be held as to the charges which have been made against him.

ARMY—QUARTERMASTERS.

DR. CLARK asked the Secretary of State for War, If Quartermasters are at present ineligible, by War Office Regulations, for employment in the Pay, Ordnance, Commissariat, and Prison Departments; and, if so, on what grounds those officers are debarred from appointments in these Departments?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. S. NORTHCOTE): There is no rule absolutely prohibiting such appointments; but, practically, quartermasters are ineligible for appointment in all the departments, because, as a rule, they are too old to be appointed to the junior grades. When the Army Pay Department was formed, it was deliberately intended that it

should act in relief of the compulsory retirement to which captains were liable. With this view, appointments were restricted to lieutenants and captains. As quartermasters can serve till 55 years of age, the same reason for opening the department to them does not exist.

GREECE—COLLECTIVE NOTE OF THE EUROPEAN POWERS.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is true that the British Minister at Athens has been instructed by Lord Salisbury to inform M. Delyannis that the British Government was prepared to send a fleet into Greek waters, in order to prevent the possibility of an attack upon Turkey by sea?

MR. HEATON: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I wish to ask him the following on the same subject—namely, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement made to-day by the Correspondent of *The Times*:—

“Lord Salisbury's sensible action is most opportune for the peace of Europe, and kindly to Greece herself. Telegrams have come in all the afternoon and evening testifying to the joy which all parts of this Empire feel at being relieved from the horrible nightmare of a European war.”

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is only reading extracts from a newspaper. The reading of such extracts is not asking a Question of a Minister.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BOURKE): In reply to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, I have to state that no such instruction was sent.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I wish to ask another Question of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of which I have not given Notice; but I think he will find that it is included in the terms of the Notice I have already given. I wish to ask whether it is a fact that the six Powers, at the instance of Her Majesty's Government, presented a Collective Note intimating that a naval attack by Greece on Turkey would not be permitted; and whether it is a fact that, previous to the presentation of this Collective Note, Her Majesty's Minister at Athens had an interview with M. Delyannis, and informed him that in case this threat were

disregarded the British Fleet would be sent into Greek waters?

MR. BOURKE: I think, Sir, that in the first place, with respect to the first part of the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, my reply yesterday was a sufficient answer. As to the last Question, it is quite a different one. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will see that a Question of such great importance cannot, consistently with my duty, be answered without Notice.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the Question on the Paper, Whether the British Minister at Athens has been instructed by Lord Salisbury to inform M. Delyannis that the British Government is prepared to send a fleet into Greek waters; and I now ask whether, at the interview which was held between M. Delyannis and the British Minister, this intimation was given?

MR. BOURKE: Exactly; I quite understand the Question. I have answered the Question which is on the Paper, which is quite different from the one which is now put to me. I have said no such instruction as is referred to in the Question of the right hon. Gentleman was sent to our Minister at Athens. That was the Question on the Paper, and that is my answer. But, I must repeat, it would not be consistent with my duty to answer the Question which the right hon. Gentleman puts to me now without Notice.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg to give Notice to the right hon. Gentleman that I will put another Question to him, and that, in consequence of the very unsatisfactory nature of his answers hitherto, I will, on the Report stage of the Address, if we ever get to it, call attention to this subject.

IRELAND (EVICTIONS)—THE RETURNS.

MR. DILLON asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, When the Irish Eviction Returns for quarters ending September and December 1885 will be published; and, whether he will lay upon the Table a Return of the number of Civil Bill processes and ejectments served, and judgments marked, in the four quarters of 1885 respectively?

MR. BRODRICK: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question I would like to ask whether, at the same time, a Return would be furnished of

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the cases of crime and outrage which have occurred in Ireland?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. HOLMES): The Return referred to in the first portion of the hon. Gentleman's Question was, I believe, presented on the 21st instant, and will soon be ready. As regards the second part of the Question, I am not aware that the Government has any means of ascertaining the number of processes and ejectments which have been served; but if the hon. Member desires a Return of those entered in the books of the Clerk of the Peace, he can obtain it if he moves for it in the ordinary course.

MR. DILLON: I would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether the number of processes served could not be ascertained from the Civil Bill officers?

MR. HOLMES: I will make inquiries on the subject.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT — REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS.

MR. SAUNDERS asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, When the Government intend to introduce the measure for establishing Representative Councils for County Government in Great Britain?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I am unable at present to name a day for the introduction of the measure.

GIBRALTAR—ZEBEHR PASHA—THE ORDINANCE.

MR. DILLON asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Under what authority, and by what Law, Zebehr Pasha is detained a prisoner in Gibraltar; and, how it is proposed to hold him prisoner?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Colonel STANLEY): Zebehr Pasha is detained in custody at Gibraltar under the authority of an Ordinance of the Legislature of Gibraltar, a copy of which is given in Parliamentary Paper 156 of April, 1885. I am not in a position to say how long he will be detained.

CRIMINAL LAW—ASSAULTS UPON CHILDREN.

MR. CONYBEARE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department,

Whether his attention has been drawn to the case tried by Mr. Mansfield, at the Marlborough Street Police Court, of a man who quarrelled with his mistress's five months old baby and brutally beat it on the arm, who excused himself on the ground that he did it in a fit of temper, and was ordered to find security in the sum of five pounds to be of good behaviour for the next three months; and, whether he will take any and what steps in order to protect innocent infants for the future?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir R. ASHINGTON CROSS), in reply, said, he had learnt, with regard to the case referred to, that no sensible injury was inflicted on the child. Although the Secretary of State had power to advise the Sovereign to remit a sentence, he had no power to interfere in order to make the punishment heavier.

GENERAL GORDON—A PUBLIC MONUMENT.

COLONEL BROOKFIELD (for Sir ROBERT FOWLER) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he has taken any steps, pursuant to the Vote obtained last Session, for the erection of a public statue to the late General Gordon?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET): Having carefully considered the subject, I decided to ask Mr. Hamo Thorneycroft, A.R.A., to undertake the execution of the statue of the late General Gordon which was voted by Parliament last summer; and I am glad to be able to inform the House that he has already made considerable progress with what appears to me to be a very beautiful design for the purpose.

NAVY ESTIMATES—SHIPBUILDING VOTES.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether there is any foundation for the report published in *The Daily News* of the 19th instant to the effect—

"That discovery has just been made at the Admiralty of a deficiency amounting to £200,000 in connection with the Shipbuilding Votes;"

and, if so, whether it is true, as stated, that it has hitherto been the practice of the Construction Department to minimise

the work done by contract each year so as to ensure a balance on the Contract Vote to make good any deficiency that may arise in the Dockyard Vote?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. RITCHIE): The statement that

"A discovery has just been made at the Admiralty of a deficiency amounting to £200,000 in connection with the Shipbuilding Vote"

is somewhat misleading. The facts are that the progress which has been made with the ships building by contract has been in advance of the Estimates made at the commencement of the year. This, I think, the House will consider a matter not of regret, but of congratulation. The result is that payments will have to be made this year to contractors of about £200,000 in excess of the amount taken for that purpose in the Estimates for the year. With reference to the second Question, I may say that, for some years past, the whole amounts inserted in the Estimates for contract work have not been so expended; but considerable sums have been used for the purchase of stores, and for Dockyard wages. In 1880-1 the saving on Contract Votes was £78,917; in 1881-2 it was £50,030; in 1882-3 it was £76,204; in 1883-4 it was £157,899; and in 1884-5 it was £47,791. Of these savings, roughly speaking, during the past five years £300,000 has been appropriated to Dockyard wages and purchase of stores.

WAR OFFICE—THE POWDER MAGAZINE AT BERMUDA.

SIR EDMUND COMMEREILL asked the Financial Secretary at War, Whether his attention has been drawn to the great danger to the dockyard at Bermuda from the close proximity of the powder magazine, and its faulty construction and condition, which have been repeatedly represented by the Military and Naval Commanders in Chief, notably by the late Director of Fortifications; and, what steps are in contemplation to remedy such a serious danger to life and Government property?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. S. NORTHCOKE): Steps are in course of being taken for the construction of a new magazine, which shall supersede the magazine referred to in the hon. and gallant Officer's Question.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON MERCHANT SHIPPING.

MR. BADEN-POWELL asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he can give the House any information as to what has become of the Royal Commission on Merchant Shipping?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. E. STANHOPE): The natural curiosity of my hon. Friend has been largely shared by others among us. He is, no doubt, aware that the Government has no control over the proceedings of the Royal Commission on Merchant Shipping; but, from inquiries which I have made, I learn that the next meeting of the Commission is likely to take place on Friday next.

MEMBERS' PLACES—PROTECTION OF SEATS.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: Mr. Speaker, I wish, Sir, to address a Question to you, which, at the commencement of the last Parliament, I addressed to your Predecessor. It is with reference to the mode of securing seats in this House. I think it is understood that the only mode in which a Member can secure a particular seat for the night is by placing his hat upon it and attending Prayers, and afterwards depositing a card in the place provided for the purpose on the back of the bench. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether it is permissible for hon. Members to come down to the House, and to place hats, which are not their own working hats, but duplicate hats—very often wideawakes—upon the seat, and then to leave the House and go about their ordinary business, and thus claim the right of retaining the seat during the evening?

MR. SPEAKER: In reply to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Glasgow (Mr. Mitchell Henry), I have to say that the conditions of securing a seat, so far as the hats are concerned, are these:—In the first place, that the hat should, undoubtedly, be the *bona fide* ordinary hat in daily use by the hon. Member. The second condition, which is almost implied in the first, is that the hon. Member who owns the hat must be within the precincts of the House, either in the Committee Rooms upstairs, or elsewhere in the House. The third condition is that he must attend Prayers himself before he can

secure a seat. I will only remind the House that the whole question is one of mutual arrangement and courtesy between Member and Member; and although I do not wish to anticipate it for a moment, should any inconvenience be felt it would be my duty to revert to the Standing Order on the subject, which I will read to the House—

"No Member's name may be affixed to any seat in the House before the hour of Prayers; and that the Speaker is to give directions to the doorkeeper accordingly."

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—RELIEF OF DISTRESS IN THE ARRAN ISLANDS.

MR. CLANCY: I desire to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a Question which I do not think will require any Notice. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether the promised Bill for the protection of life and property in Ireland will contain any provisions for the saving of the lives of the hundred families now threatened with starvation in the Islands of Arran?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: At present I can give no information as to the details of the Bill.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ABBEYLEIX UNION—RELIEF OF THE LABOURERS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Whether the Government is aware that the labourers in the Union of Abbeyleix are at present threatened with death from starvation; whether the Abbeyleix Board of Guardians have telegraphed to the Local Government Board for permission to extend outdoor relief to these labourers, and the Local Government Board has refused to sanction the issue of outdoor relief; and, whether the Irish Government will communicate with the Local Government Board for the purpose of removing the difficulty?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I cannot answer this Question without Notice. I would ask the hon. Member to put the Question to the Representative of the Department about which the information is required. [*Cries of "Where is Smith?"*] The Attorney General for Ireland, in the absence of

my right hon. Friend, I have no doubt would be prepared to answer the Question.

PARLIAMENT—ORDER OF BUSINESS.

MR. WOODALL said, he wished to put a Question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the order of Business to-morrow. The Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill was down for second reading on that day. It was admitted to be a question of great importance; and seeing that it was largely supported on both sides of the House, and that the Leader of the Opposition, as well as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had expressed a desire for an early decision upon it, might he ask that Wednesday, at any rate, might be left sacred to private Members, who had so few opportunities of making progress with legislation?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, in reply, said, the question to which the hon. Member referred was one of undoubted importance, although, perhaps, he did not concur in the hon. Gentleman's views upon it. If the Bill did not come on to-morrow, he did not see how the question was likely to be fairly discussed during the present Session. Under these circumstances, he would not press the prosecution of the debate on the Address to-morrow.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked, whether he was to understand that they were going on with the debate on the Address to-morrow, or whether the Bill of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Woodall) was to be put down as the first Order; and, if so, whether or not it would be necessary that evening to move the adjournment of the debate upon the Address until after that Bill?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, that, according to the Orders of the House, Private Business on Tuesdays and Wednesdays took precedence of any debate on the Address; and, therefore, he had given Notice of the Motion which he was about to move, that the Order for resuming the adjourned debate on the Address should have precedence over Notices of Motion on that day. He did not intend to make a similar Motion to-morrow.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he wished, for the convenience of the House, to ask what would be the Motion made on the part of Her Majesty's Government

with reference to the course of Business at the close of the debate that evening? He believed it had been expected by many, at any rate, that the debate on the Address would proceed to-morrow. It appeared, however, that the Government did not intend to proceed to-morrow with that debate; but that the second reading of a Bill of great interest was to be allowed by the Government to take its place; and the debate on that second reading, he presumed, in its natural course, would occupy Wednesday. Therefore, was he to understand from the right hon. Gentleman that he would move that night that the debate on the Address should be adjourned until Thursday? Or what Motion would he propose to make?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, that he should make no Motion with regard to the adjournment of the debate on the Address. Any hon. Member who thought fit to do so would, at the proper time, be entitled to move the adjournment of that debate. It would then stand over till Thursday, and on Thursday he would make the Motion of which he had given Notice.

MR. GLADSTONE: I apprehend the day should be named on which the adjourned debate is to be resumed.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I speak with all deference to the right hon. Gentleman's far greater experience; but I should apprehend that in the ordinary course of Business the debate on the Address would be adjourned till the next Government night, which is Thursday.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: Would it not, Mr. Speaker, be competent for any private Member to move that the debate on the Address be proceeded with to-morrow instead of a Bill introduced by a private Member?

MR. GLADSTONE: If I may be permitted, I should like to ask you, Sir, if to-night, at the proper time, a Motion is made for the adjournment of the debate, and if no other Motion be made, what would be the effect on the debate relating to the Answer to the Speech from the Throne?

MR. SPEAKER: It would be necessary to name a day to which the debate would be adjourned, and that course could be taken day by day.

MR. PARNELL: I beg to ask, Sir, whether, in the event of the debate on the

Address being adjourned till Thursday by the House to-night, it would not necessarily stand as the first Order of the Day for Thursday; or whether the Government would not have the power of its own accord—as Thursday will be a Government night—of putting some other Business before it?

MR. SPEAKER: A Motion would have to be made that the Order of the Day should be postponed in order to make way for any other Motion.

DOUBLE RETURN.

EASTERN DIVISION OF DONEGAL AND OSSORY DIVISION OF QUEEN'S COUNTY.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, returned for the Eastern Division of Donegal, and for the Ossory Division of Queen's County, stated that he elected to sit for East Donegal.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH): I beg, Sir, to propose the Motion of which I have given Notice—

"That the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address, in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, have precedence, this day, over the Notices of Motions."

In doing so I should wish to explain in a very few words the position which I thought it proper to take up with reference to to-morrow. I had understood that there was a very strong feeling on both sides of the House in favour of an early discussion, and, if possible, a decision on the important question dealt with by the Bill of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Woodall). Well, Sir, for that reason, when the hon. Member appealed to me not to propose the resumption of the debate on the Address to-morrow, in order that his Bill might be discussed, and bearing in mind my own intention to propose the postponement of the debate on the Address on Thursday, it seemed to me that the request of the hon. Member was one to which I might properly accede. We have no wish whatever to

accede to that request unless it is the desire of the House that we should do so. But if it is the desire of the House that the hon. Member's Bill shall be postponed to an indefinite day, and that the debate on the Address should occupy to-morrow, without, so far as I can see, a chance of arriving at a conclusion, Her Majesty's Government will agree to that.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address, in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, have precedence, this day, over the Notices of Motions."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: Then, Sir, do I understand that if the right hon. Gentleman understands it to be the desire of the House—and certainly, so far as I am able to gather it, I think it is the general desire of the House—that this Private Bill, however important, should not interfere with the debate on the Address, and if this Motion is agreed to to-night, in that case the right hon. Gentleman will likewise consent to give Notice of a similar Motion to-morrow?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I will make inquiries in the course of the evening.

MR. DILLON said, that before this Motion was put he would like to make a few observations upon what seemed to him the extraordinary course which had been pursued by the Government. He thought that this Motion should not be allowed to pass by the Members of that House, more especially by the Members who represented the Irish people, without taking the present opportunity, the only one they would have, of entering their protest against the extraordinary course which was being adopted by the Government. The Government did not state their intention when they were laying the Most Gracious Speech of Her Majesty before the House, although they had had ample opportunities previously of finding out all that they desired as regarded Ireland. If they had not then arrived at the conclusion that the affairs of Ireland had reached that condition that immediate action on their part was required, he would ask hon. Members what could have occurred within the past three or four days which had induced the Government to perform this extraordinary

Mr. Parnell

somersault? They were told that if on the receipt of information which they were led to suppose was awaited from Ireland—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must point out to the hon. Member that he would not be in Order in discussing the Irish Question on the Motion for the postponing for this day of the Notices of Motion.

Mr. DILLON said, he would not, then, continue that line of argument; but he had supposed that there was some connection between the two matters. Of course, he bowed to the decision of the Speaker, and he would confine himself to the observations he had to offer upon the question whether the Orders of the Day should be postponed for the purpose of making way for the debate on the Address. The point to which he wished to address himself was this—that Tuesday also was a private Member's night. Either the subjects raised in the Queen's Speech from the Throne were of such importance as to justify the House in postponing the Business of private Members, so as to enable the consideration of the Speech to be proceeded with from day to day, or else they were not of sufficient importance. The House had been led to believe, until that evening, that the Speech would be proceeded with from day to day; and what he wanted to know was this—what reason had the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer given to induce the House to consent to the postponement of the Orders of the Day that evening, which would not apply equally well on to-morrow, and equally well on Thursday? He thought the House were entitled, before they agreed to the Motion, to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to state the reasons why they should agree to it. One new fact had certainly come under the notice of the House, and it was that the Government did not consider the questions raised in the Queen's Speech to be of sufficient importance to justify the House in proceeding with the discussion of them from day to day, until they could arrive at a conclusion upon them. He should like to have some little information as to the Forms of the House. He was not much versed with them, having been for a long time absent from the House, and having been frequently interrupted, when he was a

Member, when he attempted to take part in the deliberations of the House. The argument he had been endeavouring to bring out when he was called to Order by the Speaker was this—that the statement, now for the first time placed before the House, that the debate was to be interrupted, and for all they knew interrupted for a week, a fortnight, or it was exceedingly likely to be even longer, if the Bill announced to be brought forward on Thursday was persisted with, was of so startling a nature that the debate, if postponed at all, would have to be postponed for a very long time. Indeed, if the debate the Government proposed to continue that evening were of so little importance, he failed to see why it should be allowed to interfere at all with the privileges of private Members, whose opportunities were certainly not very enormous.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL): I think, Sir, I can answer the Questions of the hon. Member in a manner which will satisfy him. The course which the Government propose to adopt to-night is, I imagine, in strict accordance with the course adopted on all former occasions when the debate on the Address has not been concluded within the first week in which the House met. In recent years the debate has been generally of a prolonged nature; and the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone) will, I think, bear me out when I say that on several occasions, when the debate on the Address was not concluded before the first private Members' night, a Motion of this kind was always made in order to enable the House to deal with the debate on the Address before proceeding to other Business. Therefore, there is nothing extraordinary in the course which the Government have adopted. Also the hon. Member will perceive, if he looks at the Notice Paper, that there is no Motion of any private Member of any very great importance—certainly no Motion of any importance compared with the Motion which the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) is going to submit to the House. The House will perceive that there is additional reason why the Government should make the Motion they have made to-night. There is no reason I know of to come to the conclusion that the debate on the Address may not con-

clude before Thursday; and on Thursday my right hon. Friend has stated that he will make a Motion, if the debate on the Address is not concluded, to bring another subject before the notice of the House—a subject which he considers of the highest and most important character; a subject to which further debate on the Address must necessarily give way. Those are the reasons which the Government have for making this Motion; and I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite and others will be inclined to agree that there is nothing extraordinary or abnormal in the Motion, and nothing at variance with the regular and established practice of Parliament.

MR. PARNELL: I apprehend, Sir, that the conduct of the Government, in making the Motion now under discussion, is not found fault with, except on the ground of the incompleteness of the Motion itself. It appears to me that it would be well for the House to decide, on the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the debate on the Address should be interrupted in the extraordinary and unprecedented way suggested by the right hon. Gentleman. From the hasty examination I have been able to make, it certainly seems to me that the debate on the Address has scarcely ever, if ever, been interrupted as the right hon. Gentleman suggests that it should be interrupted on this occasion.

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that the Question is not one of the interruption of the debate on the Address, but the continuation of the debate on the Address. It is the ordinary Motion which is made when it is considered desirable to postpone the Motion standing in the names of private Members, so as to allow the debate on the Address to be proceeded with.

MR. PARNELL: With the view of putting myself in Order, I shall move an Amendment to the Motion. I propose to leave out all the words in the Motion after the word "precedence," in order to insert—

"(On all days on which it is set down over Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day,"

so that the Motion will then read—

"That the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address, in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, have

precedence on all days on which it is set down over the Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day."

I wish, Sir, in other words, to ask the House to deal with this question as a whole, and to settle it now, so that our Business may not be interrupted to-morrow by a Motion to give precedence to the Address over the Bill of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall), and so that it may not be interrupted again on Thursday, as promised by the Government, by a Motion with regard to precedence for coercive measures against Ireland. I think, Sir, we are in a position to deal with this question now, and to decide whether we shall adhere to existing precedents, which I believe are all on one side; or whether we shall declare that the debate on the Address shall be a continuous proceeding, as it has always been up to the present date, and shall not be interrupted each day by questions of the relative importance of this, or that, or the other Bill. I wish to direct attention to the fact that, in all human probability, if the course which the Government has foreshadowed, and if my important Amendment be not agreed to, the discussion on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) cannot be concluded to-night, and that instead of resuming the discussion on that Amendment to-morrow you will turn aside to the discussion of a Bill on the undoubtedly important question of female franchise, and that instead of resuming the debate on Thursday you will turn aside to the other question of the coercion of Ireland. I would ask English agricultural Members, returned by the counties of England, whether they think they will be carrying out the wishes of their constituents, if they allow the Government to turn them away from the discussion of the very important subject of the agricultural situation in England, and the rights of the agricultural labourers on the Land Question? The motive and desire of the Government appears to be self-evident. Their stratagems are various. An Amendment was placed on the Paper late last night, just before the adjournment of the House—I have no doubt as the result of hurried consultation and communications between the front Treasury Bench and their followers—an Amendment to insert after the word "Agriculture," in the 11th

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paragraph of the Speech, the following words:—

"And humbly to represent to Her Majesty the injury which Trade and Agriculture both in this Country and the Colonies are suffering in consequence of the system of Bounties granted by foreign Powers."

The Government desired to put forward for discussion any question rather than the question of the interests of the labourers in the English counties; and when, Sir, as I understand, by the ruling of Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member, who gave Notice of the Amendment I have quoted, was unable to cut out the precedence obtained by the hon. Member for Ipswich, the front Treasury Bench resort to another stratagem. They give Notice that on Thursday they will interrupt the debate on the Address in order to get on to the question of Irish Coercion; and then, following the lead which was unwittingly given them by the hon. Member for Stoke on Women Suffrage, they eagerly jump at that question also, with a view to getting rid of another day, so as to render it more likely that the discussion on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich may be futile, vain, and of no issue whatever. I think it must be evident to the House that if we are to proceed in order and with due reverence to the Throne, we must go on with the debate on the reply to the Speech from the Throne until it has been concluded. The device of the Government must be patent to everybody—namely, to drag in any question they can for the purpose of evading debate on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich, just as the drowning man clutches at a straw. The discussion upon the Address has not been carried on at any excessive length up to the present time, and the Amendments have not been pressed with undue pertinacity. I recollect occasions when Amendments to the Address occupied a fortnight in debate; and, as yet, two nights only have been taken up this Session. There is, therefore, no ground, from any point of view, for the claim of the Government to interrupt the proceedings in connection with the Address in order to proceed to the question of Irish Coercion, and to get rid of the agricultural question which was raised by the hon. Member for Ipswich. The only way in which the House can prevent the loss of time and energy will

be by agreeing to some such Amendment as I now propose.

MR. T. M. HEALY seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out all the words after the word "precedence" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, "on all days on which it is set down over Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, there seemed to be no doubt that the House was placed in a somewhat difficult position by the announcement which the Government had made. Everyone would agree that, whatever the causes that might lead to the necessity, it was a very inconvenient process, to say the least of it, that the Address to the Crown should be postponed to an indefinite period. But he wished to suggest to the hon. Member for the City of Cork (*Mr. Parnell*) that he might confine the purport of his Amendment to that day and to-morrow. If that course were followed, the House would have time to ascertain how matters stood. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for India (*Lord Randolph Churchill*) had suggested that the debate on the Address might be concluded to-day or to-morrow. He was glad to hear that suggestion; because every Government was bound to do everything in its power to hasten the conclusion of a debate upon an Address proposed by itself. The House had disposed the previous evening of two Amendments to the Address; and he saw no reason why the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich (*Mr. Jesse Collings*) should not be disposed of that night. The other Amendments might then be disposed of to-morrow; and thus, the discussion arising out of the Address having been concluded, there would be no necessity for interrupting the debate. But the whole matter was hypothetical, and could not be determined until they should see what progress was made with the various Amendments set down for that and the following evening. If the hon. Member for the City of Cork should think fit to modify his Amendment so as to limit its effect to Tuesday and Wednesday, the House would probably find a convenient way out of the difficulties which had arisen.

Mr. FINCH-HATTON observed that, as one of the English Members referred to by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), he was anxious to lose no time in taking up the challenge. The hon. Member for the City of Cork had threatened English county Members with the displeasure of their constituents if they did anything to postpone the discussion of the interesting question about to be raised by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings). Probably his (Mr. Finch-Hatton's) was about the worst case which the hon. Member for the City of Cork could have cited; because his was a purely agricultural constituency, which took the greatest possible interest in the question to be brought forward by the hon. Member for Ipswich. He (Mr. Finch-Hatton) had himself laid on the Table a Bill similar to that of the hon. Member for Ipswich. He begged to tell the hon. Member that his constituents, interested as they were, would wish that it and every other subject should be postponed in favour of the consideration of an important question affecting the integrity of the Empire. His constituents would approve the precedence of any measure which the responsible Advisers of the Crown might hold to be necessary for the re-assertion of the supremacy of the law in Ireland.

Mr. WOODALL said, he would be very sorry to press the Motion; but it certainly did appear to be extremely inconvenient for the House to tie its hands with regard to what might be its possible action on Thursday next. He thought that when the proposal was made to-night that the debate be adjourned, the sense of the House should be taken as to whether it should be adjourned over to-morrow, or until to-morrow.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I very much agree with what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt); and after the speech of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall), of course I have no hesitation in saying that it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to proceed with the debate on the Address to-morrow. Therefore, the matter could be simplified by the amendment of the Motion as proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, to which the Government would be willing to accede. But, in my

own defence, I may say that I have simply followed invariable precedent in giving Notice of Motion as applicable to a single day. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) made a suggestion which I must most earnestly repudiate. He seemed to suggest—and the remark was received with cheers by hon. Members in that quarter of the House—that we were endeavouring in this way to get rid of the agricultural question, which the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) wishes to raise on the Address. I never heard a more baseless assertion made in this House. We have placed this Motion on the Paper in order that the hon. Member for Ipswich might have an opportunity of bringing forward his Amendment this evening; and the hon. Member who, so far as I know, is chiefly instrumental in postponing the Motion of the hon. Member for Ipswich is the hon. Member for the City of Cork himself. We are extremely desirous that the House should get to the discussion of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich. I had supposed, when I made a conditional promise to the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall), that it would be perfectly possible that that discussion could be closed by a division to-night; but, if that be not possible, it might be resumed and concluded to-morrow. We in no way shirk the issue to be raised by the hon. Member for Ipswich. But with regard to the additional proposal of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, that we should tie the hands of the House and the Government with reference to all days until the debate on the Address should be concluded, I must most earnestly entreat the House not in any way to sanction such a Motion as that. What it means is simply the delay of the proposal which we feel it our duty to make to the House on Thursday. I dare say that several hon. Members may think that we have been some time in making up our minds before presenting this proposal to the House. I am not ashamed to say that we have been very reluctantly forced to the conviction that such a proposal is necessary. But, having arrived at that conviction, it is a necessary corollary that the proposal should be placed before the House without delay, and that the House should be asked by the Government to press it forward with the utmost expedition which may be possible.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Everyone must, I think, subscribe to what has been stated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite with regard to the Motion of which he has given Notice to-day. That Motion is in perfect form and regularity, and when we are prepared I presume we may assent to it without any difficulty or objection. But the right hon. Gentleman will see that he has given a Notice to-day which raises a new question of very great importance with regard to the order of Business of the House—namely, whether it is desirable, either with a view to the observance of the usual practice of this House, or with a view to the ultimate despatch and expedition of any measure, that the Government should interpose Business of great importance in the middle of the discussion of its own Address? We have had a great deal of experience in former years in the discussion of such questions. But what I wish to put to the right hon. Gentleman opposite and the hon. Member for the City of Cork

Mr. Parnell is, that that is a question of very great importance, upon which it is extremely difficult to give a conclusive judgment at a moment's notice. I should certainly wish myself to have the opportunity of referring to former cases—even cases of Irish legislation, which, in my opinion, are nearly analogous, and which would afford us light upon the subject. What I wish to point out is that the suggestion of my right hon. Friend near me (Sir William Harcourt) prejudices no one. It determines the course of Business to-day and to-morrow, and leaves us in a condition to inquire between this time and to-morrow what may be the bearings of the very important question raised by the Notice given on behalf of the Government to-night. I certainly would suggest—and I hope it may be done with the general consent of the House, if the hon. Member for the City of Cork assents—that the form recommended by my right hon. Friend near me should be adopted; because by to-morrow we should be in a position to select in our minds and adopt some definite course with regard to that proposal.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS said, he thought that there would be no difficulty upon his own side of the House in bringing the discussion upon his

Amendment to a close that night. He was glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was disposed to do his best upon his side to bring it to an early conclusion. With regard to the statement of the hon. Member for the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Finch-Hatton), he ventured to say, from his knowledge of constituencies, including the hon. Gentleman's own, that even that formula—which they expected, but not quite so soon—about the integrity of the Empire would stand the Government in little stead if the interests of the labourers were put aside by a side wind.

Mr. PARNELL said, that he was very willing to adopt the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), provided it were distinctly understood that the Government would allow the judgment of the House to be taken on the Motion of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) either that night or to-morrow.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words, "and To-morrow over other Orders of the Day and the Notices of Motions."—(Sir William Harcourt.)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question, as amended, put.

Ordered, That the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address, in answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, have precedence, this day over the Notices of Motions, and To-morrow over other Orders of the Day and the Notices of Motions.—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [FOURTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st January].—[See page 92.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

[Fourth Night.]

ALLOTMENTS AND SMALL HOLDINGS.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS, in rising to move the following Amendment to the Address:—

"But this House humbly expresses its regret that no measures are announced by Her Majesty for the present relief of these classes, and especially for affording facilities to the agricultural labourers and others in the rural districts to obtain allotments and small holdings on equitable terms as to rent and security of tenure."

said, he thought there could be no doubt that depression existed, and that it was felt both in town and country, but especially among the labouring classes in rural districts. It had been suggested that a further reduction might be made in the wages of farm labourers; but, seeing that the rate now varied from 12s. to 9s. per week only, there was scarcely room for any further reduction. Indeed, the only mystery was how a man and his family could exist, far less live in comfort, on such a miserable pittance. Worse than that, there were large and increasing numbers of men out of work altogether. They had been glad to hear the Leader of the Opposition, in his speech upon the Address, refer to the fact that the labourers were now, for the first time, represented in that House, and express his belief that there was a great deal of regret on that side of the House that there was no reference made in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech to the labourers, and to some further means of bettering their condition. Now, although there were so many labourers out of work in the rural districts, yet no one would pretend to say that in the necessities of agriculture there was not plenty of work for them. The land in every direction was crying out for labour; and without labour it was absurd to expect land to produce what it ought to yield. It was said that the farmers could not afford to employ labour. But it was certain they could not afford to farm without labour. Therefore, it came to this—the labourer was standing idle because the farmers could not employ him, and there was no means by which he could get on to the land to work it on his own account. The consequence was that the labourers were flying from the soil, to the great detriment of the land. This was a workman's question in town as well as country. It was not necessary for him to say one word in favour of

allotments and small holdings, for everyone who was formerly opposed to them seemed now to have changed his opinion. ["No, no!"] That seemed to be the case at the meeting at Willis's Rooms; and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Chaplin), who on former occasions had strenuously opposed the principle, had, during the past three months, been making speeches of the most gushing character in favour of allotments and small holdings. Whether that was due to the fact that the labourer had got the vote he would not say; at any rate, the whole question had now assumed a different aspect altogether from what it presented previously. During the Elections the most unbounded interest was shown in this question by the rural population. As to the three acres and a cow, the labourer was not such a fool as to suppose that he would get something for nothing; but he thought that some legitimate means should be provided for giving him access to the land. Once let him get possession of the three acres, there was little doubt that by his own thrift and his own efforts the cow and many other things would speedily follow. He deprecated the leaving of the solution of the question to voluntary associations. He had not a word to say against private enterprise; but he wanted to know why any associations were wanted? If each individual landlord would take the matter in hand, the thing would be done without an association. But what was wanted was something behind that—that if the thing were not done, labourers should not be left to the mercy of voluntary effort, or to the landlord or farmer. Hon. Members, no doubt, knew what was going on between the various sections of the territorial party and the labourers. A Conservative journal at Ipswich had said—

"Surely the men must now recognize the fact that they may use their votes in such a manner as to injure their best interests. They will get neither three acres of land or a cow. They will have probably less work and lower wages. The labouring men who have gone Radical cannot be surprised if they lose the sympathy and co-operation of Conservative Landlords and Conservative farmers."

To his knowledge such writings were read to his labourers by a farmer. When they talked of "Boycotting" in Ireland let them remember that these

were words read to men content to work for 9s. and 10s. a-week to keep their children from starving. He had visited Lambourne, and there he found a beautiful village falling into decay and the grass growing in the streets. In the whole village there were not two eggs to be got for breakfast. Bear in mind that they imported 2,250,000 eggs daily; but if a French villager visited Lambourne would he not say—"What fools these English are to send to us when they have every facility here for supplying themselves." There was nothing new in his proposal from what had been brought forward since the time of Elizabeth, except the compulsion where it was needed, and that compulsion would not be carried out where the supply of land was sufficient. As to the recommendation for the sale of glebe lands, whatever reply the Government might make to this Amendment, he hoped they would not play the labourers false in any way; in other words, that they would not pretend to give a benefit which the suffering labourers would not actually realize. Glebe lands, if sold at all, must be sold without any conditions. Besides, many clergymen had their glebes badly situated for the purposes desired by labourers. In some parts there was plenty of glebe land and few people; while in other districts the people were numerous and no such land. Therefore, the labourers would thank the Government for nothing. What they wanted was machinery by which, where a fair and legitimate demand for land existed, it should be had at a fair price, and on a tenure that would not depend on touching the hat to either parson or squire; but on condition that the holders of it should be independent, paying rent for it, and cultivating it. The labourers had a fair right to ask for that. They were told that nothing could be done, the price of corn was so low. If they put corn out of the question there was still plenty of scope. They had butter which, in his younger days, used to sell at 7d. per lb. now double the price; fowls which they used to sell at 1s. 1d. now 2s. 6d.; cheese, pork, vegetables, and other small articles of food, all requiring that minute industry which the large farmer could not well give, but which a peasant proprietary could well bestow. Articles of food other than corn were im-

ported to this country to the value, in the aggregate, of £50,000,000, and every pennyworth of which they ought to produce. Fair Traders talked with alarm about a few thousand pounds' worth of foreign manufactures—girders, for instance—brought from Belgium and from France; but they had not a word to say about the fact that we imported £5,000,000 worth of cheese annually into this country. When they had £50,000,000 worth of food imported every year at prices very much higher than those which prevailed 40 years ago, and when they had the material for its production at hand and the labour standing idle, he wanted to know why that food was not produced at home? Supposing a Manchester manufacturer had plenty of material and plenty of labour lying idle, while his books were overflowing with orders, such a state of affairs would not be tolerated for a moment; and yet that was a parallel to the present condition of agriculture. ["No, no!"] They had in this country what prevailed nowhere else that he knew of, a landless peasantry. The agricultural labourer had been reduced by legislation from the position of having an independent interest in the land to that of a mere hireling. The labourers had been forced by successive migrations into the towns, and thus they had a proletariat in this country such as did not exist anywhere else that he was aware of in Europe. He claimed for this population a measure of Land Reform which he contended would be, in reality, a most Conservative measure. He was horrified to think that hon. Members opposite—the territorial party—could not see the danger that attached to their present position, a danger from which the measure he proposed would save them; but if they resisted that measure they would go further and fare worse. He had much pleasure in moving the Amendment which stood in his name.

CAPTAIN VERNEY remarked, that it was no slight advantage to a new Member, when he for the first time claimed the indulgence of the House, that he had the privilege of seconding an Amendment which would undoubtedly command the sympathy, if not the active support, of gentlemen on both sides of the House. There was no Party, from the noble Marquess at the head of the Government to his (Captain Ver-

[*Fourth Night.*]

neys') hon. Opponent in North Bucks (Sir Samuel Wilson), during the last Election which had more completely identified themselves with this question than the Conservative Party. In every village and town the Conservative candidate had never failed to explain how he had been misunderstood, and how hard it was upon him that it should be supposed he was not interested in this question of allotments; therefore, hon. Gentlemen opposite would find it difficult to go into the Lobby in opposition to the Amendment. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury), in his famous speech at Newport, had even proposed to sacrifice the precious glebe lands to provide allotments for labourers. The hon. Baronet the Member for Honiton (Sir John Kennaway) had divided the House into four Parties—the "Great Conservative Party," the "Moderate Liberal," the "Radicals," and the "Irish." The "Moderate Liberal" he (Captain Verney) had some difficulty in laying his hand upon; but he took it that the moderate Liberal was one of those Liberals who were led by the Liberal Dukes, and the Liberal Dukes had undoubtedly identified themselves with the allotment question. The Radical Party would, as a matter of course, support the Amendment: so, too, would the Irish Members, as representing a warm and sympathetic race, always ready to throw itself on the side of the oppressed, and would countenance every measure for their relief. He claimed, therefore, for the Amendment the support of all Parties in the House. Another reason which concerned all was the fact that whereas for some months past the agricultural labourer was merely "in the air," now he was literally in the House; and every Member must feel how appropriate it was that a house largely elected by the agricultural labourers for the first time in the annals of our Constitution should give its earliest attention to a question which closely affected their interests. The Amendment proposed to address the Queen, in answer to the Speech from the Throne, in such words as would be very grateful and acceptable to Her Majesty, who was always most accessible to the humblest of her subjects—that Sovereign whose whole life had been governed by a "fundamental law" laid down by herself—her loyalty to her people.

Captain Verney

Amendment proposed,

By inserting, after the word "transient," in the 11th paragraph, the words "but this House humbly expresses its regret that no measures are announced by Her Majesty for the present relief of these classes, and especially for affording facilities to the agricultural labourers and others in the rural districts to obtain allotments and small holdings on equitable terms as to rent and security of tenure."—(*Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (Mr. CHAPLIN): Sir, it may, perhaps, be for the convenience of the House if I ask permission at once to reply to the speech of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Jesse Collings), and to the Amendment which he has placed on the Paper. Of the speech of the hon. Member I am bound to say that, considering his Amendment amounts to a Vote of Censure on Her Majesty's Government, one supported by weaker, feebler, more miserable arguments I never heard in the whole course of my life. Sir, the hon. Member was good enough to warn us of the danger we should incur by opposing his Amendment. I do not see that danger in the least. We are perfectly clear as to our position; and before I have concluded my observations I hope, to some extent at least, to be able to convert the hon. Gentleman, at all events, to a portion of our views. He made one observation in the course of his speech—and which, I confess, somewhat surprised me—that the agricultural labourer in this country was not such a fool as he was thought. I do not know whoever thought he was a fool, unless it was the hon. Member himself; but I am perfectly certain that the agricultural labourer of this country is not such a fool as to be taken in by the speech which the hon. Member has delivered. Now, Sir, the paragraph in the Gracious Speech from the Throne to which the hon. Member alluded in his speech refers in terms of regret to the fact that no material improvement is to be noted in the condition of the trade and agriculture of the Kingdom; and the burden of the hon. Member's Amendment, although I am bound to say his speech was much narrower than his Amendment, is, that Her Majesty's Ministers are to be blamed because they have announced no measures whatever in the Gracious Speech from the Throne for the present relief of those

classes who are suffering from the prolonged depression in trade and agriculture. Now, I hope the hon. Member will forgive me if I express my opinion at once that his Amendment is justly open to grave condemnation upon two different grounds—on the ground that it is unreasonable on the one hand, and wholly inaccurate on the other. The hon. Member said nothing in his speech about trade, although his Amendment directly refers to it. His Amendment is utterly unreasonable so far as it relates to the attitude which Her Majesty's Ministers have adopted towards those who are suffering from depression in trade; because he must know, and the House must know, as I had occasion to state last night, that Her Majesty's Government have already appointed a Royal Commission of Inquiry into that subject. Nothing could be more unusual or unreasonable than that, having just appointed a Royal Commission, we should in the Speech from the Throne announce any measure dealing with this question before we have received any Report or recommendation of any kind whatever from the Commission. With regard to the attitude of the Government towards those who are suffering from depression in agriculture, I say that the Amendment is wholly inaccurate. What measures, except those which are referred to in the Royal Speech, did the hon. Member expect that we should announce? It is perfectly true that agriculture is suffering, as it has been suffering for a long period of years, from serious and severe depression. What have been the causes of that depression? It began with a series of bad seasons, such as I know of no parallel to before. When they passed away, and we were blessed once again with sunshine, then the prices of agricultural produce fell to a degree that I believe is without precedent for many years in the history of this country. Does the hon. Member think that we ought to have introduced a measure attempting to deal with those causes? He knows, as well as I do, why it was impossible to do so. I entertain the strongest possible opinion that the present agricultural depression is mainly, if not entirely, owing to the great depreciation of the prices of agricultural produce. [Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: What produce?] All agricultural produce. I

should have liked the hon. Member to have named to the House some of those articles to which he referred as having risen in value—[Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: Butter]; but that he entirely omitted to do. That is my opinion as to the cause of agricultural depression; and, as I have said, the hon. Member knows perfectly that we are absolutely powerless to introduce any measure dealing with the prices of food. And even if the present Cabinet had the inclination, which they have not, it would be perfectly impracticable, hopeless, and impossible, in the present House of Commons at all events, to carry such a measure, whatever may be the case at some time in the dim and distant future. Well, Sir, I mentioned last night that, though it was impossible to deal in any way with the question of prices, we had indicated in the Royal Speech our intention to do something which we believe will be in the direction of reducing the cost of production. A sentence in one of the paragraphs of the Royal Speech indicates clearly that Her Majesty's Government intend to introduce measures which will involve the consideration of the whole question of the incidence of local burdens. I say, therefore, it is wholly inaccurate upon that ground, if upon no other—but there are other grounds besides—for the hon. Member to say, in his Amendment, that no measures whatever have been announced by the Government for the relief of the classes suffering from agricultural depression. But the hon. Member, before he has had the opportunity of learning what we may propose, is obliged to flash his own proposal upon the House of Commons without an hour's delay. He says we ought to bring in a measure enabling the labourer to obtain allotments on equitable terms and with security of tenure, and that if we do that he is convinced we shall solve the whole question, agricultural depression will disappear, and all will be prosperous. Whatever the House may think of this Amendment there is one thing about it at all events about which we shall agree, and that is that it is by no means original; and, indeed, though the hands are the hands of Esau it is the voice of Jacob; or, it would be more accurate to say, that the hand is the hand of Jesse, but the voice is the voice of Joseph. The proposal we have

before us is neither more nor less than our old friends the "three acres and a cow," only dressed up in Parliamentary guise. What we really have to consider to-night is not the short and inconclusive Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich, but the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain), which he put before the electors so assiduously, energetically, and ably during the electoral campaign which has just come to a close. I hope the House will not suppose I am prejudiced against these propositions because they are made by the right hon. Gentleman. On the contrary, in some of the objects he has in view I cordially sympathize with him; while of others I entirely disapprove. The hon. Member for Ipswich assumed that it was unnecessary for him to argue the question at the present time, because there was no difference of opinion as to the advantage of allotments and small holdings. I take exception to that observation altogether. I draw a great distinction between allotments on the one hand, and what are called small holdings on the other. What I understand by an allotment is this—a piece of land either immediately attached to, or within a convenient distance from, a cottager's home for which the only capital required is his own labour and his spade, and of a size sufficient to enable him to grow garden produce for himself and for his family, and for another very important member of the establishment—namely, for his pig. Now, Sir, I do not, in the least, wish to dogmatize as to what ought to be the size of an allotment of this kind or the distance it should be from the occupier's home. These are matters of detail upon which, no doubt, Members will have much to say in the future. We have in the House Members who will be able to give practical information on that subject; and among them there is one whose opinion on the point will be of great value. I mean the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Arch); and, however much some of us may differ from him, I am sure both sides of the House will welcome the hon. Member on this question as the Representative of a class for the first time returned in this House. If I may be permitted to say so, I even hope he will take an opportunity, in the course of this debate, of

Mr. Chaplin

expressing his views on this question. I remember, some years ago, having the opportunity of examining the hon. Member as a witness before the Royal Agricultural Commission; and I was much struck by the evidence he gave on that occasion. I hope he will correct me if I am wrong; but, if I am right, he rather seemed to hold the opinion at that time that, for an allotment such as I have described, probably about a quarter of an acre was the most convenient size for a labourer to cultivate for himself, and the distance from his home ought not, under any circumstances, to exceed more than half a mile. If I am correct in my assumption, they are propositions with which I, for one, should cordially agree. "A small holding," on the other hand, I take to be either a freehold, or small tenancy, on which the occupier lives, to which he looks for his means of livelihood, and on which the whole of the labour is supplied by the family dwelling upon the holding. I say at once I look upon the provision of allotments for agricultural labourers, provided they are not too large, provided they are let at a fair and reasonable rent, and provided they are at a reasonable distance from their homes, as an unmixed good to the rural agricultural population. On the other hand, small holdings, such as I have described, I regard, for reasons which I will presently state, as a much more questionable boon. Let me add that a good deal has been done in this country in the direction of providing allotments already. The other day I saw a calculation made by Major Cragie, Secretary to the Central Chamber of Agriculture, and based upon the latest available Returns—those for 1873, since which there must have been an increase—from which it appears that there was in this country 242,542 allotments of the nature I have described; and as the Census showed there were 765,159 agricultural labourers, the proportion was one allotment to every three labourers in the kingdom even in those days. The hon. Member spoke, I thought, if not in words of condemnation, in terms of the very faintest praise, of an Association—the Landowners' Association—which has been formed in this country within a comparatively recent period. I am greatly indebted to Lord Onslow, the Secretary of that Association, for infor-

mation with which he has supplied me, and which shows what is being done in this direction by that Association at the present time. I am told that a large number of landowners, including many Members of both Houses of Parliament, and owning among them about 1,800,000 acres of land, have already joined this Association. They have been communicated with as to their views on the subject, and they replied to this effect—they are disposed to solicit applications for land adjacent to villages and not already so let to be held in allotments, and generally to afford facilities for the extension of the system to the agricultural labourers employed on their estates. I think this is some answer to the question put by the hon. Member for Ipswich as to why an Association is wanted at all. There may be another reason for it. That Association is wanted, I should say, and is, perhaps, eminently necessary, in order to counteract the mischief sought to be done by the hon. Member and some of his associates as between landlords and tenants and labourers of this country. It may be true—I am not prepared to deny it—that there may be something still wanting to be done in this direction; and, where that is the case, Her Majesty's Government are perfectly ready and prepared to encourage and facilitate a wide and general extension of the system of allotments throughout the country. Here, again, I am obliged to charge the hon. Member not only with inaccuracy, but with what appears to me to be extreme impatience on his part; because, before he had heard a word on the subject of the proposals which might be forthcoming from the Government, he took the opportunity of subjecting them to a sweeping condemnation. "Glebe lands! What is the use of them?" says the hon. Member; "we want no glebe lands; we want the labourers to be perfectly free." Nothing would satisfy them but that word which is of so much blessing and comfort to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham—that blessed word "compulsion." The House will recollect that this suggestion to facilitate the sale of glebe lands was among the most prominent of the propositions put forward by Lord Salisbury in the great speech which he made at Newport during the course of the electoral campaign. I

am bound to say that when I read that speech I thought at the time that I had never read anything more happily designed than his proposal to meet a double object greatly in need of attention. Every one who is acquainted with the circumstances of the agricultural situation must know that among the classes who have suffered from agricultural depression few people have felt it more, or have suffered from it so much, as that class of the clergy who derive their income from glebe lands. Their difficulties and troubles in this respect are increased by the great difficulty of selling glebe lands under the law as it exists at present. The Government recognize that fact, and they recognize something else besides, and that is that there is still, perhaps in many portions of the country, a large unsatisfied demand for allotments at fair and equitable rents. The importance of this part of the question of fairness of rents has been recognized in all previous legislation, which for many years has dealt with this question. It was only I think in 1876 that my right hon. Friend the present Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir R. Asheton Cross) passed a Bill called, I think, the Allotments Extension Bill, in which one of the main provisions was that the allotments for which it is intended to provide should be held at fair and equitable rents. That is a doctrine to which I heartily subscribe.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: What Bill does the right hon. Gentleman refer to?

MR. CHAPLIN: I am sorry to say that I am speaking from memory.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Does the right hon. Gentleman refer to the Allotments Extension Act of 1882?

MR. CHAPLIN: I am referring to the Bill passed by the present Secretary of State for the Home Department in 1876. I think it was called the Commons Act; but I have forgotten the name of the measure. We propose, in consequence, so to alter the existing legislation as to facilitate the sale of glebe lands by the clergy upon terms and conditions which will be specially designed for the benefit and advantage of the agricultural labourers of the country, as well as for the relief of the clergy. The only limit that I remember in this direction in the speech which Lord Salisbury made at Newport was this—that he was not

prepared to sanction purchase by compulsion. If the hon. Member for Ipswich knew as much as I do about the condition of the clergy who derive their incomes from glebe lands, and the hardships they suffer, he would be well aware of the fact that there is not the slightest necessity for compulsion in this matter. It is notorious how much many of them have suffered. I know scores of instances myself. I have known, over and over again, of a glebe farm having been given up and placed on the clergyman's hands in such a foul condition that it was impossible for him to find a tenant to take it again. The clergymen who do their duty in their parishes cannot possibly afford the time to superintend their farms in such a manner as is absolutely necessary for their successful cultivation. The result is that in nine cases out of ten, in all probability, you will find that the clergymen placed in this position are not only ready and willing, but are keenly desirous of selling that which, in too many cases of late years, has proved to be nothing but an incumbrance to them. If that be done you will find—and this is my answer to the statement of the hon. Member for Ipswich, who said that proposals of this kind would not be of the smallest use whatever—in a great number of the parishes of England land thrown upon the market of just about the right amount and probably just about the right description, and situated in places such as are requisite and most suited for the agricultural labourers of the country. There remains for me nothing to deal with but the question of small holdings; and, with the permission of the House, I should like to say a few words on that subject. The House will have perceived that I am heartily in favour of a large extension of the system of allotments. I do not believe, however great that extension may be, that it will do anything whatever to remove the effects of agricultural depression. I do not think it is likely to have any effect of that kind; but I do think that it will do more to add to the comforts of the homes, and to improve the material condition of the rural population of this country, than anything else you can do that is either practicable or possible at the present time. But with regard to a large creation of small holdings by the action of the Legislature, I hold a totally different

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opinion altogether. I am satisfied that not only would it do nothing to mitigate, but, in my opinion, it would have precisely the opposite effect, and it would only tend to aggravate and increase the agricultural depression of which we all so much complain. Something, no doubt, may be said in favour of small tenancies; but I have yet to learn whether by small holdings, as a general rule, small tenancies or small freeholds are meant by the author of this Amendment. I admit that, in many cases, a tenant of a small farm, holding his farm under favourable occupation, has probably been able to weather the storm of depression as well as, and possibly better than, some of his neighbours in larger occupations; but the small tenancy is one thing, and the small freehold is another. My experience is, that of all the classes who have suffered most at this time from agricultural depression the small freeholders of the country have been the worst. I am afraid, however, that the hon. Member for Ipswich and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham differ with me altogether as to the cause of agricultural depression quite as much as I differ from them as to the remedy for it. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham has put his views and his theories very distinctly before the country; and I should like for a moment to remind the House of what they are. The right hon. Gentleman made a speech at Birmingham on the 9th of November last. He there disclosed to the country what were his views as to the real cause of the agricultural depression at the present time. He said that the soil of the country was in a few hands, and that was the real, the true, and permanent cause of the depression which we all regret. His remedy was equally simple. It was not to return to a protective tariff, in order to keep up the rents of the landlords. No, Sir, I should think not. Any man who made that proposition in these days for that purpose would be simply mad, and would certainly be called so. But it is to be found, he says, in a radical reform of the Land Laws of this country. I wish to make two observations on this subject, and the first of them is this. It is an entire mistake to suppose that the Tory Party and Gentlemen on this side of the House generally are in any degree whatever opposed to a large distribution

of land among the people of this country. On the contrary, it is the one thing, speaking for myself, that I desire at the present moment more than anything else in the world. And that is a doctrine which I have preached for years past both in this House and out of it. There are many reasons why I should think this desirable to be done; but I will content myself with giving one to-night to hon. Gentlemen opposite, which will be a guarantee of the complete sincerity of my convictions on this point. I wish to see a large addition to the owners of land in this country, because land is no longer the same safe kind of property that it used to be.

Laughter. That is not my only reason; I said that there were many; but it is the one reason which I said I would give as a guarantee of my perfect sincerity. It is notorious that, day after day, attacks of all sorts are being made on landed property at the present time from all kinds of quarters of the world, any one of which, or most of which, if carried out, would be most injurious, not only to the land itself, in my opinion, but to those who are unhappily the owners of it. And a large increase in the number of owners of land such as I desire is, I think, the surest and perhaps the only safeguard against the predatory instincts of a class whose Socialistic schemes have found such powerful exponents in these days, and which are so admirably represented by the hon. Member for Ipswich and the right hon. Gentleman opposite. The second observation I wish to make is this—I quite admit that there may be, and I acknowledge that there are, defects in the existing Land Laws; and, where that is the case, there is no person in this House who is prepared to go further in the direction of wise and judicious reform than myself. But, in my opinion, it is perfectly idle and ludicrous on the part of the Liberals, or any other person—I hope the right hon. Gentleman will excuse me for saying so—to assert that they are the cause of the existing depression. What are the facts? As every one knows, some 10 or 12 years ago we reached a general pitch of agricultural prosperity in this country, such as was not known to have been approached by any other country in the world. Nor was that prosperity confined to agriculture alone. I re-

member the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) making a remarkable speech about that period, which attracted great attention at the time; and in it he described the general prosperity of the country as being so great as positively to be increasing "by leaps and bounds." And no doubt he was accurate in the statement he then made. But, in the face of such a statement as that, am I not strictly justified in saying that it is worse than idle and ludicrous—it is mischievous in the extreme—for Gentlemen in the position of the right hon. Member for Birmingham to go about the country denouncing the very laws and the very same conditions under which the summit of agricultural prosperity was reached as the sole and only cause of agricultural depression at the present time? If the House will give me its attention a moment longer I can also show them that if the proposals of the right hon. Member for Birmingham were adopted they would inevitably lead in the course of time to the very thing that he abhors—namely, the re-imposition of protective tariffs. How did he support his case on that occasion? He referred to France as an illustration of the advantages of small holdings, and contrasted the number of owners of land in France with the number in England. He said that you have 6,000,000 owners of land at present in France, and that 5,000,000 of them own less than 10 acres. "That is the condition," he said, "which I wish to bring about in England." Why did the right hon. Gentleman conceal from his Birmingham audience this very important fact—that those 5,000,000 small proprietors in France had never been able to exist without a system of protection; and that so extreme is their position that only within the last few months the protective duties in France have been raised to such an extent, as I have been informed within the last few days—though I do not vouch for the accuracy of the information—that the price of bread in some of the towns of France has risen to nearly 1s. a loaf. [Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The duty on wheat is 5s. a quarter.] I am persuaded that that would be the inevitable result in this country from the adoption of the right hon. Gentleman's view. The withholding of this impor-

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tant fact from his hearers at Birmingham is a specimen of the candour and fairness with which he has dealt with this whole question of land. I can only suppose that he knew the people he was addressing pretty well, and thought that anything was good enough for an audience at Birmingham, who probably were more prejudiced and even less well informed on this subject than the right hon. Gentleman himself apparently was. In making these observations I have no desire whatever to say anything that should be offensive to the right hon. Gentleman; but, at the same time, he took so prominent a position on this question and made so many speeches on it in the Recess, containing so many extraordinary statements, that it is impossible, on this occasion, not to call attention to them. Here is another. Speaking at Hull, on August 5, the right hon. Gentleman said—

"Now, I go on to the reform of the Land Law. It lies at the root of the whole matter. Agriculture is the greatest of all our industries. When it is depressed all the others follow suit."

That is quite true, and I agree with it. Then he went on to describe the enormous market, the great gain that would be produced to our manufacturing interests if by any means a revival of prosperity could be secured to agriculture. Again I agree with him. I remember that some years ago, in some of his writings, Mr. Giffen made a statement on this subject that struck me as truly remarkable. I know not how far it was accurate; but he is admittedly a great authority. It was as to the value of the home market—and agriculture was the main element in the home market as a purchasing power to the manufacturers of this country—and he computed its purchasing power to the manufacturers to be eight times as great as that of all the other markets in the world. Well, in order to accomplish that great purpose this is what is going to happen according to the right hon. Gentleman. He says the land must be held so as to give the largest amount of employment to the greatest possible number of people, and so as to get the greatest possible amount of produce from the soil. I can tell him how to do it. Let him take or buy a good-sized arable farm—I can easily accommodate him with one at this moment—let him

trench it—that is to say, dig it, instead of ploughing it—let him manure it highly, and then grow wheat upon it. In that way he would be strictly fulfilling all the conditions that he desired to lay down in his own words. The general result he will find to be this—that he has employed an incredible amount of labour—in his own words, he would employ the greatest possible number of persons; he would grow a most extraordinary crop, I know not how many quarters to the acre; and at the end of the process he would have an incredible large balance at the bank against him, and he would be extremely lucky if he did not find himself in the Bankruptcy Court. Well, these were the propositions seriously put forward by the right hon. Gentleman. ["No, no!"] What is the use of saying No! no! I have quoted his own words. They have never been contradicted by him, and he cannot deny them. I say that these were the propositions seriously put forward by the right hon. Gentleman in the country to insure the prosperity of agriculture. It would be about as wise—that is to say, it would not be one whit more foolish—for him to go to the manufacturers of this country and tell them to banish all their machinery and all the improvements that science has effected for them, to go back to the hand looms and the spinning wheels of their ancestors, and then go forth and endeavour to compete successfully in all the foreign markets of the world with the other nations who are already embarrassing you so seriously. I ask, what is there in the experience or the information of the hon. Member for Ipswich and the right hon. Member for Birmingham to show that they have any reasonable ground to expect a great agricultural success from turning the farms of this country—as I understand they desire to do—into a number of small freeholds or small holdings? I remember that when the Agricultural Commission was sitting we thought it part of our duty to make a most close and careful inquiry into the whole of the question. Hon. Members opposite never lose an opportunity of having a slap at that Commission and saying how worthless it was, and how much of the public money was wasted on it; but if they will take the trouble to study some small portion of the mass of valuable information con-

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tained in its Report they would possess a great deal more knowledge on some branches of the subject than they now show. It was our duty to inquire into the results of this system, not only at home but abroad; and if I am not wearying the House at too great length I should like to give in a few words some of the results of that information. And I ask the attention of the House because it is really a matter of enormous importance. We sent Commissioners to Russia and to France.

MR. GLADSTONE: Question!

MR. CHAPLIN: What does the right hon. Gentleman say?

MR. GLADSTONE: I said "Question!"

MR. CHAPLIN: That is the question. The question I am dealing with is an Amendment in which Her Majesty's Government are condemned for not introducing provisions into the Queen's Speech for providing small holdings for the benefit of agricultural labourers. I am endeavouring to show how completely the system of small holdings has failed not only in this country, but in other countries, and the right hon. Gentleman has the assurance to interrupt me by crying "Question!" I am not to be thwarted by the right hon. Gentleman, and I shall make my references to this Report, even though I may not have done so but for the right hon. Gentleman's interruption. What is the case in France? We sent a man of great ability and who was well versed in this subject to France, and in his Report he says—

"The peasant proprietor exists rather than lives; he rarely eats meat, his drink in a wine country is made from water poured over the already pressed grapes."

And, again, he says—

"Their wives become prematurely old from sold labour, and bent from carrying heavy loads."

What is the information that we obtain from Russia? A remarkable article appeared in *The Quarterly Review* in 1881, and which, I believe, has never been contradicted, in which the following paragraph appeared:—

"It is agreed on all sides that complete failure has been the result of the experiments made in Russia in 1861 and subsequently by stimulating the conversion of the large estates into small properties."

Is not that the question?

"From one end of the country to the other the peasant proprietors are in a state of semi-starvation; while in several of the other Baltic Provinces, once the richest in agricultural produce, starvation has assumed the form of widespread famine, which the Government is engaged in alleviating by considerable grants of money."

So I might go on reading evidence to support my contention that peasant proprietary has been a failure. ["No, no!" An hon. MEMBER: Stourton.] Yes, I will take Stourton; for I know something of it, and was several years ago, in happier days, in the habit of hunting in that country, and I am ready to admit that, to a certain extent, the system at Stourton has succeeded. And why has it succeeded there? It is because the population of the village are people who do not look for their livelihood to their freeholds; they are engaged in trades of various kinds, and their holdings, unless my memory has deceived me, are in the nature, not of small holdings, but of allotments, of which I have spoken in terms of so much praise. Let me say one word about the large number of freeholders who have existed, and who do exist, in several parts of the county which I represent. In the Isle of Axholme and along the coasts of Lincolnshire large tracts of country, which were formerly great estates, have all been broken up, and are populated entirely by people of this description. I have visited many of them. I have walked over their farms. I have conversed with hundreds of them. I know something, from my own observation, of their condition and their lot; and I have not the smallest hesitation in saying that, great as have been the sufferings of many classes connected with agriculture during the last few years, they will not compare, for a single moment, with the hardships of the lot which has been borne—borne unflinchingly and in the bravest manner—by the freeholders of the county of Lincolnshire. From all the experience I have had, however much I might desire it in my own interests, I should be utterly unworthy of the confidence of the House of Commons, or of those whom I represent, did I pretend to believe, for a single moment, that the creation of small holdings in great districts throughout the country would have the smallest effect in remedying the agricultural depression we are now suf-

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fering from. I have nothing more to say upon that head, and I thank the House for the patience with which it has listened to me; but I should like to say one word upon the position of the county Members who have been warned by the hon. Member opposite of the dangers which they incur by their present action. We laugh at those threats. We do not believe in the danger which they forbode for a moment. I speak not only as a Member of the Government, but as a county Member, as a country gentleman; and I would say for myself and for them that this is a question which we feel to be of peculiar interest for ourselves. We claim, Sir, that we have some practical knowledge and experience of this question. We live upon the same estates as those people whom the hon. Member desires to befriend; we dwell among them, and to many of them we are personally known. I have always thought that it is one of the happiest incidents of English country life that you will find on many an estate, for generation after generation, people and landlords dwelling together, whose families have existed on the same soil for generations past. The sentiments and the feelings that have been engendered by relations of this kind between them have not died away in England, and, please God, they will never do so; and we, the landlords, are prompted in our actions and views upon this question by feelings of regard, as well as by feelings of duty, to deal liberally, generously, and justly towards the people of this country. In fine, I claim this, at least—that we know as much of the condition of the people as those who now come forward on their behalf; and that we are ready to meet and to recognize the just requirements of the rural agricultural population of this country quite as much as, and possibly more effectually than, any Alderman of Birmingham, or any member of the Caucus, however distinguished he may be as a politician and a statesman in this House. I have done. I have endeavoured, as clearly as I could, to put the views of the Government upon this question before the House. I have shown that there is no monopoly whatever possessed by right hon. and hon. Members opposite of the desire to deal out full justice to the agricultural labourers of this country in this respect.

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I have made it clear that we yield to none in the importance we attach to a wide and general extension of the system of allotments throughout the country at fair and equitable rents, where it does not happen to prevail already. Those are the views of Her Majesty's Government upon this question, and I believe that they are the views of the Conservative Party as a whole; and being what they are, we are met by hon. Members opposite, before they have ever seen our measures, before they can possibly be aware of what they contain, before they have heard the views upon the subject of any one single Member of the Government, with a Motion which is simply a direct Vote of Censure on the Government in reference to this question. That is a matter, of course, for the House of Commons, by its verdict, to decide; the issue rests with them, and not in any way with us. But, speaking for myself and the Government, I say, emphatically, "No" to the Amendment of the hon. Member; and if we should be defeated, then let others prepare for the enjoyment of the heritage which we received from our Predecessors, and which we can assure them that nothing but an overwhelming sense of duty, when we had the opportunity of abandoning it, would ever have induced us for a single moment to retain.

MR. GLADSTONE: In the closing sentences of his speech the right hon. Gentleman rose to truly an heroic strain, and warned us of the consequences to be expected in the event of our carrying the Motion of my hon. Friend. Upon that subject I shall not enter. I shall always assume, until I know to the contrary, that hon. Gentlemen give their votes with deliberate consideration of the matters before them, and that they are prepared to take the consequences of their votes. But the right hon. Gentleman—if he will permit me to say so, if it does not indicate too much assurance on my part—has taken an extraordinary course on the present occasion. Having been put up in the interests of the Government to make a defensive speech against my hon. Friend's Motion, he has made a speech critical and offensive—I use the term as opposed to defensive—and has found time and space largely to decant upon agricultural depression and the speeches of my right hon. Friend

the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), with regard to which no issue is raised by the Motion of my hon. Friend. I would venture to pass by those subjects altogether, and to ask what are the reasons, upon the merits of the case, which the right hon. Gentleman has given us to induce us to vote against the Motion of my hon. Friend. He says that the Amendment was proposed in speech of very slight argument and of an extremely concise character. I will not say that it has been opposed in a speech of a character that can be described as peculiarly concise. But the right hon. Gentleman went so far as to accuse my hon. Friend of being inaccurate, unreasonable, and inexact. Now, Sir, I hold that my hon. Friend was not inaccurate, but that his inaccuracy was simply this—that my hon. Friend has declined to recognize the Commission of Inquiry into the depression that exists as a measure of present relief. If this had been the proper place and time for discussing that Commission my hon. Friend might have gone a great deal further, and not only declined to recognize the Commission in that character, but have said a great deal more on the subject of the Commission which, no doubt, on a proper occasion will be said in this House. But my hon. Friend, I hold, is perfectly accurate; and it is impossible to disguise the fact that the point of his Motion is not the general depression of trade or agriculture, but is the duty which my hon. Friend thinks to be incumbent upon the Government and the House, and the assurances which he thinks it right to give the agricultural labourer respecting that duty as to adopting special measures in the rural districts to obtain allotments and small holdings on equitable terms as to rent and security of tenure. The right hon. Gentleman in very decisive terms condemns the system of small freeholds. But his objection is totally irrelevant to the Motion, for there is nothing in the Motion of my hon. Friend which points to small freeholds. It is a Motion which points to obtaining allotments on equitable terms as to rent and security of tenure. There is plenty of security of tenure with freehold. That was, therefore, an entirely irrelevant argument. I was very sorry to hear the right hon. Gentleman condemn the system of the small proprietary class,

though that, like almost everything else in his speech, was irrelevant to the issue before us. I regret to hear him utter that condemnation, though my belief is that if we were able to argue the matter a totally different colour would be given to it. The right hon. Gentleman will, perhaps, allow me to say this—that between the periods immediately succeeding the Peace of 1815 and the year 1867, when I myself had in Paris intercourse with the greatest economists of that country, the increase in the taxable agricultural value of France in that period was very considerable, and greater than the corresponding increase in the same period in the three Kingdoms under the rule of Her Majesty. In face of facts of that kind—facts which cannot be shaken—the right hon. Gentleman ought to be slow in condemning the system of small holdings. I will not allow myself to discuss these questions; but I will come to the subject before us, and keep to it in the strictest sense. What has the right hon. Gentleman offered us by way of remedy for the existing distress? He has glanced at a protective tariff; but he has carefully stated to the House that he would not propose, or, at any rate, is not prepared to support, a protective tariff which shall have for its aim the increase of landlords' rent; but while he is so severe on the speeches of the right hon. Member for Birmingham, and is so severe on the proprietary system in France, he has not said one single word in condemnation of a protective tariff generally.

MR. CHAPLIN: I said the present Cabinet has given no indication of any inclination of that kind.

MR. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman says that the present Cabinet has no inclination of that kind. I believe that the right hon. Gentleman is not a Member of the present Cabinet, although the Treasury Bench is graced by his presence. But if the answer which he has now given to me is meant for a definite answer, then, whether the present Cabinet has that inclination or not, the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly free to entertain it. The right hon. Gentleman complains very much that we will not wait to hear his measures. What measures has he proposed for the benefit of the labouring man? A re-adjustment of local burdens. Sir, a great re-adjustment of local burdens

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is wanted; but not in the way suggested by the right hon. Gentleman. It is not a re-adjustment which is to take charges off the rates in order to lay them upon a fund supported and supplied by the labour of the country in a far greater proportion than the rate fund is supplied; the re-adjustment that is wanted is the settlement of accounts with the landed interest, which for many years past has recommended and obtained these transfers from the rates to the Consolidated Fund, every shilling of which, in the rural districts, will ultimately go to nothing but to increase the rent. We are under no obligation to wait for the right hon. Gentleman to give us his measures, unless he assures us that his re-adjustment of local burdens is to be founded on principles altogether different from those upon which they have hitherto been based. The right hon. Gentleman glanced at other measures which were to meet this case. I was astonished, Sir, when I heard him gravely propose this measure for selling glebe land as anything approaching a remedy, or an expedient for a remedy, for the general condition of the agricultural labourer. Why, Sir, I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman that there are certain portions of the clergy who have the misfortune to hold glebe farms, and no doubt that portion has suffered extremely; and it may be a great object with them to sell their glebe lands. I am afraid this is a very bad time for the purpose, though I quite admit that good may come out of it. No doubt some questions may arise with the persons to whom they are sold as to the conditions which may be imposed upon the sale. But what I wish to point out is, that to speak of dealing with glebe lands as a general remedy for the condition of the agricultural labourer is preposterous. What is the number of parishes in the country having glebe land, I should like to know? I know something of the ecclesiastical endowments in this country; and I very greatly doubt whether there are more than 200 or 300 out of 11,000 parishes in this country that have glebe farms. [*Cries of "Oh, oh!"*] I will only say that, while I have great doubts whether there are more, I have great confidence that there are not 500 with glebe farms. You tell me that there are other pieces of glebe. Certainly, there are small

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meadows and pieces of pasture. But are the clergy willing and desirous of parting with these? Not at all; they are eminently convenient in most places. Where are the vicarages? Do not the vicarages of this country include large portions of the rural population—are they not numbered by thousands? Where are the glebes? They form part of the rectorial endowment, and that is quite enough condemnation of such a proposal.

Mr. R. H. PAGET: No; there are vicarial glebes as well.

Mr. GLADSTONE: In accidental cases, certainly, where they have been acquired under special arrangements; but the vicar was essentially dependent upon the small tithes; and the basis of the vicarage was such that there is nothing like glebe land attached to it. In my opinion, it is, as I have said, preposterous to put forward this proposal about glebe land, which is altogether partial and accidental in the mode of its dispersion over the country, as a means of remedying the condition of the agricultural labourer. The right hon. Gentleman says these farms are in the right position. How does he know that?

Mr. CHAPLIN: Many of them.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Some of them are, I have no doubt, and others are far away, not within the limit of half-a-mile which the right hon. Gentleman allows for his boundary. The right hon. Gentleman has, I will admit, been large in his praise of allotments. He says they are excellent things. Does he really rely on the estimate of the number of allotments he gives us on the authority, I think, of Major Craigie, and say there are about 500,000 allotments? Is there a Government Return to that effect? Is it a Government Return, or is it the opinion not of the right hon. Gentleman, but of Major Craigie?

Mr. CHAPLIN: A Government Return taken in 1873.

Mr. GLADSTONE: These allotments have been counted?

Mr. CHAPLIN: Yes; counted.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am very sceptical as to whether the allotments of this country have been counted and tabled in a Return. But I cannot say that allotments perfectly meet this case. In the first place, an allotment is really what a cottage garden ought to be. It is in

the nature of a cottage garden; but it is a very imperfect cottage garden. Exactly so; but the right hon. Gentleman has not said one word about cottage gardens. A cottage garden of adequate size would be a far greater boon to the agricultural labourer than an allotment. The right hon. Gentleman simply tells us that there are about 500,000 of these allotments, and that to the extension of these allotments the Government are extremely friendly. In what way? To their extension by voluntary operation; and not only does he utterly condemn and proscribe any application of compulsion under any form, however equitable, but he has no proposition in any way to bring public assistance to bear for the increase of these allotments. I wish to point out that there is another question entirely vital to the agricultural labourer and lying at the root of this subject. It is not equally applicable, I grant, in all parts of the country; but it is not so much as touched in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He condemns small holdings on the one side, and approves of allotments on the other; but is there nothing between what he terms small holdings and allotments? Is there no such thing in any part of this country as pasture for a cow? Is there any question more important either for the physical or moral welfare of the population than an increase in the supply of milk? I believe that there is nothing more important for the welfare of the farmer, nothing more important for the labourer for his health and strength and for the health of his children. I know that Scotland is suffering grievously at this moment from the enormously augmented difficulties of obtaining adequate supplies of milk. The right hon. Gentleman does not throw out any hope or extend the smallest grain of his sympathy to this question; although the Motion of the hon. Member for Ipswich contemplates enabling the agricultural labourer to obtain the command of pasture which may enable him to keep a cow and add partially to his wages, and, at the same time, to obtain a good supply of milk. The whole of that subject has been entirely overlooked by the right hon. Gentleman in his speech. Now, Sir, I have stated the main purpose of my hon. Friend behind me—and I must say I thought he addressed the House, like his Secondor, with much intelli-

gence and much moderation—and his main purpose is to obtain a recognition of the condition of the agricultural labourer in respect of the land. I have told my constituents, and it is my conscientious belief, that it is painful and grievous to witness the almost entire divorce between the labouring rural population and the land of the country on which they live. And it is time and it is requisite for the House to consider whether they will give an indication of their feelings in that respect. Now, Sir, it is instructive to refer to history. If this proposition be Socialistic, it is Socialism of very old date; because in the last year of the reign of George III., or in the first of George IV., in close neighbourhood to the ill-omened Six Acts, the unreformed Parliament of that day did recognize the condition of the agricultural labourer as a worthy object, not only of general solicitude, not only of voluntary associations, which seem to be the climax of the views and desires of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but as an object of just solicitude for local public authorities. It gave powers to local public authorities, in the first place, to let lands which belonged to the parish; in the second place, to acquire lands; and, if I remember right, it gave the aid of the public purse to facilitate the terms on which they were to be acquired. Does the House think that that was a right principle or not? The right hon. Gentleman makes no reference to it. His speech, on which he said the Government takes its stand, excludes everything of the kind. There is to be no intervention of authority; there is to be nothing beyond voluntary association. Now, Sir, I say that I recognize the principle which was recognized between 60 and 70 years ago—that this matter is a just subject of public solicitude for public authorities. Here I make what some may call an admission—namely, that before you can make it an object of effectual solicitude of public authorities you must have a thoroughly good and efficient local government. When I read the Speech of Her Majesty it was not satisfactory to me on that head. What it seems to speak of is the transfer of existing functions to a new representative council; but these enlarged functions it seems wholly to exclude. The right hon. Gentleman has referred

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to this subject, in my opinion, in a manner so limited and so restrained as to be totally unsatisfactory to the country. I make no attack upon him, or upon any Gentleman, further than to endeavour to expose the futility of his argument and the insufficiency of the provisions he offers; but this I must say, with regard to the introduction of a public authority elsewhere in Europe—that it is common for local authorities to hold land which shall be made available for the labouring rural population; and I cannot see why something of this kind, when we have good local government prevailing, should not be brought about in this country. I cannot see it for my life. But nothing of the kind is to be found in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. On the contrary, he looks to the action of individual landlords and voluntary associations limited to the extension of allotments.

Mr. CHAPLIN: All I said on this point was that, in the speech I quoted, Lord Salisbury said he would not sanction purchase by compulsion.

Mr. GLADSTONE: That is what he will not sanction. But what I am inquiring is what the right hon. Gentleman says he will sanction. I am speaking of allotments, and that by voluntary agencies, which I suppose can go on and flourish or die entirely apart from any favour of, or encouragement by, the right hon. Gentleman. Now, Sir, the question of compulsion is a question on which the right hon. Gentleman looks as if there were something wicked in the nature of it. But compulsion for public objects is recognized in principle. It may be that it may be found difficult to apply compulsion in the case of expropriations or for the purpose of providing the labouring men with portions of the land. One thing I will say fearlessly in the presence of my hon. Friend—namely, that you can have no compulsion for that purpose which is not consistent with perfect fairness and equity to individuals; but, subject to that condition, compulsion is a matter fit to be examined and considered by this House. I am inclined to believe that with a good local authority and the judicious use of public aid on the safest basis as to security much might be done short of compulsion; but I am by no means prepared to say that compulsion is to be shut out. If it is shut out in

the views of the Government I will not consent to shut it out. I will examine it fairly and candidly, and with the belief that should the necessity be found still to exist, it is possible that, like competition in railways, compulsion hanging over landlords may do a great deal of good. Unquestionably there is a great object in view; and if that great object cannot otherwise be obtained, compulsion has nothing in the nature of it which ought to induce us to shrink from its consideration. I think my hon. Friend has stated his case with moderation and fairness, though he entirely avoided associating his Motion with the details of any particular plan. That was no part of the purpose of my hon. Friend. I am not aware that he has receded from any of the details of any particular plan, or that he did not reserve his own liberty on the subject of them. But he points out to us objects of the utmost importance which ought to be attained, objects which are legitimately for the care of public authorities; objects to which the public can lend the most valuable aid; and objects which the public ought to seek, if necessary, even by the agency of the principle of compulsion. To restore to the old local communities of this country something of that character of a community, in which the common interests of the individual labourer may be so managed as to associate him with the soil in a manner much more effectual than that in which he is associated at present—these I take to be views which we ought to thank my hon. Friend for having laid before the House, and I heartily hope we shall adopt his Motion by a large majority.

Mr. FINCH-HATTON said, that he would admit that the question raised by the hon. Member for Ipswich was one which not only interested all county Members who sat for agricultural constituencies, but was also of the greatest public importance; and he sympathized entirely with the desire of the hon. Member, so far as it tended towards bringing this question before the country with a view to its early settlement. The hon. Member had expressed regret that Her Majesty's Speech made no specific allusion to the question of allotments. That was not a matter of so much regret to himself, as it would have been if Her Majesty's Ministers had shown a disinclination to deal with

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the subject by legislation. But he must make an addition to that statement, and it was painful to him to make it. In listening to the speech of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Chaplin) he found it was true that his right hon. Friend did not say that the Government would not take any action in the matter. At the same time, he thought his right hon. Friend did not tell the House what the Government would do. Until they heard further from some Member of the Government what course Her Majesty's Ministers intended to take—which he hoped would be before the close of the debate—he must hold that the explanation of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster was not complete or satisfactory to those who, like himself, sat for agricultural constituencies. He had himself given Notice of, and received permission to introduce, a Bill on this question, and he did not yield even to the hon. Member for Ipswich in the interest which he personally took in the subject. He admitted that the hon. Member had great claims upon the gratitude of the public for the devotion he had shown in working for this cause; but he (Mr. Finch-Hatton) also claimed for himself a humbler, although he hoped a useful, part in it. For more than 100 years his family had granted allotments, and had found the system to succeed. The constituency which he represented—the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire—was composed almost exclusively of those who, in one rank or another, obtained their living from the soil; and he thought he had a right to protest against the manner in which hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House sometimes arrogated to themselves the exclusive right to represent the labourers. It might be interesting to inquire whether the hon. Member for Ipswich, who sat for a borough, had more agricultural labourers in Ipswich than he (Mr. Finch-Hatton) himself had in his constituency. He doubted whether the hon. Member had as many as he had. But the real question which the House had to decide was, whether or not it could go some way towards unravelling the practical difficulties which beset this question? The weakest part of the speech of the hon. Member for Ipswich was, that he did not give any exact definition of what he meant by an allotment of land, nor state

whether the principle of compulsion was to be extended to one class, or to other classes of allotments; or whether it was to go further, and create those freeholds which had, in many cases, caused considerable suffering to their owners during the late period of agricultural depression. There was, however, an important distinction to be drawn between the different kinds of allotments. First of all, there was an allotment which he might describe as a quantity of land as large as the agricultural labourer would be able to cultivate to his profit in his spare time by his own work. He held that it was to the public advantage to bring within the reach of every agricultural labourer in the Kingdom an allotment of that description; and in the Bill which he hoped some day to bring before the notice of the House it would be provided that if the voluntary system did not make provision for these allotments being given recourse would be had to compulsion in the hands of local authorities, such compulsory powers, as a matter of course, being safeguarded by proper restrictions. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), while apparently in favour of compulsion, in his speech attempted to deal with matters of detail, he committed himself to several inaccuracies. On the question of glebe lands, the right hon. Gentleman showed that he had no knowledge as to their number, for he said he did not believe that out of the 11,000 vicarages or rectories in the Kingdom more than 200 or 300 had glebe farms. He (Mr. Finch-Hatton) did not think that the right hon. Gentleman was anywhere near the truth when he made that statement. Then the right hon. Gentleman said that these globes were rectorial, and not vicarial at all. That also, he knew, was not a correct statement. As to the number of agricultural allotments existing at the present time, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster quoted the number from a Return as being something like 250,000. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had weighted himself so little with the details of this matter that he did not even know of the existence of this central Return. On that document the whole point of the present number of allotments might be supposed to turn; and yet the right hon. Gentleman did not know

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of its existence. Then the right hon. Gentleman stated that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster made no allusion, in his speech, to "cottage gardens," which he said were really more important than allotments to the labourer. It was true that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster did not refer to "cottage gardens;" but was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian ignorant of the fact that the Government now in Office carried through the House, last Session, a Bill by which they gave rural, sanitary, and other authorities power compulsorily to take land for "cottage gardens?" The right hon. Gentleman ought to have taken judicial cognizance of that Act. So far he (Mr. Finch-Hatton) did not think the right hon. Gentleman's contributions to the details of the matter were of a very reliable character. He would draw a broad distinction between the allotments of which he (Mr. Finch-Hatton) was speaking and those which were advocated by the hon. Member for Ipswich. The allotments of which he was speaking, and which he would provide for a labourer, seemed to have this claim upon the public—that they would enable him to utilize his spare capital—that was his spare time—in the only way in which he could do so to advantage. There was a growing and urgent necessity for such allotments; for now, when wages were so low that it was difficult for a decent family to keep body and soul together, that was the time when they should give the labourer every facility for adding to his wages. But the case was different if they gave the labourer an allotment so large that it would withdraw him from his daily work and wages, to which, after all, he must look as the mainstay of his livelihood. The real question at the bottom of these difficulties was one that was asked, but not answered, by the hon. Member for Ipswich. That hon. Gentleman inquired why it was that so much land lay idle, and that so many labourers were unemployed? To his (Mr. Finch-Hatton's) mind the simple answer was, because the prices that farmers and labourers equally were able to obtain for what they produced from the soil were not remunerative. But if they were going to have compulsion by public authority, let them take care that they did not compel a man to his own disadvantage. Let them not

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withdraw a labourer from his work to cultivate two or three acres of land, because that would deprive him of his wages, and the farmer, for whom also they ought to have some thought, of his best labourers at the very moment he wanted them most. But from another point of view, while they advocated compulsion in certain cases, let them take care that they did not get rid of a good deal worth keeping. The hon. Member for Ipswich would admit the great advantage of an extension, as far as possible, of allotments upon the voluntary system; because then they would get landlords to give their attention to the subject, and to the kind of land that was most suitable, and to those friendly good offices as well, which, under a hard-and-fast rule, might easily disappear. The hon. Member had alluded to the voluntary Association set on foot by a Member of the other House of Parliament (the Earl of Onslow), and the statistics of that Association were very useful in showing how far the voluntary system might go. They showed that the owners of 1,500,000 acres of land either had granted allotments already or were willing to do so. But he (Mr. Finch-Hatton) was not there to deny that it would be puerile to rest altogether on voluntary efforts; because they would then get all the good landlords on their side, and leave the bad landlords untouched. He thought and hoped he had made his own position clear to the House upon this matter. There was one class of cases on which he would bring compulsion to bear, another on which he would not. There was a line as broad and distinct as that which divided one side of the House from the other, between the two classes of allotments. There was, however, a third class of allotments that he regarded with favour quite as great as that expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian—namely, "grass cottage holdings," or "cow cottages," as they called them in Lincolnshire. But they must remember that there was a very great difference between allotments of, say, half-an-acre and these larger plots of land, and that great difficulty arose when they got to a large allotment. The difficulty in larger plots of land was that, in order to work them properly, the tenant must have some capital besides his own labour. If the House talked about compulsory

allotments of this kind to labourers, he would ask, did they propose to provide the tenants of these allotments not only with the land, but with the capital to work it? If they did not, the tenant would have to pay a double rent—the first to the public authority for the land itself, the second to the person from whom they would encourage him to borrow the capital. The labourer ought, in some way or other, to have saved sufficient money to stock the land when it was given to him. But though it would be difficult to apply compulsion in the matter, it might be well to enable the local authorities in certain cases to help a man to place his foot on the first rung of the ladder which would lead him upwards. That approached very nearly to the old idea of “three acres and a cow.” The hon. Member for Ipswich had recommended that cottagers should produce more eggs. He (Mr. Finch-Hatton) did not know how three acres of grass-land and a cow would tend to the production of more eggs. The hon. Member had brought forward an Amendment practically regretting that the question did not find expression in the Queen’s Speech. Well, he (Mr. Finch-Hatton) must say that, if the Government did not go further that night than the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had gone, and announce their intention to take up this matter and deal with it, he should be very dissatisfied, and should find it very difficult to support them. He was not to be told that the simple fact of selling the glebe lands was an answer to this question, or a way out of the difficulty; for although he would admit that it was a happy idea, he did not admit that it covered, or even nearly covered, the whole ground. If, however, the Government would give him an assurance that they would deal with the question he would have far greater confidence in leaving it in their hands than he would have in leaving it in the hands of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Ipswich. One of his reasons for not feeling confidence in the hon. Member for Ipswich in connection with the question was, that the hon. Gentleman had come down into the Division which he (Mr. Finch-Hatton) had the honour to represent, during the late Election, and made a series of speeches, in which he explained to the labourers of that Division

his own theory as to these allotments. He (Mr. Finch-Hatton) had very much to thank the hon. Member for in the result of those speeches; for he believed they contributed much to induce the electors to transfer their confidence to himself. Another, and even a stronger, reason was, that the hon. Member had already attempted, in his Act of 1882, to deal with a very small part of this great question, but with so little success, that a Committee of that House, appointed to inquire, *inter alia*, into the working of that very Act, reported that—

“The obstacles in the way of carrying it out were largely due to the difficulty of interpreting some of its main provisions;”

and that—

“further legislation was urgently needed to clear up the obscurities of the Act, and to provide better machinery for its working.”

That Report was prepared by a right hon. Gentleman who, no doubt, would command the confidence of hon. Members opposite—Mr. Shaw Lefevre. He trusted that before the debate closed they would hear something as to what the Government intended to do; for Her Majesty’s Government must know that he, and hon. Members who felt with him, were placed in a great difficulty if they could not know exactly where they stood on this question. That difficulty was very much increased by the peculiar circumstances of the moment. He admitted that, in most cases, it was an inconvenient practice to endeavour to anticipate the discussion of measures of which hon. Members had given Notice; but he did not at all regret the general discussion that had taken place. On the contrary, he hoped it would be the means of stimulating the Government to deal with the subject. Under the peculiar circumstances of the case, it was very difficult for hon. Members on his side of the House to give the hon. Member such support as they might otherwise feel inclined to give; for he respectfully submitted that, important as this question undoubtedly was, it was not the main issue before the country and the House. Believing, as those on his side of the House did, that the Government were prepared to deal with the main issue fearlessly, frankly, and entirely, they very much deprecated that the judgment of the House should be taken, adversely or otherwise, upon Her

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Majesty's Government on any other question than the main issue. He would, therefore, ask the hon. Member for Ipswich whether, after the assurance with which he (Mr. Finch-Hatton) hoped the debate would close, he would not be satisfied with a discussion on this question? The hon. Member for Ipswich (if he might apply to him for a momentary phrase in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had so happily described himself that it had already become classical as an autobiography) was an "old Parliamentary hand," and he ought to be satisfied with the discussion which he had thus been able to secure beforehand for the subject upon which both the hon. Member and he himself proposed to deal; and, although the hon. Member might personally desire the defeat of the Government, still there was the country behind; and hon. Members would not deny that what the country wished was that an emphatic judgment should be pronounced upon Her Majesty's Government upon their Irish policy. If some right hon. Gentleman should get up and say that Her Majesty's Government were prepared to deal with this subject, the issue between the hon. Member for Ipswich and Her Majesty's Government would simply be the academic issue as to whether the language of the Queen's Speech might not be improved by the introduction of the word "allotment," and whether it ought not to be so introduced. There would be no real issue, and a division would not be taken upon anything like a clear and decided difference of opinion between them. He trusted some explanation would be forthcoming as to how far the Government were prepared to go in dealing with the matter; and, if so, for the reasons he had stated, he would again say that he would have far greater confidence in leaving this question in the hands of Her Majesty's Government than in the hands of the hon. Member for Ipswich.

Mr. HENEAGE said, it appeared to him that the hon. Members for Lincolnshire were as divided in the House upon agricultural questions as they were upon the questions of Protection and Free Trade during the late Election. The hon. Member for the Spalding Division (Mr. Finch-Hatton) seemed to have forgotten that the right hon. Gentleman

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the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Chaplin) said "No," on the part of the Cabinet and the Government, to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings). [*Cries of "No, no!"*] The right hon. Gentleman used the word "No" in the most emphatic way—a monosyllable he was not likely to forget. The hon. Member for the Spalding Division, after having spoken for something like three-quarters of an hour with an eager eye towards the door, made an appeal to the Treasury Bench; and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board cheered him when he said he hoped there would be an announcement made different to that made by the responsible Minister for Agriculture. Was there a Cabinet Council sitting now in order that the Government might make another change of front; and was that change of front to be an additional reason why the House should put confidence in the Ministry? He should have thought twice perhaps a week ago before he supported any Amendment to the Address if the Government had said they were going to deal in a satisfactory way with Ireland. If they had produced Bills which he thought would tend to the benefit of that country he might have thought twice before he supported this Amendment; but it appeared they had no more opinion upon Ireland than they had upon agriculture. A week ago—nay, not a week ago, hardly four days ago—the House were told to wait until the new Chief Secretary had assumed his duties; and now the Government could hardly wait with common decency for the right hon. Gentleman to return to his place in the House. Now, what was to be said of this Amendment? The House had listened to a very long speech from the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in which, as he (Mr. Heneage) again asserted, the right hon. Gentleman said "No" emphatically to the proposition of the hon. Member for Ipswich, and now they were told they were to have some other communication.

Mr. CHAPLIN remarked that he said "No" to the Amendment of the hon. Member. He did not say "No" to his proposition.

Mr. HENEAGE, continuing, said, that if one thing had been noticeable in the debate, it had been how closely the

hon. Member for Ipswich spoke to his Amendment; and that the proposition he made was quite in accordance with the Amendment; and he Mr. Heneage regretted he could not say as much for the speech of the Chancellor of the Duchy or that of the hon. Member for the Spalding Division. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had spoken of the ruin that had overtaken the freeholders of the Isle of Axholme; but the right hon. Gentleman forgot to say that ruin came upon them because they had not bought their holdings out and out. Their land was heavily mortgaged, and their condition, consequently, was very different from that of people who could pay for the land which they bought. He asserted, both from a landlord's point of view as well as from an occupier's point of view, that neither landlord nor occupier could hold or could farm land with advantage to themselves upon borrowed money; but this did not affect the proposition of the hon. Member for Ipswich, because what the hon. Gentleman proposed to do was to give facilities to labourers to acquire allotments. On all large estates there were plenty of allotments of all sizes, and on that point he differed from his hon. Friend the Mover of the Amendment. As a matter of fact, it was to the advantage of the landlord that there should be allotments of all sizes, in order, if possible, to rear up tenant farmers who might pass on from a small holding to another holding of a larger size. The Amendment simply provided for allotments where there were none already. It was well known that there were a large number of parishes in which no cottager could get even a garden. That was so in the case of parishes which did not belong to any particular owner—parishes in which it was no particular owner's duty to provide allotments. It was so, too, to a great extent, in the case of cottages which had been built by speculators. With regard to the question of glebe lands, he had simply to say that that was so much a question of benefit to the clergy rather than to the labourer that he might let it pass by. (*Cries of "Oh, oh!"*) Well, he congratulated the labourers upon any advantages they might get out of the facilities to be afforded from the sale of glebe lands. The main contention was that the allotment of all others which

was most precious to any labourer was that of a garden adjacent to his own house, where he could spend a short time after a meal, or on a summer's evening. As to larger holdings, he thought it was very necessary that there should be, in every parish, a certain number of what in Lincolnshire were called cow-cottages. The labourers were divided into three classes. There were those who were simply the servants of the farmers; there were those who were known as day labourers, and lived in cottages on or near the farms; and there was a third class of labourers, and the most useful class, as a rule—namely, those who were known as independent labourers, who lived in the villages, and who worked by the piece. They were the men who did the greater part of the draining and skilled work on the different farms. It was of the utmost importance to have a number of such men in every parish—men upon whom reliance could be placed; men who, whenever they were not required elsewhere, could work on their own holdings. There was the very greatest difficulty in many parishes to get milk and eggs and butter—indeed, if it were not for the existence of cow-cottages, the ordinary labourer would be unable to get milk or butter. He hoped that if any legislation took place on the lines of this Amendment in the large open parishes, and in other parishes where the landlords were not resident, some attention would be given to the subject of cow-cottages. The chief evils which ought to be remedied were those arising from the absenteeism of landlords, and from the possession of so much land by corporations. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners alone held one-twentieth of the land of England. The fact was that where the landlords did not take a real interest in their properties, the agents found it much easier to deal with a few large tenants than with a great number of small tenants; and where the agents had the entire management of estates they found the labourers were neglected. He himself should vote for the Amendment, and he could assure the hon. Member for Spalding (Mr. Fench-Hatton) that he was not, in the least degree, deterred by the possibility of the Government being defeated. After all their vacillation and incapacity, after their inability to save themselves from defeat last night without

the help of Liberal Members, it was quite clear the Government could not last very long. If they could not last very long, the sooner they were turned out of Office the better.

MR. BIRKBECK said, that he believed there was no county in England in which the cottage garden allotment system was more thoroughly carried out than in Norfolk; and a visit to any cottage garden show in the county would prove how advantageously it worked for the labourers. These allotments, however, were generally confined to the limits of a quarter of an acre, as labourers had no time to cultivate more. On Lord Leicester's estates in Norfolk the labourers were some time ago given half-an-acre in addition to their gardens; but after three years they petitioned to have the amount reduced to one-quarter. He disagreed with the hon. Member for Ipswich, who saw in the extension of allotments a remedy for agricultural depression. What was wanted was such a return of agricultural prosperity as would enable tenant farmers to pay the labourers higher wages. The effect of a general allotments' scheme upon the ratepayers of the country would be that they would have to pay very high rates indeed in respect of interest upon the outlay on allotments, when the cottagers, as would frequently happen, could not pay their rents themselves. However, he was entirely in favour of garden allotments, and would support the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire, which proposed to deal with the subject. He should also be perfectly ready to agree in adopting, in connection with it, the principle of compulsion, which had already been introduced into the country by no less a person than the present Prime Minister in the Act which had been passed last August.

MR. JOSEPH ARCH: Sir, I have no intention of wasting the time of the House with a long speech; but I think I have a just right to address the House on this subject. I am, as you are aware, the Representative of a class whose interest, whose happiness, and whose comfort I believe Gentlemen on both sides of the House are anxious to improve. With regard to the allotments question, I can remember when it was one of the most difficult things in the world for a labourer in a village to obtain

anything like a decent allotment; but during the past 14 years I am happy to say that hon. Gentlemen—both Liberal and Conservative—have, to some happy extent, seen their way clear to grant and extend these allotments. The right hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), when speaking last night upon the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay), said that the small freeholders in Mid Lincolnshire were in a very destitute condition. I have watched all my life the working of a freehold, and the energy and contentment of a freeholder; and it is quite true that where a man has had a heavy mortgage on his little freehold he has had a difficulty to face. But I have been pleasantly surprised to find on both sides of the House the great anxiety there is now to improve the agricultural labourers' position. Fourteen years ago, when I was asked by my own brethren in the counties if I could institute something to improve their condition, my policy was denounced, my actions were condemned, and not a few labourers were "Boycotted." I know that there are good landlords and bad landlords, and the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich, I think, does not in the least interfere with good landlords who are willing to grant land for their labourers; but are there not places in the country where labourers are almost next to landless? Where have the majority of the unemployed men in our towns to-day come from? They have been divorced from the soil, and they have been driven into our towns. To my mind, the object of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich is not so much to cure agricultural depression as to cure the poverty of agricultural labourers. How can that poverty be arrested if, during certain portions of the year, the working men in our villages are thrown out of employment? My remedy for years has been this—that if you do not require the services of workmen to till the land of the tenant farmer, then, in the name of common justice and humanity, allow him some land to till for himself. I think the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich is quite opportune. When I read the Speech of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, which expressed sympathy with the distress that was prevalent not only in trade but

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in agriculture, I took it certainly to mean this—"You are in a terribly poverty-stricken condition. Your lot in life is hard. You are without employment, and without money, and consequently must be without food. I know your lot is hard, but I have no remedy." It seems to me something like this—that supposing as an individual I were suffering intense bodily pain, and I sent for a medical adviser. He looks at me, he sees me writhing in agony, and he says—"I have not a single ingredient in my surgery that I could apply to assuage your pain." Would it not be natural enough for me to seek the advice of some more skilled physician? If Her Majesty's Government have no remedy for this distress, then, I think, the country will very soon look out for another physician who has a practical remedy already at hand. The right hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire blamed the hon. Member for Ipswich because he had prescribed no remedy; but I confess that I have not yet found hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House prescribing any remedy themselves. If hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House have not prescribed the right sort of medicine, the Government at the present time have every opportunity of finding that medicine and relieving the distress. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire said last night that wages had gone down in that county from 18s. to 12s. per week. He expressed great surprise and wonder how these poor people manage to live. Now, I think I shall be quite in place if I ask the right hon. Gentleman to try to live upon that wage for three months himself—then he will be able to solve the problem. He further said that, while wages were low, numbers of men were out of employment. Well, if it is difficult for a man with 12s. a-week to support himself, his wife, and, perhaps, three or four children, what a sorry plight those men must be in who are out of employment and have no wages at all. Hon. Gentlemen have said that about a quarter of an acre is sufficient for a working man in a village. There may be some working men, such as shepherds and carters, who would, perhaps, be contented with a rood of ground; but I venture to say that a very large number of the labourers in Norfolk—and I am speaking now from

my own experience in that county—would only be too glad if they could rent an acre or two at a fair market price. On the other hand, I do not find any human or Divine law which would confine me, as a skilled labourer, to one rood of God's earth. If I have energy, tact, and skill by which I could cultivate my acre or two, and buy my cow into the bargain, I do not see any just reason why my energies should be crippled and my forces held back, and why I should be content, as an agricultural labourer, with a rood of ground and my nose on the grindstone all the days of my life. We want to put an end to pauperism; and I am prepared to say among my class there are hundreds and thousands of working men who hate pauperism, and who have a perfect horror of the workhouse. But if we are to be cut down to 12s. a-week, which the right hon. Gentleman acknowledged was a very small wage, and if these men by their energy can supplement those wages by another 10s. or 12s. into the bargain, I want to know why it should not be done, and the pauperism of the country lessened? The right hon. Gentleman spoke of men in France having to work very hard, and appearing very old when they were almost young. He said they carried fodder to the cows, and went milking, and the rest of it; but the right hon. Gentleman forgot to tell us that they were their own cows. I have seen the women in Somersetshire, Wiltshire, and Dorsetshire milking other people's cows, and having very little of the milk which they drew from them. I cannot understand for the life of me why, if an English workman can, by thrift and industry and care, manage to secure to himself and his family a cow, he should not have the opportunity of doing so. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich means that. We do not ask for borrowed funds, or for the land to be given us, and we have no desire to steal it. What the Amendment asks, and what I ask hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, is, whether the time has not come when these thousands of industrious and willing workers should no longer be shut out from the soil, and should have an opportunity of obtaining a fair freehold, and producing food for themselves and their families? Why are these men out of work? Is it because the land is

so well cultivated that no more of their labour is required? I travel this country from one end to the other, and I have an idea I know when land is cultivated and when it is not as well as any Gentleman in this House. I say, fearless of contradiction, that there are tens of thousands of acres of land waiting for the hand of the workman; and what this House ought to consider and aim at is to use every legitimate means to bring the land that cries for labour to the labourer as soon as possible. I am addressing in this House large landed proprietors; and will any hon. Gentleman attempt for one moment to deny that the best cultivated estate is the best for the landlord? When I look at this question I go almost out of the region of Party politics. It is not a landlord's, a tenant farmer's, or a labourer's question; it is the question of the people, and they will very soon make it their question. We are not Socialists—not in the offensive meaning of the word; but to a certain extent we are Socialists, because we are social beings. We like social comforts and social society; but we have a great aversion to social society paid for out of the poor rates. An hon. Gentleman said last night that it was beyond the power of the hon. Member for North-West Norfolk to raise wages. I thought it was equally impossible for landlords in this country to force up rent. We have always been told that the price of labour would be regulated by what it is worth in the market. That is just what land has got to be. My idea of justice in land is this—that if I have to sell as a tenant farmer my produce extremely cheap, then I say the rent of my land should be extremely cheap. But the time has come for, and this Parliament has been elected very largely to carry out, some just and wise measure, not only for the improvement of the tenant farmers—and Heaven knows they want something, some of them—but for the benefit of the labourers and for the benefit of the country. When I look around on this side of the House I see several hon. Gentlemen—a fair number of Liberal Members—who have been returned by the votes very largely of the agricultural labourers. They know that during the contests in various divisions the labourers expressed a very great desire for land to

cultivate for themselves. They naturally concurred with that idea; but I have never heard any Liberal candidate promise the labourers three acres and a cow. For myself, I never made such a vain promise. Something which dropped from the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate last night somewhat grieved me. When he was speaking of the labourers of Scotland I think he called them hinds. I should like to inform the right hon. and learned Gentleman that though our lot in life has been one of poverty, though we were born in humble cottages, at the same time we look upon ourselves as men. I think hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House would feel very much annoyed if we were to call them aristocratic goats. The labourers of this country know they are men. They have largely contributed to the constitution of this House; and I hope it will be able to show honestly and fairly to the labourers who have sent us here that, at least, we did our best to redress their grievances, to dry their tears, to wipe away their sorrows, and to place them in the position of free men.

MR. DAWSON said, the hon. Member for Ipswich had asked the House to approve of two principles—the principle of allotment and the principle of small holdings. Now, if they came to speak of the principle of small holdings he found himself somewhat at issue with the hon. Member for Ipswich. He would agree with what the hon. Member said, or anyone said, as to the land of the country. He believed there were too few landlords and too few small holdings. An increase in the number of holdings would be to the benefit of the country at large. From a purely political point of view, he was sure the Conservative side of the House would be the first to welcome the proposals of the hon. Member for Ipswich to establish a peasant proprietary in the country, for there was nothing which had a greater tendency to make people Conservatives than to know that they had something to lose. He believed it would be for the tranquillity of the country and the stability of its institutions that there should be more holdings. If he might be allowed to say so, there was no one in any part of the House who would dissent from the remark of the hon. Member for North-West Norfolk (Mr.

Mr. Joseph Arch

Arch' in the eloquent strains in which he spoke of the personal aspirations of the agricultural labourers to rise above the position in which they began life, and take a small holding. But if they were to have small holdings they must be in the possession of men who held as owners or as peasant proprietors their own land. If he were himself about to take a small plot of land he would think over it; and he should come to the conclusion that he would rather be the holder of that land as tenant than as owner of it in his own right, for this reason—because though in prosperous years he would be the gainer, yet in bad years, of which they had had so much experience, he would be thrown back upon his own resources, and when these were gone he would have no one to appeal to; whereas, if he were only a tenant farmer, he could rely on the indulgence of his landlord. [*Ironical cheers from the Irish Benches.*] An hon. Member from Ireland, only the other night, had spoken in terms of praise of the generosity of English landlords. When he found he could not carry on his business he would turn to some other mode of life. The hon. Member for Grimaby (Mr. Heneage), insinuating that the Government were not in favour of such a thing, said the supporters of the Amendment were in favour of a man buying land if he were able to pay for it. Well, if a man were able to pay for land he would have no difficulty in doing so. There were thousands and tens of thousands of acres offered for sale, as hon. Members would see on looking at their newspapers every Saturday. If it were true, as the hon. Member for North-West Norfolk said, that the new peasant proprietary, whose cause he advocated, did not want to borrow the capital, where was the necessity for the Motion? But from the point of view of the peasant proprietor there were grave objections to the scheme. A great French authority had drawn a dreadful picture of the condition of the peasant proprietary in that country; and if this were the condition of a peasant proprietary abroad, where so many artificial means were taken to keep up the price of agricultural produce, how, in the more unfavourable climate of England, could a peasant proprietary exist, when no artificial means were adopted of keeping up the prices, and when men with capital

behind them were being brought to the verge of ruin in large numbers? The right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) said he would do anything to increase the production of land; but authorities, both English and French, concurred in saying that the production of wheat was not half as much per acre in France as it was in England. Under these circumstances, he was unable to agree to that portion of the Motion in which the hon. Member for Ipswich asked the House to subscribe to the doctrine of a peasant proprietary. When, however, he came to the question of allotments, that was an entirely different matter. There was no one in the House who would offer the smallest stumbling-block to extending the system of allotments. He could not conceive anything that they should support more than that the man who toiled all day on the property of another should have himself some little property—a quarter or half an acre—which he might cultivate for his own benefit. During the Election something was said about compulsory purchase being a species of plunder. As a very humble Member of the Conservative Party he ventured to dissent from that doctrine, for it seemed to him that no charge of plunder could be levelled against the principle that a fair market price should be given to anyone for the land taken from him. The doctrine had been laid down over and over again—in the purchase of land for railways, in the Artizans' Dwellings Act, and in other measures. He was glad to hear the hon. Member for Ipswich say that he believed that voluntary efforts would very largely meet this question of allotments; but if voluntary propositions of landlords did not suffice to meet this, then he believed that it would be necessary, and, if so, then right and justifiable, to carry out some measure by which the common wealth might be protected, and by which men should be given an opportunity in every district of the country of becoming the owners of allotments. But while agreeing with that doctrine, how could he support the Amendment? The hon. Member for Ipswich complained that no measures were announced in the Queen's Speech, and said they wanted the machinery to assist labourers to get the land. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, speaking at Islington on the 16th June, said—

[*Fourth Night.*]

"The first duty of the new Parliament would be the completion and extension of the system of local government. This was a necessity prior to almost any change in other directions. There were numerous other changes—temperance reform, reform of taxation, and great social questions which were pressing for solution; but local government was the instrument whereby alone it was possible for those matters to be properly and effectually dealt with."

On looking at the Queen's Speech, he found that local County Government Boards were definitely put forward; and therefore the machinery which the right hon. Gentleman thought necessary, and which the hon. Member for Ipswich said was all he wanted, was provided. He also found in the Gracious Speech a proposed reform of the laws relating to the transfer of land, and that was all the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham wanted when he said he wanted no new-fangled doctrines, but only the simplification of the transfer of land; and yet the House was asked to say that Her Majesty's Government had not hinted in any way at any reform. He was tempted to believe that the hon. Member for Ipswich must have drawn up the Amendment before he read the Gracious Speech; or, if not, then he was driven to the hypothesis that in his own heart the hon. Member was not afraid that the Government would do too little, but that with a prudent regard to a possible change of voting on the part of the agricultural electors he was afraid the Government were going to do too much. With the permission of the House he desired to refer to another matter, about which the hon. Member for Ipswich had said but little, and that was the condition of the population of their large towns. He hoped that the Royal Commission on Trade would be a success; that the evidence it collected would be valuable, and its Report a benefit to the public. But the presentation of the Report and waiting for the gradual results of an allotment system were necessarily matters of time; and he desired to touch upon a subject which, in his opinion, brooked no delay. He would earnestly press upon the attention of the Government the position of tens of thousands of their fellow-countrymen, who at this moment did not ask for charity, but for some work whereby they could keep body and soul together. There was nothing more remarkable or more touching than the

Mr. Dawson

fact that though thousands did not know, when they rose in the morning, whether they would get a crust of bread before night, they would do any sort of work rather than darken the doors of a work-house. They asked for work. The struggle for existence was very desperate, and could be seen in every trade. Hundreds of men could be seen standing at the docks waiting for a chance of the 10 or 20 vacancies there might be, and in reply to any sort of an advertisement of a situation there were crowds of applicants. All these things spoke of a condition of matters which must be altered if the government of the country was to be continued. People were driven out of the country and came to London trying to find work, and they thus made matters worse. He knew of an instance where he met a man who had walked with his family from Lancashire to London and arrived penniless. He thought how terrible must be the condition of affairs when a man could come to London without a penny and without a friend, go into the crowd, and disappear like a snowflake on the sea. He might be told that that doctrine was a dangerous one—that doctrine of asking for public works to be carried out by the Government. He might be told it was Socialistic. He did not care for that if it saved men's lives. It might be said it was against political economy; but he did not care what it was against if it effected the purpose for which it was intended; and he was bound to say that if political economy told them it was wrong for a Government to use some of its resources to aid those who, from circumstances beyond their own control, could not get work, then he was bound to say the sooner they got rid of such a doctrine the better. He apologized to the House for having thus kept them. He knew how valuable was its time, and it was only because he was almost despairing of the lives of many hard working and honest men who were utterly unable to get help that he had appealed to the House, in the hope that something might be done by the Government, whether it was Liberal or Conservative, to relieve them without delay.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Sir, the House has listened with interest to the two speeches which have just been delivered. All of us must sympathize with the objects which the hon. Mem-

ber for East Leeds (Mr. Dawson) and West Norfolk (Mr. Arch) have in view; but heavy indeed will be the responsibility that rests upon hon. Members of this House if, carried away by the objects which these hon. Members and which we all have at heart, they venture in pursuit of these aims to embark on a course which may not lead to the accomplishment of those aims. We all come to the consideration of this Motion fresh from an electoral campaign; we are all bound by speeches which we have made during the Recess. [*Inter-ruption.*] I trust that hon. Members below the Gangway and from Ireland will remember that they have had a courteous hearing from this House, and that those who may be obliged to speak, perhaps somewhat in opposition to the popular current, may, at least, expect an indulgent hearing. I say that a heavy responsibility rests as much upon those who propose, or vote for, or promote, measures which may not lead to the objects at which they are aimed as rests upon those who oppose those measures, because they do not believe in their hearts and consciences that they will achieve those ends; and so I say, as I have said many times during the late electoral campaign, it is not enough to come forward and profess sympathy with the aims proposed unless we believe the measures proposed will practically realize them. I trust, as Radical audiences have been perfectly prepared to listen to arguments when they believed they were honestly brought forward, so in the House of Commons it may be permissible to come forward, even in what may be a somewhat unpopular cause, and to examine the proposals that are put before this House, in order to see whether they will hold water. I would wish, at the outset of the few remarks I will make, to say that this is a great subject; and those who sit on this side of the House, as well as those who sit on the other side, know how great a subject it is—a subject almost too great to be disposed of in one night's debate—a subject which reaches deep down into society; and a subject, no doubt, which requires careful examination. I ask myself what is really at the bottom of the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings)? It is that the State should step in. The

position is that it is assumed that voluntary effort has now failed; that the community should come to the rescue; and that we should put upon the community at large tasks which I doubt whether the Local Authorities will be able satisfactorily to perform. If it can be contended, and if there are men who believe, that the substitution of the community for the individual, in this matter, will not promote the object which we all have at heart, but that it may even retard it, I say that they would be traitors to their consciences and traitors to the cause which is before them if they did not speak out before the House of Commons, and tell hon. Members what they believe. I had thought, I may say almost till to-night, that there was a large body of Liberal opinion which believed, according to the older traditions of the Liberal Party, that to substitute the community in order to do a duty which individuals ought to perform was a somewhat dangerous step to take. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have said that we all come fresh from our electoral campaign; and the hon. Member for Ipswich comes forward at a very early date, supported by a large number of hon. Members on this side, to advocate the cause for which he contended during that campaign. Similarly, those who have broken a lance on the other side are bound to come forward to state their opinions in this House, as they have stated them to their constituents. We had before us during the campaign what has been called an authorized programme and an unauthorized programme. The unauthorized programme contained four points with regard to which I will not weary the House; because I feel that anyone who read one tithe of the speeches which have been made during the Recess must have been almost surfeited with these four points. Having been engaged in a somewhat warm controversy upon this very matter with my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), I should like to be allowed to congratulate him, with good humour, this evening, upon the fact that he has transferred a serious item in that unauthorized programme into what is now, apparently, the authorized programme of the Liberal Party. I trust he will accept the compliment in the spirit in which I offer it. But I must say that

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I did not understand that during the late campaign the acquisition by the community of lands for the purpose of letting out those lands, either in allotments or in small holdings, was a portion of the authorized programme with which we went to the constituencies. I may have been mistaken, and perhaps I was; because I remember the right hon. Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke) said you could read this question of allotments into the authorized programme. I did not know that on occasions like this you would have to read anything into programmes. I think it is somewhat hard upon those who believed that this was an open question, and that you might be as good a Liberal if you had faith in the action of the individual as if you believed in the action of the State. But now I understand it is put forward, on authority, that the Party, as a whole, will endorse that which has practically been in the unauthorized programme, and which has been the chief point in the programme of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain). I confess that it is not possible for me to be converted by three days of Parliamentary discussion. Conversations, I admit, proceed, in these days, with some rapidity. I must say that we have seen three interesting days. On the first day there seemed to me to be a greater conversion towards Home Rule than we had ever judged possible. On the second day there was a large minority practically for introducing the "three F's" into the United Kingdom. On the third day the proposition is, as I understand, that we are to give power to municipalities in order to promote small holdings and allotments under a system of compulsion as proposed by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings). Although the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) somewhat reserves himself upon that point, I am bound to say that his reserves were not stated with that firmness which would lead one to suppose that any great resistance would be made if the proposal were pressed. And now, Mr. Speaker, let me put myself right with the House in this matter. Those who have done me the honour of reading anything that I have said on this subject will know that I do not yield to anyone in my desire to increase

the number of the proprietors of land. They will know that I believe, as many hon. Members have stated this evening, that it would strengthen the Constitution, and would lead to untold social advantages, if you could increase the number of those who are proprietors of the soil. I have repeatedly stated, further, that it appears to me a matter of supreme interest that even if you could not increase the number of proprietors of the soil there should be more persons cultivating small holdings, and especially that the number of allotments should be increased as far as possible. These are not late views. [*A laugh.*] I do not know why the hon. Member for Argyllshire (Mr. Macfarlane) should laugh.

MR. MACFARLANE: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I was not laughing at anything which fell from him.

MR. GOSCHEN: No one can anticipate that hon. Members should be acquainted with the antecedents of every Member of this House. But I wish to state it as a fact, which I trust my hon. Friends will accept from me, that long before the recent agitation I had stated in public over and over again this view—that I am entirely in favour of the multiplication of the number of owners, and also entirely in favour of the system of allotments; and if this Motion went no further than this—than to express, as the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) has expressed to the House this evening, the opinion that the divorce of the agricultural labourer from the soil was a calamity to this country—if that mere abstract proposition was in this Motion, I should vote for it with as great enthusiasm as any hon. Member sitting on this side of the House.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: That would be perfectly useless.

MR. GOSCHEN: That would be perfectly useless, says my hon. Friend. But it was because my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian considered that to be the point of the hon. Member's Motion that he has consented to vote for it this evening.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I did not mean to say it would be perfectly useless; but I intended to imply that the right hon. Gentleman would vote for it if it would be perfectly useless.

Mr. Goschen

Mr. GOSCHEN: Why should my hon. Friend consider that I would vote for it if it would be perfectly useless? That is the kind of spirit to which I object. I consider the hon. Member's Motion not to be of much utility, as I shall show if I continue my remarks. But my argument is this—that my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian has said that the point of my hon. Friend's Amendment is that it expresses the desire that we should put an end to the divorce of the agricultural labourer from the soil. I say again, though I may excite the hilarity of hon. Members, that if this were a mere abstract proposition I would vote for it. But I should know, at the same time, that I was not doing much to promote the cause which my hon. Friend has at heart. It may be asked, then, why object to the Motion of my hon. Friend? I think it was remarked by some hon. Member this evening that you ought not to raise false hopes; and I believe that in this Motion of my hon. Friend there lurks a danger of raising false hopes among a great portion of the agricultural labourers. Therefore, I do not think I am justified in voting for it. You think otherwise; therefore you may be justified in voting for it. But those who believe that in the particular plans put forward by my hon. Friend there lurks the danger of arresting that spontaneous development which is now in progress will vote against it. Is there no progress now? Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: No. My hon. Friend says "No." I cannot admit that. I believe in the progress of public opinion; and if the hon. Member wishes it, I will give him the credit of having stimulated that public opinion, and of having done good service thereby; but I believe that the public opinion roused during this discussion will be infinitely more valuable in promoting the system of allotments and small holdings than the legislation which he wishes to stimulate. I admit that landlords have been roused. I believe that all that has been said may have stimulated some landlords who were somewhat blind to their duty. It may have encouraged them to perform that duty. But I say that that public feeling has been roused; that there is in progress at this moment a large development of the system of allotments; and that there are a large number of landlords who are most anxious to pro-

mote it; and why should they not do so? Is there anything against the interests of landlords in promoting the system of allotments? Most proper distinctions have been drawn this evening between the system of allotments and small holdings. I agree with those who think that while it is absolutely certain that the extension of the system of allotments would be of vast advantage to the whole community, the question as regards small holdings is not so decided. With regard to small holdings, it is an economical question upon which there is much to be said. I make this admission to my hon. Friend and to the House, if hon. Members care to know my opinion on the subject. Although it may tell against my own argument, I should prefer to see a larger number of persons farming their own land as small holdings than a larger number of holdings under an opposite system. I am so convinced of the social advantages of having a large number of persons interested in the soil, of having the agricultural labourers interested in the soil, that I would gladly put up with a smaller aggregate production of wealth in order to see this larger number interested in the soil. I make that admission in order that hon. Members may see that I am not blind to this movement which has been so encouraged by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain). But I would ask the right hon. Gentleman this. You want machinery to carry this system out. It is all very well to pass an abstract Resolution; but I think everyone will agree—my hon. Friends on this side of the House will agree—with me when I say that no man would be justified in voting for the Resolution of my hon. Friend unless he, at the same time, believed that you can invent such a machinery as would carry it out satisfactorily. You would not vote in the abstract for such a proposal, raising the hopes of the agricultural labourers, if you thought that your machinery would ultimately prove imperfect. My hon. Friend believes that there can be a perfect machinery, and therefore he is justified in submitting his proposal to the attention of the House. But other hon. Members say—"Why not try it as an experiment?" I say it is a dangerous experiment, because, by trying the experiment, you may discourage the voluntary movement that is now going on. I

[Fourth Night.]

can fancy that many landlords who are now prepared to give allotments might much prefer that they should sell their land to the community, and that then the community should undertake all the disagreeable labour of collecting the rents from the tenants of all those small allotments. I think you would remove a great part of the duty from the landlords, and would remove from them that to which I attach the greatest importance—namely, the sense of duty that they ought to give these allotments. ["No!"] Surely, although they may disagree with me, hon. Members will see that that is an extremely probable result. Do you believe that if the State or the community comes in and says, "On me rests the responsibility of carrying out this movement," you will not discourage the individual action of the landlords? ["No!"] That may be a matter of opinion; but, conscientiously holding it, I am bound to believe that it will discourage the sense of duty and responsibility on the part of the landlords, and I am bound to express that opinion to the House. Then, if the House will permit me, I will enter for a moment upon another question—Are we certain that this machinery would succeed? It may be an extremely costly process. We have had to-night a curious proposition put before us—namely, that the small freeholders have done worse during the late agricultural depression than the other farmers of small holdings. Why should a man who pays no rent fare worse than the man who has to pay rent? Here are holdings farmed by individuals who have no rent to pay, and yet it is said that they have not done so well as those who pay rent. Why is that so? I can imagine one good reason for it; and it is that, in regard to those small holdings, the repairs have to be done by the landlords, and the farm buildings have to be looked after, and that all those various items of expenditure the landlord has to bear, while the tenant of the small holding has only to look after his own affairs; whereas, on the other hand, the small freeholder has to pay for the repairs himself. What, then, is the result? On the small holdings, under your proposed system, who is to do the landlord's repairs? Suppose you have got in some neighbourhood 40 or 50 small holdings, I ask my hon. Friend who is to do the land-

lord's repairs? I cannot get an answer from my hon. Friend. I am not going to be so discourteous as to press him for an answer; but I will repeat—who is to do the repairs? I will tell him who would have to do them. They would have to be done by the landlord. And who, under this plan, is the landlord? The community—that is, the ratepayers. Then, I ask, in those small holdings, if there are to be any farm buildings on them at all? Are the ratepayers, composed of all classes of the community, to step in and make the landlord's repairs on all of them? And are the Local Authorities to do all the jobs on the farm? Are they to see to the drainage? Are you to have an army of Inspectors and officials of the Local Authorities who are to do all these jobs? I say it is a far more serious thing for the Local Authorities to undertake this work than the hon. Member who proposes this abstract Resolution seems to imply in the Resolution. I ask my hon. Friend, as a candid man, whether I am not entitled to put to him this question? [Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: No!] My hon. Friend says that I am not entitled to put it. Then I must say that he has the courage of his opinions. [Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: Mere rhetoric.] I should like, however, to press this matter, and to ask my hon. Friend for an answer. My point is this—the repairs must be done by somebody. You may say that the tenant can do them himself. If so, then he will be in the position of the freeholder, who has not succeeded. The answer must be either that the tenants must undertake the repairs themselves, or the Local Authorities are to do them; and I submit the point of my argument to the House, to the country, and to the ratepayers at large—namely, that any system under which the ratepayers are to become the landlords of these small holdings will involve them in a very considerable expense indeed—will involve them—and here is my point—in so large an expenditure, and in so much liability, that I doubt whether much will come of the proposals of my hon. Friend. I have argued against the substitution of the community for the individual for the performance of a duty which the individual ought to perform himself. I go beyond that, and I say that the whole business of landowning, if you put it into the

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hands of the Local Authorities, is surrounded with so much expense, so much danger, so much liability to jobbing, so much liability to parish squabbling and dispute, that I fear the excellent intentions of my hon. Friend will fail, and that he may have a vast machinery raising great hopes in the minds of the agricultural population, and that those hopes, when we come to work them out in a Bill, will not be fulfilled. Those, therefore, are just as much the friends of the agricultural labourers who say that they are against this proposal, and do not believe it will be effectual, as those who put it before the House with a light heart. But there was another point in the speech of my hon. Friend to which I wish to be allowed to allude. He spoke of the right of the labourers to the land. Then, are the Local Authorities to have no option in the matter? I ask, how will it be if the Local Authorities do not give effect to the notion that the labourers have a right to the land? If they are frightened at the expense, and do not give effect to the notion of my hon. Friend that the labourers have a right to the land, is it not dangerous to use language in this House, and to endorse that language by a Resolution passed by a majority of this House, which will convey the impression that we believe that the labourers have a right to the land, and then leave it to the Local Authorities, who may give effect to it, or who may adopt a very different principle? I am as anxious as anyone that the labourer should have the land; but it is not only a question of the rights of agricultural labourers, but of the town artisans that is concerned. I ask the hon. Member, and those who are going to support his Amendment, whether they hold that in towns all the artisans have a right to their tenements? The agricultural labourer, my hon. Friend may contend, cannot live without the land. He is depressed in his condition, and the House desires to raise his *status*; and therefore my hon. Friend says he has a right to the land. But are there not tens of thousands of artisans in the large towns who wish to have their tenements at a fair and equitable rent? And then is the next step to be, when we pass from the fair and equitable rent for agricultural land, a fair and equitable rent for house property for the artisans?

I notice that cheers are no longer general from hon. Members around me; and I should like to know from my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) whether, if a proposition had been made that the artisans in the towns were entitled to a fair and equitable rent for their tenements, he would have endorsed it? But see the danger we are incurring when we embark upon the question on the ground of right. Is it not certain that the artisans in the towns would follow out this concession as to right, and would say you must regulate the rents of our tenements for us in the towns on the same principle as you regulate those of the agricultural labourer? I know men in this House who are perfectly prepared to undertake a measure of that kind. But if that is not the view of the majority, I ask is it wise—is it not in contravention of all past traditions of both sides of this House—that the community should undertake this great task, which my right hon.—my triumphant Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) has called “restoring the labourer to the land?” Are we going to embark upon that course? The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian quoted an old Statute of about 70 years ago to show that there was nothing new in the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Statute of George III. had for its object the very aim of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. But why should this old Act be quoted by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian if it has not been successful? I am opposed to the Resolution and to the measures of my hon. Friend, because I believe that past legislation in that direction has failed. [Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: No; it was not compulsory.] Yes; my hon. Friend says it was not compulsory. But then compulsion is the very point which has been reserved by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian. My hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) and my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham have achieved great things already in introducing the articles of their unauthorized programme into our discussions; but they have not yet succeeded in inducing the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to accept the

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principle of compulsion; and if there is no compulsion, then the proposals of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham will share the fate of the Act of George III. With the experience of that Act before us, I ask is it wise to embark afresh upon this legislation? [An hon. MEMBER: Make it compulsory.] Yes; with compulsion you will do much. But is the Liberal Party prepared to adopt the principle of compulsion? ["Yes!"] That is not a general cheer. Nor do I observe a cheer from my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian. If compulsion is introduced, well and good; you may run great danger, at the same time you may give some effect to the proposals of the hon. Member for Ipswich. But if there is no compulsion, you will be simply stopping what is now in progress in the way of development, without having the advantage of the hon. Gentleman's proposals. I must thank the House for having listened to what I have, most reluctantly, laid before them—namely, an economical argument upon a night when the fate of the Government is at stake; but I wish to say, in conclusion, that I will protest, with all the energy in me, against any charge that may be made against me, that because I and those who think with me may vote against the Motion of my hon. Friend, we are, therefore, wanting in sympathy with the objects he has at heart, or at all wanting in sympathy with Liberalism. I want to know since when this proposal formed part of the creed of the general Liberal Party? ["Oh!"] If I am challenged upon this point I am perfectly prepared to take up the challenge. I ask what was the date of the conversion—if they are converted—of the Leaders of the Liberal Party upon this question? If this proposal is to be part of the creed of the Liberal Party, I ask why was it not included among the points of the Manifesto of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian? Why were there not five points instead of four in that Manifesto? I protest against any charge that may be made against any who, like myself, pleaded before our constituencies the cause of freedom and of free contract—the cause of individual duty against the duty of the State—that because we cannot go into the same Lobby on this question, after three days of the Session, we are

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wanting in allegiance to the Liberal Party. I believe that everyone on this occasion is entitled to vote precisely as he chooses. It is not included—it cannot be included—in the authoritative programme of the Liberal Party, because, if it were so, my right hon. Friends—those of them who have been silent on this point during the late Elections—would have felt it their duty to plead it before the country at the time, and then the electors who went to the poll and who returned hon. Members to this House would have known whether or not they were voting for a compulsory system of allotments and free holdings, and adopting practically the programme of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) and my hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings).

MR. BRADLAUGH: The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Chaplin) drew attention to the excessively miserable condition of 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 of the French peasantry; but I did not understand the right hon. Gentleman to adduce anything in the shape of facts to illustrate that misery. There is, however, this fact by which the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down could illustrate it beyond the possibility of contradiction—namely, that in 1871, when the great French Loan was contracted, it was nearly all subscribed for in France by the very peasantry whom the right hon. Gentleman has to-night pictured as being in exceeding misery on their small holdings. There are one or two matters which have been raised this evening which seem to me to demand a little attention. The hon. Member for the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Finch-Hatton) has invited hon. Members from Ireland not to proceed to a division on the ground that the issue which is raised is not what he calls the main issue. Why, in every election contest in the country this very question was raised by hon. Members opposite, and by many candidates who are not there now, in the hope of casting ridicule upon the Liberal Party. If, then, it is not the main issue, I know not what is. What is the main issue? Is it something sprung upon us because the Cabinet has collapsed, and desires to find a new issue to relieve them in the country

from the difficulties of their present position? Were it not for one or two words which have been spoken with authority by the right hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the House, and which demand some reply, I would leave the matter here. But the right hon. Gentleman has asked whether labourers have rights to land, and whether artizans in towns have rights? Surely artizans in towns and labourers in the country have a right to life. Life—not all endurance from day to day; life not mere suffering and the dragging on of an existence from week to week; but life with some real pleasure and comfort in it. The country must be poor indeed which cannot give that life. The land hitherto has been held by the landlords under restrictive laws, which have given the labourers but little freedom beyond the mere right to exist; and the amount of misery produced in the country has been so terrible that a Return laid on the Table of the House in 1867 shows such a state of our agricultural population as would be a disgrace to any civilized country in the world. A lamented Bishop recently deceased—[*A laugh*—]whom I honour, although other hon. Members may not—placed on record the condition of the agricultural population in the Eastern and Southern districts of England in words so terrible that if they did not come from a high authority it would be impossible to believe them. The right hon. Gentleman asks if there has not been some improvement? Yes; there have been improvements; but to whom are thanks due? To the agricultural labourers themselves and not to the landlords, who remained deaf and dumb and motionless until the ghost of a vote frightened them in their sleep. The improvements never came until the agricultural labourers united themselves, and they have slowly come since the agricultural labourers united themselves. [“No!”] Either hon. Members who about “No!” have not made themselves acquainted with the facts, or they desire to ignore them. Unfortunately, the facts are beyond dispute, and we are asked now whether compulsion is to be used towards the owners of the land? Why not? The landlords have compelled the labourers as long as they dare; they have held them down by law as long as they could; and now there is an endeavour, on the part of those who

have votes, to free themselves. And now the very remedy the landlords have employed is complained of, and they resent every proposal to apply the lash they have so remorselessly used themselves. [*A laugh*.] I am not astonished that hon. Members laugh at these things, because it shows one of two things—either that they have not made themselves acquainted with the condition of the people upon whom they live, or that they are willing, for the sake of a Party vote, for the moment to ignore it. It is my intention to go into the Lobby with the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings); and I will only say, in conclusion, that there is one item of repairs neglected by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and that is the impossibility, in any bill of repairs, of rehabilitating a shattered Cabinet.

MR. LONG: I should be sorry to detain the House at any length, and should not have risen only that I desire to say a word in answer to the charge which has been made by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). The hon. Member says it is not sufficient to say “No” when he charges the landlords with never having moved hand or foot in support of the labourers. I admit that shouting “No!” is not a sufficient answer; but I could produce proof that, somewhat more than 40 years ago, the landlords did their best to help their labourers by providing suitable allotments at fair and just rents. I feel sure that the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) will himself admit that the charge which the hon. Member for Northampton has made is, in the case of many landlords, most unjust. I admit that there is a great deal to be said in favour of the action of the hon. Member to-night; and, for my own part, I have always been a cordial supporter of the system of allotments, and even of small holdings. I should not, however, have risen at this late hour if it had not been for the challenge of the hon. Member for Northampton, which made me anxious to express my regret that in supporting a Motion like this, which he ought to have advocated in a non-Party spirit for the benefit of the community at large, he should have taken advantage of the occasion, under the pretence of advancing the labourers’ interests, for the

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purpose of making an unjust attack upon landlords who have always done their best to improve the condition of their agricultural constituents.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) rose after a pause, during which Mr. Speaker again put the Question. The right hon. Gentleman said: I waited, Sir, until you put the Question, because I certainly supposed that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) would, in the course of this debate, have given his opinions to the House; and I more especially thought so after the challenge that has been thrown down, in no ambiguous language, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen), who sits on the same Bench with himself, and who is one of the Members of the same Party. The speech of that right hon. Gentleman has been one of the most interesting delivered in the course of a most interesting debate. I shall have something to say, although not much, in regard to the right hon. Gentleman's speech later on; but the chief interest of that speech to those who sit on the Government Benches consists in the fact that it was the concluding scene of a drama which has been acted during the past six months, in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Edinburgh and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham have been struggling together over the body of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). The result of that struggle was long ambiguous. We did not know which right hon. Gentleman would pull the hardest, and which would come triumphant out of the contest. I apprehend that the doubt has this evening been settled by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Edinburgh admitting himself to be beaten. He has relinquished the last hold on the body of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and he has surrendered that right hon. Gentleman, body and soul, to the care of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Now, Sir, the accusation levelled against Her Majesty's Government in this debate is that we have not, in the course of the Queen's Speech, announced to the House that we were

going to bring forward measures to relieve that agricultural distress, the gravity of which Her Majesty's Speech has acknowledged. Sir, what foundation is there for that charge? There are no fewer than four measures mentioned in the Queen's Speech which have a direct bearing on the question before the House, and dealing with the tenure of land in this country, and the condition of those classes who depend upon land. We have, in the first place, made an announcement that the incidence of rating is going to be altered. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian boldly assumes that any measure for altering the incidence of rating proposed from this side of the House would be of a nature to take the rates off the land and throw them upon labour. What right has the right hon. Gentleman to make that rash assumption? Until he sees the measure before the House, it would be well for him not to assume that the Government mean to carry out the programme which he has been good enough to lay down for them. Then there is the Bill dealing with the sale of glebe lands; the Bill dealing with land transfer, which is made a cardinal point in the Royal Speech; and no hon. Gentleman opposite will, I presume, have the hardihood to say that a Bill for facilitating land transfer is not likely to be for the benefit of the agricultural labourer. Then, finally, we have a Bill which, more than any other, bears on this question—the Local Government Bill. When that Bill comes before the House, if ever it does come, hon. Gentlemen will be in a better position than now to judge how far the Government mean to deal with this question. As my right hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin), in his admirable speech at the beginning of this debate, pointed out, there are two questions which have been brought before the House about which absolute confusion seems to reign in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. There is the question of allotments on the one side, and on the other that of small freeholds and small tenancies. Not only are those questions totally distinct, but they belong, in my opinion, to totally different provinces of legislation. Allotments, like sanitary questions, are connected with the general comfort and well-being of the population. Dealing with allotments will not

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be an attempt artificially to alter the natural channels in which industry is flowing. But to substitute small freeholds for large freeholds, and small holdings for large holdings, though I should agree with those who have spoken this evening that thereby great stability might be given to our institutions, and great solidity to the bases of our society, is a question belonging to an entirely different province of legislation, and one which should be entered into by a Government with the utmost caution. It will be admitted, I think, that any effort to alter artificially the channels in which a great industry should flow should have in its favour a great *prima facie* case. Is there a great *prima facie* case for the Government at once taking in hand a measure for a great multiplication of freeholds and small farms? We have ample means of making a comparative estimate of the systems of tenure by looking on the Continent, seeing what is going on there, and comparing it with what is going on here. The right hon. Gentleman opposite spoke of the labourer being divorced from the soil; and the hon. Gentleman who brought forward this Motion described the labourer in the present circumstances in England as being in a state of dependence. In what way, I ask, is the agricultural labourer divorced from the soil any more than the miner is divorced from his colliery, or the cotton spinner from the mills in which he works? Is it degrading for an Englishman to work for weekly wages? If it is not degrading, then why do hon. Members apply these depreciatory epithets to that great mass of our fellow-countrymen who, like the artisans in the towns, and the agricultural labourers in the country, are working for weekly wages? I quite agree that we should endeavour to improve the condition of the agricultural labourer; but is it certain that their condition would be improved by a Bill which would produce a large increase of small holdings and small farms? I wish to lay before the House one or two facts which ought to convince hon. Members that they should pause before any such legislation is undertaken. In the most prosperous Provinces of France, where these small tenements the right hon. Gentleman speaks so highly of exist in large numbers, I find that the weekly wages

amount, in some cases, to 8s. 5d., in others to 8s. 9d. and 8s. 2d., and in some districts the labourer gets 1s. per day. When I heard the hon. Member for North-West Norfolk (Mr. Arch), who made an admirable and interesting speech, describe how hard it is for a labourer to live on 14s. a-week, I was reminded of a sentence in a French treatise relating to Normandy, in which the writer enthusiastically says—

"In these districts wages are 13s. a-week. Is not that enough to produce contentment and harmony between the labourer and farmer?"

Such, Sir, is the condition of the labourer in the most favoured Provinces of France, where these small holdings flourish. As I am on this subject, I would remind the House that while it is true, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) says, that there are 8,000,000 peasant proprietors in France, it is also true that 3,000,000 of them are too poor to pay taxes. On the ground of indigence, they are excused from paying taxes. When I am told that the English labourer is ill-housed and ill-lodged—a proposition which may be true partially of certain districts in the country, but which emphatically is not true as a general proposition dealing with the whole country—I am reminded of descriptions of the average peasant house in Normandy. These descriptions are given by the same authority I have already quoted—an authority not an enemy to small holdings—who says that the peasants live in houses narrow, low, inconvenient, dirty, and unwholesome. Then, again, let me remind the right hon. Gentleman that a Commissioner sent out in connection with the Agricultural Commission describes the system of small holdings in Belgium to be one of high rent and low wages. I am not saying that, on general, social grounds, I do not desire to see a large increase in small freeholds and small tenures; but I am trying to explain to the House that in making a comparative survey of countries where these small tenures exist, and of this country, there is nothing to convince me that the one is so superior to the other as to induce us to enter upon the difficult and almost hopeless task of creating such tenures, except in so far as this result would naturally follow from increased facilities for the transfer of

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land. So much for the first part of the question. I now come to what is more immediately before the House—namely, the question of allotments; and I have here to supplement the statement made by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Chaplin). The hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) boldly assumed, in the course of his speech, that there has been a change of front on the part of the Government. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that there has been no change of front. The Government propose, as they always have done, that in the Bill dealing with Local Government power should be given to the Local Authority to be constituted by that Bill to deal with this question of allotments. It is, and always has been, the intention of the Government to give those Local Bodies power to deal with this question. I feel as much as any man in the House the force of the criticisms passed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen) upon any attempt to give power of any kind to the Local Authority to deal with this question. But I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that it is nothing new in English legislation to give such powers to Local Bodies. Powers are already given. The right hon. Gentleman alluded to the Act of George III.; but that Act is not the only one relating to this point. The Act of George III. was amended in the time of William IV.; but the Act of William IV. is not the only or the most recent Act. There is still another Act, which was passed in 1843, which gave power to certain bodies to deal with parts of common lands, and let them out as allotments. If there is any fundamental and vital objection to the possession of powers of this kind by a public authority, that objection clearly would apply to the case of those authorities who have, by the Commons Act, power to deal with these questions. The Government do not conceive, in the provision which they intend to submit, that they have departed from the sound "traditions of English legislation." Now, Sir, I want to know why the Government are threatened with a hostile division because they have not mentioned in Her Majesty's Speech that this specific and special question is to be dealt with in the new Local Government Bill?

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There is another question of still greater importance than the question of allotments—the question of temperance. Well, this has not been mentioned in the Queen's Speech. That also will be dealt with by the new Bill. But hon. Gentlemen come down and threatened the Government with a hostile Motion, not because the question is not to be dealt with, but because we do not catalogue the special provisions, in detail, which our Bills are to contain. Is that consistent with the traditions of Parliament? Now, the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone), on the first night of the debate on the Address, used these words—

"I wish to say that, so far as is possible, and so far as I may venture to recommend a practice which I believe to be to the advantage of the House, I do believe it is best, as far as we can, that we should be content to recognize the Speech from the Throne and the Address moved in consequence of it as presenting to us an outline of what we have to do, rather than a convenient occasion for the discussion of the several parts of it in detail."

I wish that the practice of the right hon. Gentleman was in accordance with his theory. The Government have presented in outline, as recommended by the right hon. Gentleman, the measures they wish to present to the House without giving the details; and because we have done so we are threatened now with a hostile vote. Sir, if the object of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jesse Collings) is simply and solely to benefit the agricultural labourer—if he has nothing in view but to extend the system of allotments, would not his best course have been to wait until the time comes when the Government bring in their measure, and then to amend it, if he thought it required amendment, or to reject it if he thought it deserved rejection, and to substitute something else? Can anything, from the labourers' point of view, be gained by the Amendment now before us? Absolutely nothing. Pass this Amendment to-night by what majority you choose, and not a single labourer in the country will be one iota nearer to the possession of his allotment. The fact is so patent, so obvious, that I am almost tempted to conclude that those who move this Amendment and those who support it have some other object in view than that which lies ostensibly on the face of the Motion of the hon. Gentleman. But if there is another

object in view, as may be inferred from the recent conversion of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) to the doctrines of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), that object is, and can only be, to turn out the Government and come in themselves. If that be so, would it not have been more simple—would it not have been more straightforward, more in accordance with the traditions of the House, to move on this Address a Vote of "No Confidence" in Her Majesty's Government? The Government tell you it is a subject with which they mean to deal themselves. The Government tell you it is a subject with which they always intended to deal; and if hon. Gentlemen are determined not to wait to see their proposals—if their object is to hurl the Government from their places and come in themselves, against that we have nothing to say. We only complain of the means adopted to attain that end. I do hope, in order to preserve intact the traditions of the House, as to the manner in which it deals with the Queen's Speech, it may seem good to the right hon. Gentleman opposite to withdraw his support to the Amendment, and to bring forward a Vote, at a later stage of the debate, which would raise the true issue which is before the House. Not the issue of allotments, but the issue of Ireland—the issue of Ireland, which, while you have the agricultural labourer and his fortunes on your lips, during the whole course of this debate, I doubt not, occupied your minds.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down opened his speech by a direct challenge to myself, and an inquiry as to why I had not, up to that moment, addressed the House, and favoured hon. Members with my views on this subject. Well, Sir, certainly I thought that the House, and all who had any interest in this matter, were sufficiently acquainted with the opinions I have expressed in the country over and over again, and that it was not necessary to delay the House from a division by any repetition of them. The right hon. Gentleman, however, thinks that I was called on to do so after the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen); and he stated that my right

hon. Friend made a direct appeal and challenge to me. I certainly did not understand his speech in that light. He offered me his congratulations, which I accept in the spirit in which they were offered; and he repeated, with great eloquence and earnestness, the arguments against the proposals I have supported in the country—arguments to which I have already, again and again, replied; and the only new point in the speech of my right hon. Friend was the naive and ingenuous expression of his disappointment at finding that three acres and a cow are a part of the authorized programme. My right hon. Friend has really no one to blame but himself for the disappointment which he has experienced. What right had he to say, as he did in the country, that the proposals which I have made again and again in favour of the wider distribution of land, and for increasing the facilities for allotments for labourers—what right had he ever to say that that was excluded from the authorized programme of the Liberal Party? I read the Manifesto of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) with at least the same attention as my right hon. Friend the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen); and I found in it a statement that the Liberal Party, if they were called into Office, would be prepared to bring in a great scheme of Local Government; and the hope, also, that it might be possible to extend the functions and authority of those Local Bodies, so as to secure that a larger number of persons should be placed upon the land. Well, Sir, all that I can say is that, under the circumstances, I thought myself justified in making the proposals which I have made, which were in some sort the details and the fringe of the great programme of the Liberal Party; and if it was not included, at any rate it was not excluded; and there was no reason to suppose that there was any other Member of the Liberal Party except my right hon. Friend (Mr. Goschen) who was pledged against it. Well, now, Sir, the debate has shown that I was right, and my right hon. Friend was wrong. He has congratulated me, and I sincerely and respectfully condole with him. And if, Sir, I were inclined to condole with my right hon. Friend when he made his own confession, I am still more inclined to con-

dole with him after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. A. J. Balfour). For what has the right hon. Gentleman told us? He has told us, forsooth! that it was always the intention of the Conservative Government to do this thing, which is, in the eyes of my right hon. Friend, the greatest heresy of which any Government can be guilty—that they are going to call in the aid of the community to assist individuals in doing that which they ought to do for themselves. They are going to ask the community to undertake the repairs of small holdings, and they are going to introduce into local government jobbery and mismanagement. And, Sir, these statements have been made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and my right hon. Friend the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen) has promised to vote for them. My right hon. Friend is going to exchange sides; but I do not think he will gain much by the exchange. The right hon. Gentleman opposite says this has always been the intention of the Government. Well, Sir, never was a secret better kept. Why, Sir, what happened at the beginning of the evening? We listened to a lengthy and most earnest and vigorous speech from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Chaplin); and not one suggestion, not one hint, did he give us of any intention on the part of the Government to produce this great scheme for facilitating allotments in connection with their Local Government Bill. Not a bit of it. Not only so; but after the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) proposed the Amendment, the right hon. Gentleman wound up his eloquent oration by saying—"I shall meet, on behalf of the Government, the proposition of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) with a bold and uncompromising 'No.'"

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy is not present; but I am sure the right hon. Gentleman does not wish to misrepresent my right hon. Friend. What he said he should meet with an uncompromising "No" was the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: Quite so; but all I can say is that our ideas of what constitutes a bold and uncompromising "No" must differ very considerably. The right hon. Gentle-

man (Mr. Chaplin) was going to meet the Amendment with a bold and uncompromising "No!" But how does the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board meet it? He meets it by the statement which I am bound to say no Member on the other side ever heard a word of before, that the Government are going to deal with this subject by giving large facilities for the increase of allotments in connection with their Local Government Bill. That is not a bold and uncompromising "No;" but I should rather, under the circumstances, say that it is a compromising "No." It is a very curious thing, Sir, that this kind of compromising negative has come before from the right hon. Gentleman opposite, for I remember a discussion we had across the Table in this House at the end of the last Session of the last Parliament about the Bill for medical relief. Then, also, the proposal was made by my hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings)—whom I must congratulate on his success in converting the Government Bench—and then, also, the answer given was, in the first place, a bold and uncompromising "No;" and, in the last place, complete and humiliating surrender. But the surrender did not carry the counties, and the surrender in the present Parliament will not save the Government. I am sorry that it should have fallen to the lot of the President of the Local Government Board to be the channel for these two confessions on the part of his Government. The right hon. Gentleman asked why it is that we have thought it necessary to support an Amendment hostile to the Government, and why we have not waited for the proposals which he intends to make? I can only reply that we could only judge the nature of those proposals, before the astounding statement which we have just listened to, by the description of them in the Queen's Speech; and there the proposals of the Government were described as a transfer of the functions of the Quarter Sessions and other county authorities to a new Local Authority. We were not told how this new authority was to be constituted; and I have some difficulty in believing that the constitution of such a body according to the view of the present Government would have been satisfactory to the House.

Mr. Joseph Chamberlain

Further, what we were told as to the intention of the Government to effect a transfer of functions, in our opinion, clearly precluded them from making such a proposal as the President of the Local Government Board now says they always had in their minds. At the present moment, the Quarter Sessions cannot purchase land for allotment. If, therefore, the Local Government Bill is to be a Bill for the mere transfer of functions, how can it contain the provisions which we favour? [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The *Guardians*.] Oh, then, it is to the old, unused, unsuccessful powers which were committed to the *Guardians* by an Act of George III., 70 years ago, that the Government intend to revert—an Act which has been ridiculed already in the course of this debate. This is the valuable power which the right hon. Gentleman is prepared, and which he and his Government always intended, to transfer to the new authority whom they will create if this House permits them to do so. Well, Sir, I do not think that it is upon promises of this kind that the House can rely. We support a hostile Amendment, in the first place, because the condition and claims of the agricultural labourers being one of the great questions raised at the last Election, it is our bounden duty, at the first opportunity, to raise their claim, and call upon the Government to do them justice; and, in the second place, because we have no confidence that the Government will either do justice to the agricultural labourer or to any other question with which they may be called upon to deal.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Sir, I am glad that at last, after a long and interesting debate, we have a clear statement from the Bench opposite as to the real intention and meaning of the Motion before the House. We do not wonder that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) feels it incumbent upon him to attempt to redeem all those wild and astounding promises that were made at the General Election to the deluded agricultural labourer. But it is even more of a piece with the political history of the right hon. Gentleman that he should take up a Motion which, I believe, has been brought forward in all sincerity by the

hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jease Collinge), and by the hon. Member for North-West Norfolk (Mr. Arch), whom I am sure all of us are glad to welcome in this House, whatever we may think of his opinions—it is even more of a piece with the past conduct of the right hon. Gentleman that he should use this Motion as what, to the great bulk of those who will vote for it, it really is—namely, a Party move to turn the Government out of Office. Sir, in the course of the debate we have had a speech from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen), who is still a Member of the great Liberal Party; and we have had that speech replied to, but not adequately, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Sir, I think the House will await with some curiosity the reply to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham which I anticipate will be made by the noble Marquess the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington). I am surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down say that he had no reason to believe that any other Member of the Liberal Party, except the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Edinburgh, objected to the inclusion of these proposals of his in the authorized programme of the Leader of the Opposition. What was it, then, to which the noble Marquess opposite referred when he spoke of proposals of a Socialistic tendency which, in his opinion, were not included in that programme? I should like to hear this evening from the noble Marquess what is his opinion of the scheme which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has now triumphantly enforced upon the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone)—whether he still maintains his opinion that it does not form part of the authorized programme of the Liberal Party, and that it is of a Socialistic tendency? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was very hard upon my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. A. J. Balfour), because he said that he had made a disclosure never heard before, to the effect that Her Majesty's Government intended to propose that the Local Authorities in the counties

should be invested with powers to facilitate the acquisition of allotments by the labouring classes. I can only say that, so far from that being a new principle, as has been said in this debate, it is a principle which has been accepted and adopted in legislation for many years past; and although there are points connected with the question of compulsion to which I cannot hold out to the right hon. Gentleman any hope that Her Majesty's Government would be able to adhere, yet, if the right hon. Gentleman does attach any importance to the statement made by my right hon. Friend that the Local Authorities will be invested with these important powers, instead of supporting the hon. Member for Ipswich, he ought to have invited him to withdraw his Motion, in order that we might have an opportunity for laying our proposals before the House. The hon. Member for Ipswich has taken a long and, as I believe, a sincere interest in this question. He took up the case of the agricultural labourer before the agricultural labourer had a vote. I cannot say as much for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I believe that in all guilelessness, in all earnestness, and, I may say, in all impatience, the hon. Member for Ipswich has placed this Motion on the Notice Paper; but I cannot help thinking that some one craftier than himself has since that, so to speak, "got at" the hon. Member; for I believe that otherwise he would either, after discussion of that which is, after all, a mere detail in the great programme of legislation, have withdrawn his Amendment, in order that he might put forward to the House his own proposals in the shape of a Bill or a Motion, or that he would have endeavoured to engraft Amendments on the Government scheme rather than press to a division this evening a proposition vague and inconclusive in itself, and one which, as my right hon. Friend has already said, could not, even if carried, advance the cause of the agricultural labourer one inch in the direction in which he desires to go. No, Sir; as we now know, this is not a move for the benefit of the agricultural labourer. It is a move on the part of the Opposition, made for two reasons—in the first place, to turn the present Government out of Office. Well, I can assure hon. and right

hon. Gentlemen opposite that if the result of the division to-night should be unfavourable to Her Majesty's Government we shall accept the decision without regret. We assumed Office reluctantly; and we shall leave it willingly as soon as we are assured that we do not possess the support of this House. But, Sir, the success of this Motion will have another and graver result than the defeat of Her Majesty's Government; and that is very well known to those hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway who took so novel and remarkable an interest earlier this evening in securing a division on the Motion of the hon. Member for Ipswich before Thursday next. Those hon. Gentlemen know well that the success of this Motion will not only defeat Her Majesty's Government, but that it will also defeat the policy which Her Majesty's Government have announced that they believe it to be their duty to pursue with reference to Ireland. That result may be grateful to them; but will it be equally grateful to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite? ["Hear, hear!"] Then let them undertake the difficulties which we have had to face. But this I will say—if the probable result of this Motion be, as hon. Members in that quarter of the House desire, to place in Office a right hon. Gentleman who only on Thursday last made a speech in this House full of the vaguest possibilities with reference to the future connection of the two Kingdoms, then I do earnestly and sincerely press on hon. Members who value the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland as much as we do to think once, twice, and thrice before they allow their sincere desire to promote the interests of the agricultural labourer to induce them, through this vague, unnecessary, and untimely Motion, to commit the future of their country to the gravest dangers that ever awaited the people of England.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON:
Sir, the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has called upon me to state my opinion, and the course I shall take on this Amendment, before the House goes to a division; and I must admit that, considering the large amount of attention which I have been called upon to devote to the subject in the course of speeches to my constituents

The Chancellor of the Exchequer

some short time ago, it is not unreasonable that I should state, in the fewest possible words, what course I feel bound to take. Now, Sir, I am not going into a discussion on the merits of this question at this hour of the night. I might have been prepared to do so at an earlier period of the evening, or I may be prepared to do so on a future occasion. All that I think I need say is this—that I agree to a very great extent with much that has fallen from my right hon. Friend the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen); and I feel bound, in consistency with the language which I used to my constituents at the Election, to oppose the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings). Sir, my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) has made some observations, which I think he was perfectly justified in making, upon the want of consistency which has characterized the statements of Her Majesty's Government in this and other matters. Certainly, it is extremely difficult to recognize the statement which has just been made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. A. J. Balfour) with the statement made in an earlier period of the evening by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Chaplin). I can well understand that my right hon. Friend the Member for East Edinburgh can have very little more satisfaction in supporting Her Majesty's Government than he would have in supporting the Motion of the hon. Member for Ipswich. But while I agree with my right hon. Friend in the course he is going to take, I may say that if there had been time I should have put my opposition on a somewhat lower and somewhat different ground from that which he has taken. I have never said that I was opposed to legislation on this subject. On the contrary, I have always said that provision for allotments and possible provision for small holdings to be occupied by the labouring classes, or by a small class of tenant farmers, was an object which was very much to be desired. I have said that I desired that object to be accomplished by natural and self-acting means, and that it was through the operation of those natural causes, freed from all restraint, that I looked forward with so much hope to a better distribution

of the land of this country. But I have never proposed or said that the operation of the public authorities must necessarily be excluded from this question. I have admitted that the compulsory acquisition of land for various public purposes has been sanctioned by various enactments; and that, therefore, I was totally unable to join in the cry of confiscation which has been raised in reference to this question; and, further, that if I were satisfied as to the details and the proper constitution of the authorities to whom such powers might be safely entrusted, I was not going to commit myself against the consideration of such questions. Therefore, I entirely agree with what was said by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham when he stated that this question was not excluded from the policy which was laid before the country by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). Certainly, I have never treated it as excluded, and I have never considered it as excluded. But what I have never understood until this evening is that it was intended that the Liberal Party should be invited, at the first assembling of Parliament, to lay down a vague and wide declaration establishing a principle without having under consideration the details of the measure by which that principle is to be carried out, or the character of the authorities to whom its execution is to be entrusted. That, Sir, is the reason why I find myself unable to support, and on the contrary obliged to oppose, the Motion of the hon. Member for Ipswich, which appears to lay down a principle novel in itself, and of very wide extent, without taking any security from the House that that principle will be carried out in a satisfactory manner. The objection that I have always taken since this subject has been before the country is that it has been given a far wider importance than that which belongs to it. I thought that it raised too great hopes—I trust not false hopes—in the minds of the agricultural labourers of the country. I thought that it led them to think that by the operation of Parliament, acting through some Local Authorities not defined and not yet created, the prospect was being held out to them that their position was to be definitely and permanently improved; whereas, I believe, all great or permanent improvement in

[Fourth Night.]

Pickersgill, E. H.
 Picton, J. A.
 Pilkington, G. A.
 Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
 Portman, hon. E. B.
 Potter, T. B.
 Powell, W. R. H.
 Power, P. J.
 Price, T. P.
 Pricstly, B.
 Pugh, D.
 Pulley, J.
 Pyne, J. D.
 Quilter, W. C.
 Rathbone, W.
 Redmond, J. E.
 Redmond, W. H. K.
 Reed, Sir E. J.
 Reid, H. G.
 Rendel, S.
 Reynolds, W. J.
 Richard, H.
 Richardson, T.
 Rigby, J.
 Roberts, J. (Cmrvn. E.)
 Roberts, J. (Flt. Bghs.)
 Robertson, E.
 Robinson, T.
 Robson, W. S.
 Roe, T.
 Rogers, J. E. T.
 Roscoe, Sir H. E.
 Russell, C.
 Russell, E. R.
 Ruston, J.
 Rylands, P.
 Salis-Schwabe, Col. G.
 Samuelson, Sir B.
 Saunders, W.
 Sexton, T.
 Shaw, T.
 Sheehan, J. D.
 Sheehy, D.
 Sheil, E.
 Shirley, W. S.
 Small, J. F.
 Smith, W. B.
 Spencer, hon. C. R.
 Spensley, hon. H.
 Spicer, H.

Stack, J.
 Stafford, Marquess of
 Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
 Stevenson, F. S.
 Storey, S.
 Strong, R.
 Stuart, J.
 Sturgis, H. P.
 Sullivan, D.
 Sullivan, T. D.
 Sutherland, T.
 Swinburne, Sir J.
 Tanner, C. K.
 Taylor, F.
 Tennant, Sir C.
 Thomas, A.
 Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
 Tuite, J.
 Vanderbyl, P.
 Wardle, H.
 Warmington, C. M.
 Wason, E.
 Watson, T.
 Watt, H.
 Wayman, T.
 West, Colonel W. C.
 West, H. W.
 Weston, J. D.
 Whitbread, S.
 Will, J. S.
 Williams, A. J.
 Williams, J. C.
 Williams, P.
 Wilson, Sir M.
 Wilson, H. J.
 Wilson, I.
 Wilson, J. (Durham)
 Wilson, J. (Edinburgh)
 Winterbotham, A. B.
 Wolmer, Viscount
 Woodall, W.
 Woodhead, J.
 Wright, C.
 Yeo, F.

TELEGRAMS.

Collings, J.
 Verney, Captain E. H.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
 Agg-Gardner, J. T.
 Ainslie, W. G.
 Allsopp, G.
 Ambrose, W.
 Amherst, W. A. T.
 Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
 Baden-Powell, G. S.
 Bagdallay, E.
 Baily, L. R.
 Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
 Balfour, G. W.
 Barnes, A.
 Bartley, G. C. T.
 Barttelot, Sir W. B.
 Bates, Sir E.
 Baumann, A. A.
 Beach, right hon. Sir
 M. E. Hicks-
 Beach, W. W. B.

Beadel, W. J.
 Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
 Beresford, Lord C. W.
 De la Poer
 Bethell, Commander
 Bigwood, J.
 Birkbeck, E.
 Blaine, R. S.
 Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
 Bonsor, H. C. O.
 Boord, T. W.
 Borthwick, Sir A.
 Bourke, right hon. R.
 Bridgeman, Col. hon.
 F. O.
 Bristowe, T. L.
 Brodrick, hon. W. St.
 J. F.
 Brookfield, A. M.
 Brooks, J.

Bullard, H.
 Burdett-Coutts, W. L.
 Ash.-B.
 Burghley, Lord
 Campbell, Sir A.
 Chaplin, right hon. H.
 Charrington, S.
 Churchill, rt. hn. Lord
 R. H. S.
 Clarke, E.
 Coddington, W.
 Cohen, L. L.
 Commerell, Adml. Sir
 J.
 Compton, F.
 Cooke, C. W. R.
 Coope, O. E.
 Corbett, J.
 Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
 Courtney, L. H.
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Cross, rt. hn. Sir R. A.
 Cross, H. S.
 Crossley, Sir S. B.
 Cubitt, right hon. G.
 Curzon, Viscount
 Davies, D.
 Davies, W.
 Dawnay, Colonel hon.
 L. P.
 Dawson, R.
 De Cobain, E. S. W.
 Denison, E. W.
 Denison, W. B.
 De Worma, Baron H.
 Dimsdale, Baron R.
 Dixon, G.
 Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
 Donkin, R. S.
 Duncan, Colonel F.
 Duncombe, A.
 Dyke, rt. hon. Sir W.
 H.
 Eaton, H. W.
 Ebrington, Viscount
 Edwardes-Moss, T. C.
 Egerton, Admiral hon.
 F.
 Egerton, hon. A. de T.
 Egerton, hn. A. J. F.
 Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
 Ellis, Sir J. W.
 Evelyn, W. J.
 Ewart, W.
 Ewing, A. O.
 Farquharson, H. R.
 Feilden, Lt-Gen. R. J.
 Fellowes, W. H.
 Fergusson, rt. hn. Sir J.
 Field, Captain E.
 Finch, G. H.
 Finch-Hatton, hon. M.
 E. G.
 Fisher, W. H.
 Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
 Fitz-Wygram, Sir F.
 Fletcher, Sir H.
 Folkestone, Viscount
 Forwood, A. B.
 Fowler, Sir R. N.
 Fraser, General C. C.
 Gardner, R. Richard-
 son-

Gathorne-Hardy, hon.
 J. S.
 Gent-Davis, R.
 Gibson, J. G.
 Giles, A.
 Goldsworthy, Major-
 General W. T.
 Gorst, Sir J. E.
 Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
 Green, E.
 Greenall, Sir G.
 Gregory, G. B.
 Grey, A.
 Grimston, Viscount
 Gunter, Colonel R.
 Hall, A. W.
 Hall, C.
 Hallett, Colonel F. C.
 Hughes-
 Halsey, T. F.
 Hamilton, Lord C. J.
 Hamilton, Lord E.
 Hamilton, Lord F. S.
 Hamilton, right hon.
 Lord G. F.
 Hamilton, Col. O. E.
 Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
 Hanbury, R. W.
 Hankey, F. A.
 Hardcastle, E.
 Hardcastle, F.
 Hartington, Marq. of
 Haslett, J. H.
 Heaton, J. H.
 Hervey, Lord F.
 Hickman, A.
 Hill, Lord A. W.
 Hill, A. S.
 Holland, rt. hon. Sir
 H. T.
 Holmes, rt. hon. H.
 Hope, right hon. A. J.
 B. B.
 Houldsworth, W. H.
 Howard, J.
 Howard, J. M.
 Hubbard, rt. hn. J. G.
 Hughes, Colonel E.
 Hunt, F. S.
 Hunter, Sir G.
 Hutton, J. F.
 Isaacs, L. H.
 Jackson, W. L.
 James, rt. hon. Sir H.
 Jennings, L. J.
 Johnston, W.
 Jones, P.
 Kennaway, Sir J. H.
 Kenyon, hon. G. T.
 Ker, R. W. B.
 Kimber, H.
 King, H. S.
 King-Harman, Colonel
 E. L.
 Knatchbull-Hugessen,
 hon. H. T.
 Lawrance, J. O.
 Lawrence, Sir T.
 Lawrence, W. F.
 Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
 Leighton, S.
 Lethbridge, Sir R.
 Lewisham, Viscount

Llewellyn, E. H.
 Lloyd, W.
 Long, W. H.
 Lowther, hon. W.
 Lubbock, Sir J.
 Macartney, J. W. E.
 Macdonald, right hon.
 J. H. A.
 Maclean, J. M.
 Macnaghten, E.
 Macmont, Captain J.
 Macgregor-Hogg, Sir J.
 Makins, Colonel W. T.
 Mannera, rt. hon. Lord
 J. J. R.
 March, Earl of
 Marriott, rt. hon. W. T.
 Marton, Maj. (J. B. H.)
 Maxwell, Sir H. E.
 Milla, C. W.
 Morgan, hon. F.
 Mount, W. O.
 Moubray, rt. hon. Sir
 J. R.
 Mulholland, H. L.
 Manchester, Lord
 Muntz, P. A.
 Murdoch, C. T.
 Newark, Viscount
 Norris, E. S.
 Northcote, hon. H. S.
 Norton, R.
 O'Neill, hon. R. T.
 Paget, R. H.
 Pearce, W.
 Peel, right hon. Sir R.
 Pelly, Sir L.
 Percy, Lord A. M.
 Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
 Pomfret, W. P.
 Powell, F. S.
 Price, Captain G. E.
 Pritchard, J. H.
 Rishra, rt. hon. H. C.
 Ritchie, C. T.
 Robertson, J. P. B.

Ross, A. H.
 Round, J.
 Russell, Sir G.
 St. Aubyn, Sir J.
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T.
 M.
 Sanderson, Maj. E. J.
 Slater-Booth, rt. hon. G.
 Seely, C.
 Selwin-Elbetsen, rt.
 hon. Sir H. J.
 Seton-Karr, H.
 Sidebottom, T. H.
 Sidebottom, W.
 Sitwell, Sir G. R.
 Smith, A.
 Smith, D.
 Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
 Stanley, rt. hon. Col. F.
 Stanley, E. J.
 Stewart, M.
 Sturrock, P.
 Temple, Sir R.
 Tipping, W.
 Tollemache, H. J.
 Tomlinson, W. E. M.
 Trotter, H. J.
 Tyler, Sir H. W.
 Valentine, C. J.
 Vincent, C. E. H.
 Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
 Waring, Colonel T.
 Watson, J.
 Webster, Sir R. E.
 Westlake, J.
 White, J. B.
 Whitley, E.
 Winn, hon. R.
 Wodehouse, E. R.
 Wortley, C. E. Stuart.
 Wroughton, P.
 Yorke, J. R.
 Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
 Walrond, Col. W. H.

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Of course, Sir, we quite appreciate the nature of the vote at which the House has arrived; and I think that the proper course for me to take, remembering that the ordinary meeting of the House to-morrow would be at an early hour, is to move that the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Thursday next.

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman has not yet moved the adjournment of the debate.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Then, Sir, I first move the adjournment of the debate on the Address.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be adjourned till Thursday,"—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer,)—put, and agreed to.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I beg to move that the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Thursday next.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Thursday,"—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer,)—put, and agreed to.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I am afraid I am again in fault on a matter of form. My intention was to move the immediate adjournment of the House. I beg to move—"That this House do now adjourn."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

MR. T. M. HEALY: Mr. Speaker, I do not see why the House should not go on and get through with its ordinary Business. As we have beaten the right hon. Gentleman once this evening, I hope he will not put us to the trouble of beating him again on this question of adjournment.

MR. GLADSTONE: It appears to me, Mr. Speaker, from my recollection of many critical votes in this House, that the course proposed to be taken by the right hon. Gentleman on the present occasion is in accordance with the usual custom and the precedents. Therefore, if the Government feel that in consequence of the vote that has been arrived at by the House it is desirable that they should examine their position, it is the uniform custom of the House to suspend the immediate prosecution of Business; and I think that the adoption of any other course would be inconvenient, and would probably lead to confusion.

Question put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

[Fourth Night.]

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 28th January, 1886.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had prepared and laid it on the Table: The same was ordered to be printed. (No. 8.)

Several Lords—took the Oath.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Houghton, after the death of his father.

QUEEN'S SPEECH—HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

THE LORD STEWARD OF THE HOUSEHOLD (The Earl of Mount-Edgcombe), in reporting Her Majesty's Answer to the Address, said: My Lords, I am commanded by the Queen to deliver to this House the Gracious Answer which Her Majesty has been pleased to send by me in response to the loyal Address unanimously passed by your Lordships in acknowledgment of the Gracious Speech from the Throne. The reply is as follows:—

MY LORDS,

"I THANK you sincerely for your loyal and dutiful Address.

"I rely with confidence upon your hearty co-operation and assistance in My endeavours to advance the best interests of My Empire, and to promote the happiness and prosperity of all classes of My people."

I have to move that this Gracious Message from Her Majesty be printed and circulated among your Lordships.

Motion agreed to.

Address and Answer ordered to be printed and published.

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT—RESIGNATION OF THE MINISTRY.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): My Lords, in the absence of my noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury), I have to inform your Lordships that in consequence of what has happened "elsewhere" a communication has been made

by the Government to Her Majesty. My noble Friend has now gone to Osborne, and has requested me to move that this House adjourn to Monday next.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 28th January, 1886.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—The Hon. Sidney Herbert, for Croydon.

Several other Members took and subscribed the Oath.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That the Chairman of the Select Committee on Standing Orders have leave to seek a Conference with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining (under Standing Order 79), in which House of Parliament the respective Private Bills should be first considered, and to report the same to the House.—(Sir John Mowbray.)

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT—RESIGNATION OF THE MINISTRY.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH): Mr. Speaker, I have to inform the House that, in consequence of the vote at which this House arrived on Tuesday, Her Majesty's Ministers, at their meeting yesterday, have deemed it their duty to address a communication to Her Majesty, of the precise nature of which it is not at present proper for me to inform the House; but, as the result of that communication, my noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury) has received Her Majesty's commands to attend at Osborne, and he has gone there to-day. It is not possible for me to make, at present, any more definite announcement; and it is not likely that I shall be able to do so to-morrow. Therefore, I shall conclude with a Motion that this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday. Of course, Sir, in circumstances such as those in which we are now placed, it

has been, I believe, almost the invariable custom that ordinary Business should not be proceeded with. I think it will be obvious to the House that we are not at present in a position either to be responsible for the conduct of that Business, or to give any satisfactory or sufficient answers to questions that might be asked as to the views or intentions of the Government. And therefore, Sir, although this is a matter purely for the consideration and determination of the House, if the House should accept the Motion which I shall make, I shall afterwards propose that the House do immediately adjourn. I beg to move that this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday next.

Question, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till *Monday* next,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*,)—put, and agreed to.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*,)—put, and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly at half after Four o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 1st February, 1886.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

PARLIAMENT — ADJOURNMENT — RESIGNATION OF THE MINISTRY — STATEMENT OF THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I have simply to state to the House what is already very well known to you—namely, that Her Majesty's Government—the late Government—I do not know what to call it—have resigned, and that Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to accept their resignation. I understand that Mr. Gladstone has gone down to Osborne, and has undertaken the task of forming a Go-

vernment; and, under the circumstances, I have now to move that your Lordships do adjourn until Thursday.

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 1st February, 1886.

NEW WRITS.

For Galway, v. Thomas P. O'Connor, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said Borough of Galway, and also for the Borough of Liverpool (Scotland Division), has elected to sit for the Borough of Liverpool (Scotland Division).

For Queen's County (Ossory Division), *r. Arthur O'Connor*, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said Queen's County (Ossory Division), and also for the County of Donegal (Eastern Division), has elected to sit for the County of Donegal (Eastern Division).

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

The Right honble. Hugh Culling Eardley Childers, *for* the Burgh of Edinburgh (South Division).

PARLIAMENT — ADJOURNMENT — RESIGNATION OF THE MINISTRY — STATEMENT OF THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH): Sir, I have now to state to the House that Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to accept the resignation of Her Ministers; and, consequently, we only hold Office until our Successors are appointed. I have further to inform the House that Her Majesty has been pleased to require the attendance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) at Osborne, and that that right hon. Gentleman has kissed hands on receiving Her Majesty's commands to form an Administration. At his request, I beg to move that this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Thursday next.

Question, "That this House will, at the rising of the House this day, adjourn till *Thursday*,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*,)—put, and agreed to.

Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*,)—put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at half after Four o'clock till *Thursday*.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 2nd February, 1886.

Their Lordships met for Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, to *Thursday* next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 4th February, 1886.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I understand that it is the wish of the House to adjourn until Monday; but there is Judicial Business which makes it necessary to meet to-morrow for that purpose. I therefore move that your Lordships now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 4th February, 1886.

A Member took and subscribed the Oath.

NEW WRITS.

For—

Edinburgh County, *v.* Right honble. William Ewart Gladstone, First Lord of the Treasury.

Derby Borough, *v.* Right honble. Sir William Vernon Harcourt, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Edinburgh (Southern Division), *v.* Right honble. Hugh Culling Eardley Childers, Secretary of State.

Stirling District of Burghs, *v.* Right honble. Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Secretary of State.

Birmingham (Western Division), *v.* Right honble. Joseph Chamberlain, President of the Local Government Board.

Hawick District of Burghs, *v.* Right honble. George Otto Trevelyan, Secretary for Scotland.

Sheffield Borough (Brightside Division), *v.* Right honble. Anthony John Mundella, President of the Board of Trade.

Hackney Borough (South Division) *v.* Charles Russell, esquire, Attorney General.

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (*Mr. Arnold Morley*): I beg to move that the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Saturday next at 3 o'clock.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Sir, I only rise for the purpose of expressing a hope that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury will, on Saturday, be able, for the convenience of the House, to inform the House on what day the Government anticipate that they will be ready to proceed with Business. I do not ask that question now, because I expect the hon. Gentleman would be hardly in a position to answer it.

Question, "That this House will, at the rising of the House this day, adjourn till *Saturday*, at Three of the clock,"—(*Mr. Arnold Morley*,)—put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Arnold Morley*,)—put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock till Saturday.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 5th February, 1886.

Their Lordships met for Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, 6th February, 1886.

The House met at Three of the clock.

A Member took and subscribed the Oath.

NEW WRITS.

For—

Newcastle upon Tyne, *v.* John Morley, Esquire, Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Leeds (Southern Division), *v.* Right honble. Sir Lyon Playfair, Vice President of the Council.

Great Grimsby, *v.* Edward Heneage, Esquire, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Berwick County, *v.* Honble. Edward Marjoribanks, Controller of the Household.

Bedford County (Southern Division), *v.* Cyril Flower, Esquire, Commissioner of the Treasury.

Stafford County (North Western Division), *v.* George Granville Leveson Gower, Esquire, Commissioner of the Treasury.

Clackmannan and Kinross, *v.* Right honble. John Blair Balfour, Lord Advocate of Scotland.

Elgin District of Burghs, *v.* Alexander Asher, Esquire, Her Majesty's Solicitor General for Scotland.

Banff County, *v.* Robert William Duff, Esquire, Commissioner of the Admiralty.

Northampton County, *v.* Honble. Charles Robert Spencer, Groom in Waiting.

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Thursday 18th February.—(*Mr. Arnold Morley.*)

House adjourned at a quarter before Four o'clock till Thursday 18th February.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 8th February, 1886.

The Lord HALSBURY—Chosen Speaker in the absence of the LORD CHANCELLOR and the LORDS COMMISSIONERS.

House adjourned during pleasure; and resumed by the LORD CHANCELLOR.

LORD CHANCELLOR.

The Earl GRANVILLE acquainted the House that Her Majesty had been pleased to create the Right Honourable Sir Farrer Herschell, Knight, Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, a Peer of this Realm, by the title of Baron Herschell of the city of Durham, and his Lordship, having retired to robe, was introduced in the usual manner.

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I beg to move that the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Thursday, the 18th instant; but, as there is some Judicial Business to be disposed of, it will meet for that purpose in the meantime.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at a quarter past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 9th February, 1886.

Their Lordships met for Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at One o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 11th February, 1886.

—

Their Lordships met for Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Four o'clock, till To-morrow,
half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 12th February, 1886.

—

Their Lordships met for Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, to
Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 15th February, 1886.

—

Their Lordships met for Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Two o'clock, till
To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 16th February, 1886.

—

The Lord Bishop of Truro—Took the Oath.

Their Lordships met for Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Two o'clock, to Thursday next, a
quarter past Ten o'clock.

THE MINISTRY

OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE,
AS FORMED ON ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE IN FEBRUARY, 1886.

THE CABINET.

First Lord of the Treasury (Prime Minister)	Right Hon. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.
Lord Chancellor	Right Hon. Lord HERSCHELL.
Lord President of the Council	Right Hon. Earl SPENCER, K.G.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Right Hon. Sir WILLIAM V. HARCOURT.
Secretary of State, Home Department	Right Hon. H. C. E. CHILDERS.
Secretary of State, Foreign Department	Right Hon. Earl of ROSEBURY.
Secretary of State for the Colonies	Right Hon. Earl GRANVILLE, K.G.
Secretary of State for War	Right Hon. HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.
Secretary of State for India	Right Hon. Earl of KIMBERLEY.
First Lord of the Admiralty	Right Hon. Marquess of RIFON, K.G.
President of the Board of Trade	Right Hon. A. J. MUNDELLA.
President of the Local Government Board	Right Hon. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.
Secretary for Scotland and Vice President of the Scotch Education Department	Right Hon. GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN.
Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant	Right Hon. JOHN MORLEY.

NOT IN THE CABINET.

Field Marshal Commanding in Chief	H.R.H. the Duke of CAMBRIDGE, K.G.
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland	Right Hon. Earl of ABERDEEN.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Vice President of the Committee of Council for Agriculture	Right Hon. EDWARD HENEGAN.
Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education	Right Hon. Sir LYON PLAYFAIR, K.C.B.
First Commissioner of Works and Public Buildings	Right Hon. Earl of MORLEY.
Postmaster General	Right Hon. Lord WOLVERTON.
Lords of the Treasury	Sir E. J. REED, K.C.B. CYRIL FLOWER, Esq. G. G. LEVESON GOWER, Esq.
Lords of the Admiralty.	Admiral Lord JOHN HAY, Vice Admiral Sir ANTHONY HILEY HOSKINS, Vice Admiral WILSON GRAHAM, Rear Admiral JAMES ELPHINSTONE ENSKINE, and ROBERT W. DUFF, Esq.
Joint Secretaries to the Treasury	HENRY HARTLEY FOWLER, Esq. ARNOLD MORLEY, Esq.
Secretary to the Admiralty	JOHN TOMLINSON HIBBERT, Esq.
Secretary to the Board of Trade	C. T. D. ACLAND, Esq.
Secretary to the Local Government Board	JAMES COLLINGS, Esq.
Under Secretary, Home Department	HENRY BROADHURST, Esq.
Under Secretary, Foreign Department	JAMES BRYCE, Esq.
Under Secretary for Colonies	Right Hon. GEORGE OSBORNE MORCAN.
Under Secretary for War	LORD SANDHURST.
Under Secretary for India	Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Bt.
Paymaster General	
Surveyor General of Ordnance	W. WOODALL, Esq.
Financial Secretary to the War Department	HENRY GLADSTONE, Esq.
Judge Advocate General	JOHN WILLIAM MELLOR, Esq., Q.C.
Attorney General	CHARLES RUSSELL, Esq., Q.C.
Solicitor General	HORACE DAVEY, Esq., Q.C.

SCOTLAND.

Lord Advocate	Right Hon. JOHN BLAIR BALFOUR, Q.C.
Solicitor General	ALEXANDER ASHER, Esq., Q.C.

IRELAND.

Lord Lieutenant	Right Hon. Earl of ABERDEEN.
Lord Chancellor	Right Hon. JOHN NAISH.
Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant	Right Hon. JOHN MORLEY.
Attorney General	SAMUEL WALKER, Esq., Q.C.
Solicitor General	THE MACDERMOTT, Q.C.

QUEEN'S HOUSEHOLD.

Lord Steward	Right Hon. Earl STUNNY, G.C.B.
Lord Chamberlain	Right Hon. Earl of KENMARE, K.P.
Master of the Horse	Right Hon. Earl of CORK AND ORRERY, K.P.
Treasurer of the Household	Right Hon. Earl of ELGIN.
Comptroller of the Household	Hon. EDWARD MARJORIBANKS.
Vice Chamberlain of the Household	Right Hon. Viscount KILCOURSIE.
Captain of the Corps of Gentlemen at Arms	Right Hon. Lord STURLEY.
Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard	Right Hon. Lord MONAGHAN.
Master of the Buckhounds	Right Hon. Lord STUFFIELD.
Chief Equerry and Clerk Marshal	LORD ALFRED H. PAGET.
Mistress of the Robes	

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 18th February, 1886.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—*Women's Suffrage** (10); *Marriages Validity** (11).

NEW PEER.

Sir Charles Henry Mills, Baronet, having been created Baron Hillingdon of Hillingdon in the county of Middlesex—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR SCOTLAND.

The Clerk of the Crown in Chancery delivered his certificate that the Earl of Dundonald had been elected a Representative Peer for Scotland in the room of the Lord Borthwick, deceased.

POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

EARL GRANVILLE: I am afraid, from the large attendance and certain intimations that have been given in the public Press, that some of your Lordships are expecting some very comprehensive statement from the Government as to their policy. ["Hear, hear!"] I think that my noble Friend who cheered that observation can hardly be aware of what the precedents have been on the subject. Public men have often thought it necessary to give personal reasons for the resignation, the refusal, or the acceptance of Office. But it is only in a very small minority of cases that the Prime Minister—and still less his Representative in the Chamber in which he does not himself sit—has made a general statement of the views of the Government on such an occasion as this. It is less necessary now than in even some of those cases, from the circumstance that the last General Election, and also the by-elections which have since taken place, have given an opportunity to the Leader of the Liberal Party—who is now the Prime Minister—to take a general view in regard to the policy of that Party. I will, however, give to your Lordships

a very short and, I am sorry to say, a meagre account of the Government Business in this House. Not only that, but your Lordships may excuse the irregularity of my adverting to the same subject in the other House of Parliament. Your Lordships may have heard me state on many former occasions how desirous I have personally been to provide measures of importance for the early consideration of your Lordships during the Session. You are, no doubt, aware of the difficulties which have presented themselves, not only to me but to my Predecessors, in that respect; and, indeed, I have often had to apply almost *in forma pauperis* to the other House that measures might be brought forward here which it was thought, for one reason or another, might be more advantageously introduced in the House of Commons. There are one or two small Bills, of which I cannot give you the particulars now, which I trust my noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for War (Lord Sandhurst) will produce. There is the Bill with regard to Scotch Burgh Police, and Improvements—a very formidable Bill, containing between 500 and 600 clauses, which will be immediately introduced. I am authorized by the Lord Chancellor to say that he will introduce to your Lordships a Bill dealing with lunacy, which, as to its main provisions, has the great authority of the Earl of Selborne. I have reason to believe that Mr. Gladstone will make a statement with regard to Government Business in "another place." I need not remind the House that considering the date at which we have now arrived—the 18th of February—it will require all the Government days for the necessary financial requirements before the 1st of April. Then, my Lords, as to the great anxiety about Ireland, I do not think it is natural or reasonable that your Lordships and others in the House of Commons should expect that within 10 days of the formation of the Government they should produce out-and-dried the final measures with regard to the burning questions which affect Ireland at this moment. I would mention that in 1841, when Sir Robert Peel took the Government, the repeal of the Corn Laws was the subject of the hour. Sir Robert on that occasion merely announced an Amendment. That Amend-

ment was kept secret until it was described five months after Sir Robert Peel had undertaken the Government. Now, my Lords, I do not think that anyone will suppose that a few weeks—not months—are too much for the consideration by Her Majesty's present Advisers of substantial measures which they may have to introduce with regard to Ireland—with regard to its social state, with regard to its crime, with regard to the fulfilment of contracts, and with regard to personal liberty of action. All these subjects will require the fullest attention, and the time I have mentioned will not be thought too much. But Mr. Gladstone, I believe, and I have reason to know, intends to state to the House of Commons that it is his hope that after that period he will be able to make a statement as to the character of those measures. It would be impossible for me to give to the House any premature account of what those measures may be. I venture to express a hope, however, that your Lordships will forbear from thinking that it is absolutely necessary that they should be an exact copy of the lay figure which was created yesterday in a neighbouring hotel—which lay figure was violently attacked by its creator. Perhaps before I sit down I may be allowed to suggest a very humble hope that, considering the very excited state of public opinion on the two different sides, public men will think it their duty to avoid as much as possible making passionate appeals to those excited feelings, and try, on the contrary, to induce as much as possible that judicial frame of mind, which, I am convinced, is the sole chance of giving efficient consideration to the problem.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, the very interesting statement of the noble Earl with respect to the Business of the country amounts, as I gather it, to this—till the 1st of April the House of Lords will be occupied with the question of lunacy; and that on the 1st of April the Prime Minister will be prepared to give an account of his policy with respect to Ireland. The occasion and the subject, I suspect, will be found to be well suited. The noble Earl defends the singularly meagre, as he admits, account of the intentions and policy of the Government by telling us that at the General Election the Leaders

of the Liberal Party had an opportunity of stating before the country what their policy was. But a good many things have happened since the General Election. At the time of the General Election the two Leaders of the Liberal Party were Mr. Gladstone and the Marquess of Hartington. Since the General Election we have seen a Government formed by Mr. Gladstone of which the Marquess of Hartington does not form a part. The noble Earl must admit that that is a very interesting circumstance; and that it is sustained by the further fact that upon the Bench opposite we no longer see the familiar figure of the late First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook); that the Woolsack is occupied by a very distinguished but a different occupant; that the noble Earl (the Earl of Derby), who has sat on more sides of the House than one, is no longer found upon that Bench—in fact, that many changes and many deficiencies may be noticed in the phalanx that is opposed to us. It is natural for us to ask, then, have those things happened by accident? Is it a mere accident of destiny, or is there any change in the opinions which, among the Leaders of the Liberal Party, were, at the General Election, understood to be the policy of the Liberal Party, which has caused this division in their ranks? It is impossible for us to doubt that the representations which were made to the people of England at the time of the General Election of the policy of the Leaders of the Liberal Party no longer represent the facts as they exist. And we have further matter for disquietude. Figures have been joined to the Liberal Government—the Radical Government—which were never seen there before, especially in that matter of Ireland. You suppose from those who are appointed to govern Ireland that their opinions have some relation to the future policy of the Government, and must be taken as indicating the path which the Government intends to pursue. Well, I do not mean to deduce any inferences from the appointment of the Earl of Aberdeen; but the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) is a Gentleman who has never concealed his opinions—a Gentleman whose opinions are of the very strongest kind, and were, only two months ago, supposed to be held in reprobation by both Parties in the

State. When we see the extraordinary phenomenon of this Gentleman responsible now for the government of Ireland, sitting in the same Cabinet with the late Viceroy of Ireland, who was supposed to represent specially the support of the Union between the two countries—when you see such a phenomenon as that, surely we are entitled to ask for some better satisfaction than to be referred to the 1st of April for the explanation of the extraordinary circumstance. Somebody must have renounced the opinions of his life. We wish to know who it is? We wish to know whether we are to look to the former opinions of Mr. Morley, or to the former opinions of the noble Earl (Earl Spencer), as indicating the path along which the Government mean to go? My Lords, the noble Earl referred to the precedent of Sir Robert Peel. In the first place, the alteration of the Corn Laws in 1842 is scarcely to be treated as a matter of the same intense and vital moment as the Union which insures the integrity of the British Empire. But we must say something more. Sir Robert Peel had been for years in Opposition. He had had no opportunity of studying the circumstances and the facts on which a financial policy must be founded. Those noble Lords opposite have, on the other hand, been for years in Office. They have not been absent from Office except for a brief period of repose. They come back after seven months, and they tell us that this subject is to be put off till the 1st of April. It is one which has occupied their days and their nights in meditation. Will they not lift up a corner of the veil; will they not give us a hint of the direction in which their meditations tend? My Lords, they are treating Parliament with singular levity; they are treating the public interests with singular levity, if, instead of determining in the formation of a Government what shall be the great main lines of their policy, they put into one room men differing in every possible direction on the main subject of the day, and trust to the chances of discussion to furnish them with a policy. I will only say, in conclusion, that not only is it Parliament that is treated badly, but this is a matter of life and death to Ireland. While you are putting off matters to the 1st of April, every social interest is jeopardized in Ireland. Property has

become unsaleable, business cannot be conducted, men will not trust men, and no one knows what the future is to be. In spite of this, and while all this is going on, the Government, simply because they have chosen to assume Office without an agreement on the elementary lines of the policy they are to pursue, bid us wait to see what chance will give us in six weeks for the policy of the Empire.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that he could not help stating that the remarks made upon his side of the House by the noble Earl (Earl Granville) were unsatisfactory. He did not expect that the noble Earl would come down and make a comprehensive statement on the part of the Government with regard to their policy; but he had thought it likely that in reference to the great question of Ireland—the one question, indeed, that was before the country—something more would have been said. He had expected that time would be asked for presenting a measure; but he did not expect that the subject would be passed over so lightly by the noble Earl, and that they would be told it could not be brought before their Lordships for such a long time as the 1st of April. They must consider what had happened since 1880, during which period the present Ministers had been in Office, with one interval of six months. Mr. Gladstone had made statements that he had given Ireland the most anxious and earnest attention—that he had been considering the state of that country night and day—and now the Government asked to postpone all questions in reference to Ireland till the 1st of April, and, perhaps, for a much longer period. Let them but consider the position as it affected Ireland, this country, and Parliament. Business in Ireland was entirely at a standstill, and would remain so until some measure was brought forward dealing with the matter. Administration was at a standstill, and it must be until it was known what was to be the plan of future administration. Parliament was in a state of anxious suspense and expectation, and it must be until they knew the plans of the Government. This anxiety on their part was the very reverse of unreasonable. It was only natural and right; it was their duty to be anxious. He would not enter into details; but the

The Marquess of Salisbury

statements which had been made by Mr. Gladstone were of a very vague character, and they would comprehend almost any change in the administration of Ireland from an independent Parliament down to some lesser measure of Home Rule. Then it was notorious from the statements of the Press that the other Ministers did not know what the intentions of Mr. Gladstone were. There were discrepancies between the statements of Mr. Gladstone and those of other Ministers. It was said—and it might be admitted—that inquiry was necessary with regard to what was to be done in Ireland; but Mr. Morley, a personal friend of his, for whom he had the highest personal respect, the Chief Secretary, and the virtual Ruler of Ireland, had most decided opinions about which there was no mistake whatever, and this inquiry would be conducted, in a great measure, under his guidance. Did not that fact seem to prejudge the inquiry? Then Mr. Parnell and his Party had made no concealment of what they expected to be the outcome of this movement; they had stated distinctly, within the last few days, that they expected a Parliament to be set up in Dublin. In these circumstances, was it unreasonable that they were in a state of great anxiety and suspense, and that they were most anxious to hear the Ministerial statement? All would hope that they would see it to be their duty to make it at the earliest possible moment, for every day of delay would increase the difficulties of the position of that country.

LORD ASHBORNE: I waited after the noble Earl resumed his seat in the hope that the noble Earl who not long ago was the Representative of the Queen in Ireland (Earl Spencer) would rise and state what his views were in regard to Ireland. No doubt it is true that a new Government is entitled to consideration; but there are others who are entitled to consideration as well, including this House and the public opinion of the country. When we are referred to the Election addresses made by the Prime Minister and other Ministers for an indication of their policy, it is forgotten that many things have happened since those addresses were delivered; and there are many things contained in those addresses which imperatively require explanation at the earliest possible moment. The

Prime Minister indicated, in his Election address, that Ireland required the consideration of three most important questions—namely, social order, the Land Laws, and local government. I know full well, as an Irishman thoroughly acquainted with Ireland, that land difficulties lie at the root of much of the discontent and disorder of Ireland; and therefore I would welcome any suggestion which would indicate something like a resolute intention on the part of any Government to grapple with that difficulty, so as to settle it on the lines of justice and of fairness. The Government, indeed, might well have asked for some time before they should be called upon to submit a measure for its solution. I would make the same admission with reference to local government. But I note this extraordinary fact—that in the statement of what we are to be told on the 1st of April the noble Earl (Earl Granville) did not intimate that any statement would be made then, or at any other time, on the part of the Government with reference to local government. He intimated that on the 1st of April we were to be told something of what the Government intended in reference to social order, to crime, intimidation, and personal liberty. I do not know whether the omission was intentional or accidental on the part of the noble Earl; but it is extraordinary that he used the expression more than once that the questions relating to Ireland are burning questions, and there are no questions more burning at this time than those he omitted. I think we are entitled to some explanation how it is that a Cabinet constituted like the present, and having, I assume, some point of agreement, will apply themselves to the work of embodying their point of agreement in a Bill. I have read the speeches of public men on both sides in this question, and those who have had to deal with the government of Ireland are entitled to have their words keenly and jealously scrutinized. Mr. Trevelyan has been Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and now occupies a high position in the present Government. He is a trained literary man; and, speaking with much and avowed deliberation, and with all the weight of his experience, he used these remarkable words on the 31st of December last—

"There is one point which, in the coming controversies, public men ought to fix quite clearly in their minds; and that is that, as far as law and order and the peace of the country are concerned, there is no half-way house between entire separation and absolute Imperial control."

Now, this statement comes not only from a late Chief Secretary, but from a Member of the existing Cabinet. It is the statement of the trusted Friend and political Colleague of the noble Earl opposite (Earl Spencer). I think, at all events, we are entitled to ask this question—Does that statement, made so deliberately, represent the views of the Government, or only those of Mr. Trevelyan, which he is at liberty to act upon when he thinks proper by withdrawing from the Government at his own convenience? Mr. Trevelyan also said—

"But to keep up the name and outward semblance of a Union and, at the same time, to put into the hands of the enemies of that Union full licence to keep Ireland in disorder is a policy which I do not think will commend itself to those who best know the country."

This is the last quotation I will make from the speeches to which we have been referred by the noble Earl as being an explanation of the views of the Government sufficient to exonerate him from the necessity of making any further statement on the subject. I put this question before your Lordships and the country. Do these words now represent the settled convictions of the present Government? If they do not, in what respect do they fall short of them; and in what respect do the present Government reserve to themselves the right of a partial examination? My own belief on these subjects is known to your Lordships. I believe that to satisfy the Parnellite demands would be fatal to the best interests of this country, and destructive of the interests of the loyal minority in Ireland. This would be to the Empire a lasting disgrace and a permanent dishonour. Assuming that on the land and local government questions the Government were entitled to ask for time to formulate their proposals, does the same excuse apply to that great, living, anxious question now really so acute in Ireland—the question of social order? The criticisms made by noble Lords opposite on the paragraph of Her Gracious

Lord Ashbourne

Majesty's Speech framed by the late Government dealing with the position of Ireland, was that it did not go far enough—that it was not sufficiently clear and precise. That was the point of the criticism of the present Government, who were then in Opposition. My noble Friend the then Prime Minister, and my right hon. Friend Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the then Leader of the House of Commons, a few days after, in the clearest and plainest way indicated what was the intention of the late Government with reference to this urgent and pressing question of the restoration of social order. The present Government knowing the exact position of affairs, Mr. Gladstone, joined by Mr. Parnell and his followers, promptly turned out the Government. The responsibility of the present Government, having elected to turn out the late Government directly on the statement as to the actual, immediate necessity of prompt action being taken to put down crime, check intimidation, and restore social order, is a responsibility that cannot be deferred five or six weeks. The question is acute; it is one that must be settled and met by something like an adequate statement. I read this morning a speech which was quite recently made on the occasion of the debate on the Address by the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council (Earl Spencer). How did the noble Earl then describe the position of Ireland? He said—

"I greatly fear that the condition of Ireland with regard to intimidation and 'Boycotting' is more serious than it has ever been before; and if this be so, I maintain that it has increased ten-fold or a hundred-fold since I had the responsibility of the Irish Government."

Those were grave and weighty words; they were the words of a Minister entitled to speak with great authority on the subject. I ask this question now, and I am entitled to an answer. Can it be said that the condition of Ireland has improved since the noble Earl, less than a fortnight ago, uttered those words? Is that a state of facts which is urgent—acutely urgent—which must fill everyone desirous of seeing Ireland tranquil and calm with great and increasing anxiety; and is that a state of facts which can be put aside until the 1st of April, and until the Government have made up their mind as to how, if at all, they would deal with the question?

There was no mistake as to the attitude of the late Government on this question. They found in many parts of Ireland that the law of the National League, which sanctioned intimidation and "Boycotting," was so powerful that unless it was checked—and promptly checked—it would become in those districts more powerful than the Government of the Queen. The late Ministers decided that the Government of the Queen should prevail. What is the position of the present Government? They say they will keep in suspense the decision as to whether the Government of the Queen is to prevail or not. That is a very serious matter. Is there any possibility of a doubt that intimidation does prevail so widely that it has become a scandal and a disgrace to the country? The noble Earl said that the intimidation is greater than ever it was before. If he knows that, does not his own Cabinet believe him? If they did, why is it that they are to wait five or six weeks to find out what is the state of the case? The statement of the noble Earl (Earl Granville) has left us not in the dark, but in an acute fog. The only light I have been able to get is from the remarkable document addressed by Mr. Gladstone to "My dear Lord De Vesci"—one of the most singular transactions that ever occurred in a civilized country. Has any of your Lordships read that remarkable production with a clear understanding as to what it is intended to convey? What is its meaning? As a specimen of elaborate construction and never-ending sentences it is a marvel. It is a general invitation to all, whether well-informed or ill-informed, to write letters to the Prime Minister for all time. I venture to ask your Lordships was there ever, since Constitutional Government was established in this country, such a method adopted by a Premier for obtaining information to guide the deliberations of the responsible Ministers of the Crown? The Prime Minister invites communications; but the right hon. Gentleman never uses a substantive without a qualifying adjective, and he therefore invites free communications of views. But he invites free communication of views with this qualification—that he would like them to be views which would be most likely to supply full and authentic knowledge as to what is the wish of the Irish

people. Where has the Prime Minister been for the last five or six years, and where have his Colleagues been? The Prime Minister, having invited these letters, saying that he would like to have these views and authentic information, says that much as he would like the views he would highly value indications. Now, "indications" is a curious word. They may mean anything, and I am tempted to suggest that they may mean nothing. But the right hon. Gentleman goes on again to give some kind of clue to the kind of indications which he would value. He says, "especially if they go to the heart of the question before us." Now, can any of your Lordships suggest what is the meaning of this? I have read it with ever-increasing admiration and wonder; and, I would ask, have the present Government no knowledge, have they never considered this question for themselves? I see upon the Government Bench two noble Lords who have been Lord Lieutenants of Ireland; and there are also in the Cabinet two Ministers of ability and experience who have occupied the position of Chief Secretary; and it is simply trifling with the nation at this time of day, with these means of knowledge at the disposal of the Government, to write such a document as that written by the Prime Minister. What were the present Government in Office five years for if, at this moment, they are to be considered as tyros who know nothing, who are incapable of learning anything from one another, and who appeal to somebody for "indications which go to the heart of the question?" There is some method, after all, in this procedure of the Prime Minister. Does it not look very like the "old hand sparring for time?" Under ordinary circumstances I would make no objection to time being taken; but this is not a juncture when you can play fast and loose with the position of affairs in Ireland. If I were a suspicious man I would hazard the suggestion that the caution and reticence of the noble Earl on this subject are those of a man who was not sure that he had anything to disclose, or whether, if he said anything, he would not offend one-half of his Colleagues.

EARL GRANVILLE: I rise to give an explanation. I will only say that I feel bound to resist the temptation given by the noble Marquess, and still more by

the noble and learned Lord. What I wish to do is to remove an impression which the noble and learned Lord seemed to gather from the words which I used. I do not know exactly what those words were; but what I wished to convey was that the Government did not concentrate their attention on the question of repression or coercion in Ireland. What I stated was that the Government were dealing with the whole Irish Question; and on the whole Irish Question they intended to make a statement in what appeared to them to be a very short time, considering the gravity and importance of the subject.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: I should like to ask the noble Earl whether "Home Rule" will come within "the whole Irish Question?"

[No reply.]

DISTURBANCES IN THE METROPOLIS.

QUESTIONS. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK, in rising to call attention to the unprotected state of the streets on Monday, 8th February, although it was well known that disturbances had been threatened; and to ask what instructions, if any, had been given to the police; and, further, whether any proceedings have been or will be taken against persons who incited to disturbance, and who threaten further and revolutionary disturbances in the future when they are better prepared? said, that the events which disgraced the Metropolis on Monday were so well known that it was not necessary to lay them at any length before their Lordships. It would not be proper for him to go into the incitements to disturbance which were made use of by certain persons, as that matter was now being investigated in a Court of Law. Their Lordships were all aware that a meeting was held in Trafalgar Square on the 8th instant; and in alluding to that meeting he would express an opinion, which was probably shared by their Lordships, that those who convened that meeting, and the great proportion of those who took part in it, were altogether innocent of the offences which were afterwards committed. It was evident, too, from the fact that the subscriptions for the relief of the unemployed still continued to pour in, that the public were able to discriminate be-

Earl Granville

tween genuine working men and those agitators who, with the assistance of the criminal classes, worked so much mischief in the West End on Monday week. Previous to then, there had been meetings of Social and Democratic Clubs, at which the announcement had been made of the intention of making a demonstration; and he should imagine that those facts must have been known to the police. He was informed on good authority that on the Thursday previous the police were assured that certain persons were getting up a meeting in Trafalgar Square; that they expected to be able to maintain peace at that meeting; but that they anticipated disturbances on the part of certain persons who were going to interrupt it; and that, although they thought there would be peace at the meeting itself, they could not be answerable for disturbances in the streets. The meeting, when it took place, promptly divided itself into two parts, and one of the sections of the crowd was addressed in violent language by several agitators, and was asked to prepare themselves for a crusade against the rich. Excited by this language, they proceeded to parade through the streets. At first, little damage was done; but, gaining courage from impunity, they broke windows, rifled shops, and attacked carriages, not sparing even ladies, and one lady at least, he regretted to hear, was seriously injured. For two hours, apparently, there was no interference on the part of the police, nor any attempt to put this violent conduct down. Now, he put it to their Lordships—and he had an opportunity of seeing the crowd in the early part of its career—whether at the first start from 50 to 100 police might not have prevented any damage whatever? Why, then, when this crowd was seen leaving Trafalgar Square, was it not stopped? Why, during its progress through the streets for two hours, was there nothing done? Surely it did not take all that time for the Metropolitan Police to get together 100 or 200 men. Why, again, was it that the first check given to the mob was in Oxford Street, that check, too, being administered by a few police who were got together on the spot, and who were not collected through any central order from Scotland Yard? After all that had happened one was bound to con-

sider the consequences. There was considerable destruction of property; but that was not the worst feature. By far the worst feature was the disturbance of trade and business which occurred, and the belief which the mob might entertain that, having had that impunity, they would have impunity also on future occasions. It remained to be considered who was to blame. There was no doubt that Parliament looked to the Secretary of State for the Home Department as the man who had the control of the police. It was his duty to see that the police did their duty. They were informed, on good authority, that a Departmental Committee had been formed to inquire into the subject of those riots, and that the head of that Committee was the Home Secretary himself. Well, it could scarcely be supposed that the Committee would inquire into the conduct of the Home Secretary himself; nor was it to be expected that that right hon. Gentleman would convict himself before the Committee over which he was called upon to preside. The Committee would merely come to a decision whether his subordinates had properly discharged their duty. But that was not sufficient, nor could it relieve the Home Office of responsibility for preserving the peace and security of the Metropolis. He trusted they would not be referred to the Report of the Committee as a complete answer, but would be told whether any instructions to the police had emanated from the Home Office; and, if so, what those instructions were?

VIMOUR MIDLETON, who had a Notice to the same effect on the Paper, and asking what precautions would be taken in future to prevent the recurrence of similar outrages, said, he wanted to have a clear statement whether any information from the police reached the Home Office as to the probable character and outcome of the demonstration? He ventured to think that no satisfactory answer could be given by any such Committee as had been appointed by the Home Office. What was wanted was an independent inquiry as to how the Home Office acted in the matter. They all knew the peculiar views entertained by the present Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) as to the class of persons to whom the police should be entrusted in the *Sister Isle*. He believed that had

it not been for the lawlessness which prevailed on the other side of St. George's Channel there would have been little disturbance in the Metropolis. He should like to know—and the House had a right to the information—whether the police authorities had brought to the notice of the Home Office what were the dangers and perils of allowing these demonstrations to take place in the middle of so crowded a city as the Metropolis? Sir Richard Mayne, he knew, entertained very strong opinions upon the subject; and he should like to hear whether the Government had arrived at any very distinct conclusion as to permitting them in the future? The fact that it was possible for men to be hustled and robbed, for women to be insulted, little children stoned, and shops sacked within a couple of hours in some of the most crowded and busiest thoroughfares of the greatest city in the world would scarcely be considered satisfactory by reasonable men, or properly accounted for by those responsible for the maintenance of public order. It had been said that such gatherings afforded a safety-valve to the feelings of the people by enabling them to express their opinions freely; but since the Reform Bill, and now that London abounded with large halls, where the utmost freedom of speech could be indulged in, there was really no occasion for out-door demonstrations. The only two purposes which they could possibly serve were intimidation and obstruction. This latter was most undoubted; for hours before and after such demonstrations had taken place the thoroughfares were thronged by an excited and sometimes angry crowd, business was oftentimes suspended, perforce, representing a very serious money loss to many who could ill afford to submit to it, and those persons who were in the habit of using the streets for legitimate purposes were compelled to travel by another route. He entirely agreed that the outrages of Monday week last were not the work of the honest working man, but were perpetrated mainly by the criminal class. He, for one, was not sorry that these things had happened. Sooner or later, he was certain that the weakness of the Home Office on this particular subject would meet with some severe lesson; and his only wonder was that it had not been more severe. He hoped that now

the Government would not only be wise, but wise in time, and would give assurances to the House that they considered themselves responsible for the preservation of law and order in the Metropolis, and that they would use such means and measures as would prevent for the future such things as occurred to the disgrace of London last Monday week.

LORD DORCHESTER said, he wished to give to Her Majesty's Government some information which, even if they were in possession of it, they might, perhaps, be reluctant themselves to give to their Lordships. He had that very day seen a letter from the country, dated January 29, in which it was positively stated that riots would occur on February 8, and that the intention of the mob was, in the words of the letter, "to plunder the squares and pull down the Clubs." He thought that that prophecy had been pretty well fulfilled, for a more melancholy spectacle he had never seen in any country than the West End presented last week. He believed he was right in saying that there was a large force of police in a garden not very far from Stafford House, and another body in a courtyard near Arlington Street, though for what special purpose was best known to themselves; and the Inspector in charge of the latter body, when appealed to, simply said "he knew his duty and had received his instructions." What the latter were he did not say; but they certainly appeared not to be to protect the public streets. There was one policeman at Mr. Childers's residence in Piccadilly, and he had no doubt that the other Ministers were equally well guarded—and that that solitary constable was instrumental in preventing a lady being turned out of her brougham by some sharp practitioner. There was hardly a place which afforded such facilities for putting away large bodies of men as did the vicinity of Trafalgar Square; but with the exception of the policeman he had referred to, and two sentries at the War Office, who effectually protected the glass of that establishment, not one single attempt at protection appeared to have been made. The mischief done their Lordships had probably seen; but it was a mere trifle compared to the moral humiliation that came from the fact that such proceedings

should be possible in a country like this. The Home Secretary, he thought, could hardly have been less instructed upon the matter than the lady who wrote the letter on the 29th of January. He did not pretend to say on whom should rest the blame for the inaction of the police; but he wished to observe, with reference to the position which the Home Secretary filled in the Court of Inquiry, that that right hon. Gentleman could hardly be expected to censure himself. It was like a court martial, of which the President was trying himself, and might end in the engineer being "hoist with his own petard."

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK observed, that the speech of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Dorchester) raised a question which was very important, and that was the appointment of Mr. Childers himself as Chairman of the Committee of Inquiry into the conduct of the authorities. Against that he must protest as being opposed to precedent and reason and justice. He did not at all impugn Mr. Childers's Committee; but it was obvious that the first question which would be asked of any person coming before the Committee would be whether orders were or were not sent from the Home Office? At any rate, the conduct of the Home Office might immediately come into question. It might be a proper proceeding for the Home Secretary to inquire, as between himself and the police, whether they had fulfilled his orders, and if not why not? That was properly a departmental inquiry; but what the public really wanted to know was, whether it was possible that the streets could again be placed in the hands of a riotous mob as upon that and other occasions? He trusted that the noble Lord who represented the Home Office (Lord Thurlow) would be able to say that there would in this, as in former instances, be an independent Commission appointed to investigate the whole circumstances of the case. An investigation of that kind should be held in the interests of the working classes themselves, in order that they might be cleared of all complicity in the outrages that were committed. He believed most earnestly, from having seen the mob when it began its outrages at the Carlton Club, that it did not represent in any sense the unemployed people

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of the Metropolis. Its character was quite different, and it was swelled by some of the worst characters in London. In justice to those who had been injured, to the working men who had been misrepresented, and to the public at large, an independent Commission ought undoubtedly to be appointed.

LORD STANLEY or ALDERLEY said, he wished to ask if Her Majesty's Government would lay on the Table of the House a copy of the police orders making necessary arrangements with regard to the meeting in Trafalgar Square on Monday the 8th instant; also, if such orders were submitted in the first instance for approval to the Home Secretary, or issued on the sole responsibility of the Chief Commissioner of Police? He believed that much unmerited obloquy had been heaped upon Sir Edmund Henderson, and that Scotland Yard had been made a scapegoat for the Home Office. Although by a Statute of George IV. the Chief Commissioner of Police was under the orders of the Home Office, yet during his long tenure of that Office Sir Richard Mayne had been virtually independent of the Home Office, and responsible for the tranquillity of the Metropolis; but since his death, and especially since Sir William Harcourt had been Home Secretary, the Home Office had been encroaching continuously upon the province of the chief police authorities, and had instituted a new department in the Home Office for the management of the police. Not very long ago, in Westminster Hall, on the occasion of the presentation of awards to the constables who were injured by the dynamite explosion, Sir William Harcourt publicly declared that the Secretary of State for the Home Department was the head of the police. The Chief Commissioner had thus been taught to expect instructions on all critical occasions from the Home Office, and this paralyzed the action of the Chief Commissioner. Her Majesty's Ministers ought to be made aware that they lay under suspicion of connivance with the riots; one of their Colleagues (Mr. Chamberlain) had used language which was as much an incitement to riot as the language used by the leaders of the mob in Trafalgar Square; an evening newspaper had announced, four days before the event, that an attack would be made on the Clubs; and similar information had been con-

veyed through other channels to the Home Office some hours before the riot. There was another public expectation, which had been disappointed—namely, the resignation of the Home Secretary after the calamities of Monday the 8th, and that of some others of the Ministers. Lord Hartington had set a high example, and Sir Henry James had set a still higher one. The next best thing to declining to join an unsound Administration would be to retire from it now that they had seen their Colleagues' words translated into deeds. The conduct of Her Majesty's Ministers was bearing out a saying of Tacitus—"*Contemni famam despicit virtutes*," which meant that if they had so little regard for their reputation as to associate with Mr. Chamberlain, they must be expected to despise the virtues which were the outcome of obedience to the Ten Commandments.

LORD FITZGERALD said, he also wished to ask Her Majesty's Ministers a very practical question—namely, were they prepared to compensate those sufferers whose property had been stolen or injured by the rioters, inasmuch as those losses were the consequence of the default of one or other of the public Departments? A century and a-half ago the Royal Guards successfully quelled the riot in Salisbury Court between the Tories and the Whigs; and their success on that occasion might have induced the authorities to have recourse to their services on the 8th instant. It would be well, if the police did not interfere on such occasions, that there should be some interference by the military authorities. If the people whose property had been damaged were not compensated by the Government they would get no redress at all, for it was a delusion to suppose that legal action would assist them. In the existing condition of the law he was confident that if £1,000 could be recovered from the Hundred it would be done at the cost of £3,000 or £4,000 in law expenses. He believed that, in this case, nine-tenths of the property in question had been stolen; and although the remaining tenth might possibly be recovered, it would only be recovered under circumstances that would make the proceeding insufferably unjust, and at a cost of four times the amount obtained. When the practice of holding the Hundred liable for damage of that

kind first originated there was no police, no police tax, no standing Army, and no Home Secretary; and in those days it might have been just to call on the Hundreds to be their own police and to protect themselves. But the circumstances now were wholly changed, and an action against the Hundred in such a case would be as unfruitful and unwise as it would be entirely unjust. The police tax was now represented not by thousands or hundreds of thousands of pounds, but by millions of money; and, he asked, should a law which was made at a time when there were no police, and when the policy of the law was to make the Hundred police itself, be allowed to continue at a period when every householder paid his quota to the great police and military forces kept up for the public protection? If the law was sound, and maintainable on sound principles, he would suggest to the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack that it ought to be made simpler. But if it was unjust and unsound, and could not be maintained on principle, it should be swept from the Statute Book; and if compensation was given, it ought to be given, not at the expense of the Hundred, but from the public finances.

LORD THURLOW said, that he would endeavour to place before their Lordships as succinctly and as clearly as he could, on behalf of the Home Office, the statement of facts as they stood within the knowledge of the Home Department. At the outset, he desired to say that he was extremely glad that those Questions had been put by noble Lords that evening. It was difficult, he thought, to imagine any question that could be more worthy of the careful consideration of Parliament than the scenes which occurred in the streets of that Metropolis last Monday week. It was impossible to imagine a subject into which it was more important to have a careful, minute, and searching inquiry, and on which it was more important to re-assure the public mind. That, at any rate, was the view taken by the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the present occasion; and he could assure their Lordships that Mr. Childers had not only courted and challenged, but would insist on the most searching inquiry into all the circumstances which had been referred to, and which had resulted in such grievous loss to innocent and peace-

Lord FitzGerald

ful citizens. He (Lord Thurlow) did not complain of the terms in which the Questions had been put by noble Lords on both sides of the House. In his humble opinion, if there ever was a subject on which it was fitting to use strong language, and to express just indignation, it was with reference to circumstances such as those that they were now dealing with. Their Lordships were aware that it was not till Saturday, the 6th of February, Mr. Childers received from Her Majesty the Queen at Osborne the Seals of the Home Office. Mr. Childers did not return to London that day until past 7 o'clock, and he did not on that evening visit the Home Office. On Sunday he did not go to the Home Office; it was not customary for the Home Secretary to do so. The permanent officials would not have been there; and the usual practice was followed on that occasion as to forwarding to the Home Secretary's residence the Home Office and other Cabinet boxes containing despatches on matters of urgency. Those boxes were received at the Home Secretary's private residence on Sunday morning, and his right hon. Friend examined their contents. They contained no allusion or reference whatever to the meeting which was anticipated to take place on the following day. On Monday, the day of the riots, Mr. Childers went to the Home Office and got there at 11 o'clock. It was his first appearance at the new Office that had been entrusted to his care; and it was his first duty to make himself personally acquainted, not only with the current business of the Department, but with the various officials representing the heads of that Department. He accordingly conferred with those Gentlemen, and examined into the current business of the Home Office. The Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police (Sir Edmund Henderson) called upon him at 1 o'clock in the afternoon. The first inquiry which Mr. Childers made of Sir Edmund Henderson was whether he had taken ample precautions in reference to the meeting that was then about to take place in Trafalgar Square? That gentleman replied that he had taken ample precautions, and more than he would otherwise have done had it not been that at that moment the Government had changed hands. Mr. Childers further asked Sir Edmund Henderson whether he had taken into

consideration the dangerous character of the mob that might be gathered together? The latter replied that the matter had been carefully considered both by Sir R. Assheton Cross, the outgoing Home Secretary, and himself, and that ample provision had been made; that the police on duty had been doubled in the Square itself and in the surrounding streets; and that a body of 660 constables would be held in reserve in Scotland Yard. In addition to that, the Chief Commissioner of Police informed Mr. Childers that the Office of Works had made an examination of the hustings which had been prepared in Trafalgar Square, from which the orators were to address the mob. The erections had been found substantially constructed, and were not likely to prove a source of danger in any way, by removal or otherwise. He therefore ventured to say that it was perfectly clear that at that time—half-past 1 o'clock in the afternoon—Mr. Childers had certainly ample reasons to feel convinced that all proper precautions had been taken. Mr. Childers remained at the Home Office the whole of that day, with the exception of one brief interval of about an hour in the middle of the day. It was not until a quarter before 7 o'clock in the evening that the first official intimation reached the right hon. Gentleman that the riots had taken place. [*Laughter.*] It was quite true, as had been stated in *The Times* by a writer signing himself "One who knows," that Mr. Childers did receive a letter about 6 o'clock from a friend, stating that disturbances had taken place. Immediately after receiving that letter, Mr. Childers, of course, communicated with the police in Scotland Yard; but it was not until a quarter to 7 o'clock that special information reached him as to the character of the riots which had occurred. The moment that information was brought to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman he communicated with the War Office, with the Adjutant General of the Army, and instructions were at once given to the various commanders of troops in London in the different barracks to have the men in readiness to turn out. Instructions were also given to provide for the attendance of Justices of the Peace at the barracks, if their services were required. Having taken those precautions, the next matter which called for the attention

of the Home Secretary was the question of taking proceedings against the principal persons who had incited the mob in Trafalgar Square, and who were responsible for the disastrous consequences which followed. Mr. Childers lost no time in consulting the Law Officers of the Crown and other high officials on that point. Their Lordships were aware that this was a question which was by no means so simple or so easy of solution as was generally supposed by the uninitiated. It was a question which required careful weighing and consideration before a Minister could arrive at a knowledge whether the evidence that might be brought forward would be sufficient to secure a conviction. The delay which occurred before the legal steps were taken could not be held to be otherwise than beneficial. The result of the consultation with the Law Officers of the Crown was that summonses were issued for sedition against four of the principal speakers—Hyndman, Burns, Williams, and Champion. The summonses were issued on Saturday night, and made returnable on Wednesday morning. On Wednesday morning those persons submitted to their summonses at Bow Street; and, as their Lordships were aware, the ordinary course of the law was now being proceeded with, and they must leave the matter in the hands of the proper legal authorities. Their Lordships also knew that the Home Secretary immediately afterwards appointed a Committee to examine most carefully into all the circumstances of the case; and in connection with that point he (Lord Thurlow) could not agree with what had been said by the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Cranbrook), that it was an extraordinary proceeding on the part of the Home Secretary to preside over that Committee. Taking into consideration the circumstance that the Government had only then assumed Office, and the assurance of the Chief Commissioner of Police that ample precautions had been taken after consultation with the late Home Secretary, he could not see that Mr. Childers was implicated in any way in the matter; and it was only right and proper that he should undertake the arduous duty of presiding over the business of that Committee. He called to his aid four Gentlemen in whom he believed the country would place confidence—

Lord Wolseley, Lord Edward Cavendish, Sir Henry Holland, and Mr. Ritchie. These Gentlemen had been attending from three to four hours at the Home Office from day to day ever since. They had taken a great deal of evidence, and had examined a great many witnesses, and had not yet arrived at the close of their examination. It was, however, anticipated that they would arrive at the conclusion of their labours before many days were over. Their Report would contain recommendations which would be those not of the Home Secretary himself, but of a majority of the Committee, the responsibility of acting on the recommendations resting on the shoulders of the Home Secretary. The Committee would report to Parliament in a few days; and he thought their Lordships would agree with him in thinking that, pending the result of the Report, it would be premature to pursue the discussion further. Her Majesty's Government recognized that it was the first and essential duty of a Government to protect life and property, and maintain order in the streets of the Metropolis. Her Majesty's Government had taken ample precautions, in their opinion, to insure the fulfilment of that requirement, and they would not relax their endeavours in that direction. The peace of London was in the hands primarily, no doubt, of the Metropolitan Police, a force which was second to none in the world for efficiency. It was a force which was admirably officered by able and gallant men. It was also sufficiently large in numbers for the performance of any duty it was likely to be called upon to discharge. The Police Force had at its back the armed Forces of the Crown, which could be called out at a moment's notice. The police, moreover—as did not appear to be generally recognized—had perfect independence of action, and could act, and would act if required, with vigour and rapidity, without any previous consultation with the Home Department. It was not necessary for the police to get instructions from the Home Office. The Chief Commissioner of the Police, in cases of urgency, acted on his own authority, and reported afterwards. In conclusion, he (Lord Thurlow) wished to re-assure their Lordships and the country generally that the Government had no anxiety as to the future; but they would

Lord Thurlow

not relax their endeavours to prevent any recurrence of those lamentable and lawless events to which the attention of their Lordships had so properly been called.

EARL FORTESCUE said, that the speech they had just listened to was of an unsatisfactory nature. As a former Representative in two Parliaments of one of the largest Metropolitan constituencies, and as a member of the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers, he (Earl Fortescue) had had opportunities of learning from tradesmen of the Metropolis how serious was the loss of custom to many classes of shops even from a temporary interruption of traffic, and still more from any diversion of it by breaking up the surface of the thoroughfare in front of their premises. The plunder and the destruction of glass in shops were by no means the only losses sustained by the shopkeepers on that long line of march through which the mob ranged unchecked. The riots did not affect those thoroughfares alone. Trading throughout the greater part of the Metropolis was checked and impeded by want of confidence and the alarm which was spread abroad. Many shopkeepers would be able to date their day of ruin in these times of depression from the disturbances which had taken place. Besides injury to shopping, there had been a loss of work, an absence of orders, and a reluctance to embark in fresh undertakings, consequent on the removal of capital from this country. Mr. Froude had stated, in his last instructive and interesting book, that the novel legislation of the last few years, and the novel doctrines propounded by Cabinet Ministers, had driven much capital out of England, thus confirming publicly what he (Earl Fortescue) had been told confidentially by several friends they had been doing latterly. The bad example of London had been already more or less followed in other towns. Was it nothing that, in times of great depression, the departure of capital should be thus accelerated and augmented to go elsewhere to give employment to foreign workmen, while thousands of our own workmen required it? He had reason to believe that this was one of the consequences of the events of last week. It appeared that Mr. Childers was well aware that a meeting of this sort was about to be

held; but he never took the precaution of insisting that information should be regularly sent to him of the course of proceedings. He sat apart, unmoved and indifferent, like the gods described by Lucretius. Apart from the force of police in King Street and Scotland Yard, the Home Secretary had at the Horse Guards, St. James's Palace, and elsewhere Life Guards and Foot Guards, available at a moment's notice, to check the rioters. The fact that the riot should have been allowed by the authorities to go on for something like two hours in some of the principal West End thoroughfares seemed to imply an amount of apathy and want of capacity on the part of the Home Secretary which was almost incredible. He, at least, whatever others might have been, was in fault; and instead of occupying the Chair on a Committee appointed to examine into the misconduct of others, Mr. Childers ought to have his own helplessness and incapacity inquired into. By law, every Secretary of State was competent to perform the duties of a Secretary of State; and it was strange that no Minister should have realized the situation and taken action, setting aside ceremony as one would do in the case of a fire. It was amazing that no one had the moral courage and the energy to see that the rioting was checked, as it might easily have been, at its commencement.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (EARL GRANVILLE): My Lords, I think that, in the whole course of his speech, the noble Earl has carefully avoided referring to a single word in the statement made by my noble Friend (Lord Thurlow) on behalf of the Government. As to the alarming statement that it has already come to his knowledge that, in the case of a friend of his, capital is leaving this country in consequence of what has occurred, he did not make that information complete, and inform your Lordships—what it would be exceedingly interesting to know—to what particular country it is that English capital is going in order to be perfectly safe, or even more safe than it is in this country. When the noble Earl talks about the lamentable apathy and the incapacity of Mr. Childers, or what might have been done by him, or by any Secretary of State, I really cannot conceive that any of your Lordships

can see what is the drift of the noble Earl. I am really astonished at it after the speech of my noble Friend, and I can only think that the noble Earl has not heard that statement. His contention seems to be that it was apathy for Mr. Childers not to have called upon the 40 Life Guardsmen who were at the Horse Guards, and possibly put himself at their head. Now, I should have thought it would not have been wise in a Minister just come into Office to set aside the police at a time of this sort. The whole thing turns upon this—that it happened without Mr. Childers being aware of it.

EARL FORTESCUE: Hear, hear!

EARL GRANVILLE: Your Lordships have heard—and if the noble Earl refers to the statement he will find—that Mr. Childers went to the Home Office for the first time at 11 o'clock in the morning; that a communication had been made by Colonel Henderson to the late Secretary of State, a statesman of experience; and that Colonel Henderson had received orders to take additional measures for the public security; and that he had, therefore, taken precautions which he otherwise would not have taken to prevent the occurrence of disorder. I say it is unfair to make the attack the noble Earl has made. If the police authorities were of opinion that all necessary precautions had been taken, would it not have been, in the highest degree, imprudent in the Home Secretary, quite new to his Office, to interfere with the experienced Commissioner at the head of the police, or to have altered the arrangements? Whether it was desirable that a large body of police should have been required for the protection of the noble Marquess—

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: No; it was not my house they were watching—it was a different house altogether.

EARL GRANVILLE: However that may be, everyone is agreed that this was a most lamentable event, and that there were great *lacunes* on the part of the police or someone; but every means have been taken to discover who was responsible, and to take all precautions as will make it perfectly impossible that such a thing can happen again. Notwithstanding the statement which has been made, it seems strange, if he heard

it, for the noble Earl to try to bring a personal charge against Mr. Childers, and to fasten on him a charge which appears to me absolutely without foundation.

EARL FORTESCUE: I must be allowed to say that, owing to an unfortunate imperfection in my hearing, I did not hear all that the noble Lord (Lord Thurlow) said; but I heard quite enough to justify all that I said. I have shown that, quite apart from the police, the Home Secretary was not by any means helpless if he had taken prompt measures, as he ought.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I regret to say, my Lords, that I am one who was not convinced of the entire innocence of Mr. Childers by the statement made by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Thurlow). Your arrangements for defending the Metropolis and maintaining order have lamentably, disastrously, and contemptibly broken down. It is impossible to use words too strong to express the nature of the breakdown which has taken place. The noble Lord talks of other capitals being insecure. That is very possible; but they are insecure for good reasons, because there is a very dangerous revolt against the Civil powers; and then there is, no doubt, a struggle, and a considerable amount of insecurity may result. But here there is nothing of the kind; there was no real danger whatever; and it is simply because of an absolute breakdown of the machinery for the maintenance of order that all this terrible disorder occurs. What did Mr. Childers do? I see an illustrious Admiral (the Duke of Edinburgh) sitting on the Bench near me. I would submit to him what he would think if a captain wrecked his ship, and came home and said it was a very disgraceful thing; that there had been great *laches* somewhere; and that he was going to appoint a court martial, on which he would himself sit, to examine into the conduct of the first lieutenant and the crew. What would his opinion have been of such proceedings? The noble Lord seems to have the idea that the blame may be conveniently distributed among three different persons, with the result of leaving Mr. Childers entirely innocent. The first persons who were to blame were the Home Office officials, who did not convey to Mr. Childers on Sunday

information as to the approaching riot. The second person to blame was Sir Edmund Henderson, with whom Mr. Childers had an interview at 1 o'clock on Monday; and the third person was the unfortunate Sir R. Assheton Cross, who had an interview with Sir Edmund Henderson on the Friday before, and who, apparently, was going to set on foot—but did not do so—so perfect a system of precaution that it should go like a clock, which, having been once wound up, should continue to operate without anyone looking at it any more. Mr. Childers seems to have lived in a species of conventional seclusion. He was absolutely ignorant of what everybody else in London knew. Everybody knew that there was going to be an attempt at disturbances.

EARL GRANVILLE: No, no!

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Well, I have met many people who had told the ladies of their families to keep out of the way, as a riot was apprehended; and it was announced in the newspapers some days before. But not only that; besides living in a state of conventional seclusion, Mr. Childers shows an entire absence of curiosity, and, having heard from Sir Edmund Henderson that the arrangements were satisfactory, he appears to have asked no questions, nor informed himself as to the nature of the arrangements, nor required any report from any officer as to how matters were going on; but to have allowed the thing to go on as if it was one not interesting to the Home Secretary, until he casually heard of it by means of a lady's letter about half-past 5 o'clock. I should have thought, from the mere noise made by these men, that, seeing how near it was, somebody in the Home Office would have found out that everything was not right. I heard with regret that the Government are not going to give an independent Commission. The fact that Mr. Childers has thrown the blame right and left on one and another makes it very important that we should have some inquiry not under the conduct of Mr. Childers himself. The noble Lord has given us a very able account, in which, no doubt, all the circumstances favourable to Mr. Childers have been brought forward with great skill; but it is only one account of the transaction, and has not been subject to cross-examination. All the other defendants' de-

Earl Granville

fences have been rigidly inquired into, and cross-examined by skilful men. Mr. Childers's defence is simply given by the noble Lord across the Table, and no means have been taken to ascertain how far this freedom from responsibility really extends, and how far it covers the injury that has been done. We must regard the man who was in charge at the time as primarily responsible for the breakdown that took place. There may be circumstances of defence in the case in Mr. Childers's favour; but they are circumstances that he must plead. He is on his trial. He must show that he was exonerated by the circumstances he pleads, and must show it by producing them before some tribunal more independent than the one of which he himself is the Chairman. It is impossible to overrate the evil which this lamentable occurrence has caused. It is not only that it has injured our reputation, and exposed us to the ridicule and contempt which we deserved; but it has created a great danger in London in the future. It has been the habit—I do not say or think it is a good one—for many years past for various sects of people who have particular causes or opinions to represent to go in procession through the streets; and, confiding in the guardianship of the police, people have always looked upon them as innocent, and they have created no apprehension on the part of the population and no interruption of trade. All that immunity is now at an end. Whenever there is a procession in future there will be a panic among the shopkeepers along the line which it takes, and all the progress of commerce and transactions of business will be put a stop to. I do not think the evil is at all the less for what has taken place since. We have had, unfortunately in one sense, and most fortunately in another, a very large subscription for the unemployed following immediately on this riot. I should be very sorry indeed that the subscriptions for the unemployed should drop off; but it is an unfortunate and unhappy exaggeration of the evil resulting from this unfortunate neglect of the Home Office and the police that people must form the conclusion that it is solely on account of what took place, and to the violent measures that were pursued, that this succour was brought forward by the classes at the West End. These are

most lamentable results, and I think the Government have acted most unwisely in attempting to screen the Office which is primarily responsible from full and independent inquiry; and, unless they reverse their decision in that respect, no measures they may hereafter take against the police by way of punishment for what has taken place will receive the sanction and approval of the public or of Parliament.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of Kimberley) said, he quite agreed with the observations of the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) as to the ill effects of this unfortunate riot; but he would appeal to the noble Marquess as to whether it was a fair, or even a generous, thing to endeavour to fix the blame upon Mr. Childers? Under ordinary circumstances, the Home Secretary was the responsible person in these matters; but, under the circumstances of the present case, it was absolutely preposterous to bring a charge against the present occupant of that post, Mr. Childers. He (the Earl of Kimberley) had had some experience of the suppression of riots and dealing with large bodies of men in Ireland; and if he had found himself in the position of Mr. Childers, and had been informed that measures had been taken by the Chief Commissioner of Police, which that official considered to be sufficient to cope with a disturbance, he should have considered himself in the last degree imprudent, and wanting in that discretion which ought to belong to a man in his situation, if he interfered with the details of the arrangements, and took upon himself responsibility which he could not under the circumstances discharge. He did not believe that the noble Marquess himself, or any man placed in Mr. Childers's position, would have acted so rashly as to interfere with the police in these matters. Had the Home Secretary done so, it would have been likely to have brought about results for which he would have been personally and most gravely responsible. The suggestion that Mr. Childers did his best to shift the responsibility from his own shoulders was not fair, nor was it at all likely to promote harmonious action, or to aid the Government in their determination to restore confidence. To turn the matter into an attack on Mr. Childers would

not conduce to any good result. He had no desire to relieve Mr. Childers through his Colleagues from any part of the responsibility which attached to him; but let them not obscure the matter. He trusted they would not be led away from the true issue by what he would almost say—though he did not wish to offend—appeared to be a desire to make political capital out of the subject. Considering the peculiar circumstances of the case, he thought it was far better, and much more likely to conduce to a thorough investigation and a good result, that Mr. Childers should have put himself at the head of the inquiry which was now taking place into the matter.

VISCOUNT ENFIELD asked the Lord Chancellor, whether the inhabitants of the Western portion of the Metropolis, whose property was either destroyed or injured during the riots on Monday, 8th February, had any legal claim to redress and compensation; if so, whether Her Majesty's Government or the Ossulton Hundred in the county of Middlesex was liable to make good such compensation?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): I need hardly say that I should be at all times most anxious to give any assistance in my power to the noble Viscount, and to your Lordships' House; but the Question which the noble Viscount puts to me now is one raising a point which may possibly come before this House for its judicial decision. It is strictly a question of law, pertaining to the construction of one or more Acts of Parliament; and I am quite sure the noble Viscount and your Lordships will feel that, considering the question may come before the House for judicial decision, and that it may be my lot to take part in such judicial decision, it would be improper that I should now express a legal opinion upon it. I feel that it would not only be prejudging a case which I may have to determine after argument, but that I might be giving false confidence to those who might depend upon an opinion given by one in my position, and, under the circumstances, be led, perhaps, to take steps which they might afterwards find they had reason to regret. Therefore, the noble Viscount will feel that it is from no discourtesy to him or to this House if I think it undesirable I should answer a purely legal Question.

The Earl of Kimberley

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he wished to ask Her Majesty's Government, whether any measures were taken by the Home Office to restore confidence in the Metropolis on Tuesday the 9th and Wednesday the 10th instant; and, whether the recommendation to the citizens on both sides of the river to close their shops and protect their premises was given by direction of the Home Secretary? A report was circulated on Wednesday that a mob was coming from Deptford, and the shops on the other side of the river were closed, nor did anything appear to have been done to restore confidence. The presence of some military in the streets, or of bodies of police at certain points, would have had that effect; but, so far as the public knew, nothing had been done, except what excited only greater alarm—namely, directions by the police to the shopkeepers to close their shops.

LORD THURLOW, in reply, said, that the Home Secretary took what he considered to be ample precautions to insure the safety of the town on Tuesday and Wednesday. He communicated also, as he (Lord Thurlow) had stated, with the Adjutant General of the Army; and the result was that the troops were held in readiness to act at any moment, and magistrates were prepared to assist if required. There was no foundation whatever for the rumour which had got abroad, that the police on the other side of the river warned the people to shut their shops in anticipation of further riots. The Home Secretary requested Sir Edmund Henderson to make inquiry into the point; very careful inquiry had been made of all the police officers who were on duty on Tuesday and Wednesday, and such a warning had not been traced to any of them; none of them admitted having warned any shopkeepers whatever to shut up their shops. Nor was there any truth in the rumour that the police at one time had given instructions to have barricades erected, or prepared, or got ready for erection, at certain strategic points.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he could not say personally that shopkeepers were warned by the police; but a certain head of a bank in St. James's Street—at the very moment that he called in there—namely, about 12 o'clock on the day after the riots—in-

formed him that he had been so cautioned.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK said, the order might not have been issued from head-quarters; but there appeared little doubt that it was circulated.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, that unless the public were informed of the steps taken by the Government, those measures were absolutely useless for the purpose of restoring confidence.

LORD THURLOW said, that noble Lords would probably not have to wait many days before they would obtain full information upon the points referred to.

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Before the House adjourns, I wish to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give us any information with regard to the policy of Her Majesty's Government in South-Eastern Europe?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (The Earl of Rosebery): I am extremely indebted to the noble Marquess for the Question which he has just put. I should, but for the discussion in the early part of the evening, have intervened with a statement which I have prepared on the very subject to which the noble Marquess has referred; but, the attention of the House having been directed to Ireland, I had no opportunity of doing so. Even at this late hour, however, I think it most desirable that some such statement should be made, for Her Majesty's Government are extremely anxious that there should be no doubt or ambiguity with regard to their policy in Eastern Europe. At this moment any such doubt or ambiguity might lead to results of extreme gravity. No one is better aware than the noble Marquess of the critical state of affairs in Eastern Europe. Servia and Bulgaria are by no means disarmed; while, farther South, Greece and Turkey are face to face and armed to the teeth. On the other hand, there is this consolatory reflection—that the Great Powers of Europe are, I believe without a single exception, resolved upon the maintenance of peace. If, therefore, on one side we have the elements of local disturbance, which, if kindled, might at any moment raise a conflagration in Europe of which it might be difficult to

see the limits or the end, on the other we have the firm determination of the Great Powers of Europe that peace shall not be disturbed. That object appears to us to be extremely desirable in itself; while as to the means by which it is to be secured there is a general agreement among the Great Powers. With regard to Greece, we find engagements entered into involving, if necessary, measures to prevent a rupture of the peace by that country. It would not be possible, in my opinion, to set those engagements aside, even if it were desirable to do so, and we shall certainly act upon them; but I think they are judicious in their spirit and their nature. We desire not merely to preserve the peace of Europe, but to protect Greece against herself. We can only view with apprehension, in the interests of the Hellenic Kingdom, the result of a single-handed conflict between that country and Turkey; and if there were any fear—of which happily there is none—of its ceasing to be single-handed, it might involve the imminent risk of a European war. We are, therefore, determined to maintain these engagements, and to act upon them with firmness, if necessary.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for extending the right of voting at Parliamentary elections to duly qualified women—Was *presented* by The Lord Denman; read 1st. (No. 10.)

MARRIAGES VALIDITY BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill to remove doubts as to the validity of certain marriages—Was *presented* by The Lord Bishop of Carlisle; read 1st. (No. 11.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 18th February, 1886.

A Member took and subscribed the Oath, and another Member made the Affirmation.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women, * [70].

Second Reading—*Referred to Select Committee*—Shop Hours Regulation [56].

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

John Aloysius Blake, esquire, *for* Carlow County.

The Honble. Edward Marjoribanks, *for* Berwick County.

The Right honble. Sir William George Granville Venables Vernon Harcourt, knight, *for* Derby Borough.

Alexander Asher, esquire, *for* Elgin District of Burghs.

The Right honble. Anthony John Mundella, *for* Sheffield (Brightside Division).

Cyril Flower, esquire, *for* Bedford County (Luton Division).

The Right honble. John Morley, *for* Newcastle upon Tyne.

The Right honble. John Blair Balfour, *for* Combined Counties of Clackmannan and Kinross.

The Honble. Charles Robert Spencer, *for* Northampton County (Mid Division).

The Right honble. Edward Heneage, *for* Great Grimsby.

Charles Russell, esquire, *for* Hackney (South Division).

The Right honble. George Otto Trevelyan, *for* Hawick District of Burghs.

The Right honble. Joseph Chamberlain, *for* Birmingham (West Division).

The Right honble. Sir Lyon Playfair, K.C.B., *for* Leeds (South Division).

Robert William Duff, esquire, *for* Banff County.

The Right honble. Hugh Culling Eardley Childers, *for* Burgh of Edinburgh (South Division).

The Right honble. Henry Campbell-Bannerman, *for* Stirling District of Burghs.

George Granville Leveson Gower, esquire, *for* Stafford County (North Western Division).

Sir James Porter Corry, baronet, *for* Armagh County (Mid Division).

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

For—

Flintshire, *v.* The Right honble. Richard de Aquila Grosvenor, commonly called Lord Richard Grosvenor, Chiltern Hundreds.

Somerset County (Southern Division), *v.* The Right honble. Frederick Edward Gould Lambart, commonly called Viscount Kilcourse, Vice Chamberlain of the Household.

Cardiff Borough, *v.* Sir Edward James Reed, K.C.B., Commissioner of the Treasury.

Borough of Grantham, *v.* John William Mellor, esquire, Judge Advocate General.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

The Right honble. William Ewart Gladstone, *for* Edinburgh County.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had received the following Communication from the Judges selected, in pursuance of The Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868, for the Trial of Election Petitions:—

St. Andrews Election.

The Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868.

Unto the Right Honourable the Speaker of the House of Commons.

We, Andrew Rutherford Clark, Lord Rutherford Clark, and Robert Lee, Lord Lee, two of the Judges of the Court of Session in Scotland, and two of the Judges for the time being for the trial of Election Petitions in Scotland, pursuant to "The Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868," and "The Parliamentary and Corrupt Practices Act, 1879," do hereby certify, That, at the conclusion of the trial of an Election Petition, at the instance of Sir Robert Anstruther, of Balaaskie, Fife, baronet, a candidate at the Election for the St. Andrews District of Burghs in December 1885, praying to have it determined that the double Return made at the said Election was an undue Return within the meaning of the said first-mentioned Act, and that the Petitioner was duly elected, and ought to have been returned as Member for the said District of Burghs, which trial was on the 15th instant, and on this day, holden before us in Edinburgh, we did find and determine that the said Return was an undue Return within the meaning of the said Act, and that the Petitioner, the said Sir Robert Anstruther, baronet, was duly elected, and ought to have been returned as Member for the said St. Andrews District of Burghs.

Given under our hands at Edinburgh, this 16th day of February 1886.

AND. R. CLARK.

ROBERT LEE.

The evidence taken at the trial, under the authority of the Shorthand Writer of the House of Commons, is transmitted with the foregoing Certificate.

A. R. C.

R. L.

Ordered, That the Clerk of the Crown do attend this House forthwith with the last Return for the St. Andrews District of Burghs, and amend the same by striking out the name of Stephen Williamson, esquire.

The Clerk of the Crown attending, amended the Return accordingly.

POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S
GOVERNMENT.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): Sir, I wish to give Notice that I shall, on Monday, move to refer the question of the Procedure of the House of Commons to a Select Committee. I may add that it was our intention to propose that this Select Committee should be of a number considerably exceeding the usual number of 15. Perhaps I may be permitted to go further, and state for the convenience of the House, and as far as we can forecast it, the course of Public Business. First, with respect to the Address—which comes on to-night—it may be for the convenience of hon. Gentlemen to know that we propose, after having fully considered the subject—a novel one in some points of view—to accept the Address in substance exactly as it is—that is to say, the portion of it which may be considered to be virtually adopted by the House down to the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), which was carried by a majority; and likewise the remaining portion of the Address down to the close, as far as the substance is concerned. But the lapse of time requires some grammatical changes—strictly and purely grammatical—to make the Address congruous and consistent with reference to the circumstances which now exist. I could state those grammatical changes; but I think they would be hardly intelligible to the House, and that I had better reserve them. Then, Sir, I have to say that, that being the case, we should not be able to give our assent, I am afraid, to any Amendments that might be moved to the Address—one of which we have already heard from my hon. Friend the Member for North Bedfordshire Mr. Magniac—for the obvious reason that if we were to entertain any one Amendment we could not consistently refuse our assent to the introduction of other subjects, and I think considerable confusion would probably result. I may also say, in regard to one of the Amendments of which Notice has been given, relating to the crofter population, that my right hon. Friend near me Mr. Trevelyan will to-night give Notice of his intention to introduce a Bill, on a very early day,

with reference to that subject. So much for the subject of Procedure, and so much for the subject, urgent undoubtedly, of the crofters. After that the House will, I am sure, have regard to the date which we have now reached. We are now at the 18th of February. There are eight days at the command of the Government, according to the usage of the House, between this time and the 22nd of March, on or about which date it is absolutely necessary to introduce a Financial Bill for the purpose of observing the law in regard to the Accounts of the year and passing the Estimates. These eight days, we must calculate, will probably be required in the main for disposing of the Supplementary Estimates of the present year, and for dealing with the great Votes of the Military and Naval Services, in order to place those Services in cash, and, in conformity with usage, to enable the Business of the country to proceed in a regular manner. We do not, therefore, contemplate any serious interruption to that course of Business within the period I have named. An hon. Member opposite, the Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston), has given me Notice of his intention to ask a Question to-morrow with respect to the state of Ireland, and the intentions of Her Majesty's Government as regards Ireland. I will anticipate the answer to the Question as far as I am able, because I have no doubt the House will make all due allowance for the circumstances of the case, notwithstanding all the information I can give. Sir, from the first moment—and the first moment has hardly passed since the Cabinet met for the first time on Monday—we have made our first care the state of Ireland, and the subject will be one occupying our unceasing attention. I may say—for, indeed, it has been announced in the addresses of various Members of the Government to their constituents—that we do not propose to meet the case of Ireland by suggesting to the House, at the present moment, the re-enactment of repressive criminal legislation. Of course, we are well aware, as the hon. Gentleman who has just given his Notice has observed, that the state of Ireland requires the closest attention, and is not to be disposed of by merely negative assertion. Our desire is, and our endeavour will

be, to introduce measures of a positive and substantive character in the House, which may deal with the case of Ireland in the various aspects in which it is now presented to us, both in respect to social order, which must necessarily be on all occasions the question first offering itself to the notice of an Executive Government, with respect to the great subject of land, and with respect to any measure which requires attention in connection with the future government of Ireland, and the method of that government. The time which will necessarily be occupied with the financial Business of the year will be studiously applied by us to maturing as rapidly as possible—[*Laughter from the Opposition*]
—I do not know whether the implication is that there are Gentlemen in this House to whom the state of Ireland is a subject so easy that they have in their minds, ready for production, some simple and satisfactory method of dealing with it. That is not our view of the matter. Our view is that the subject is one of the greatest importance, and one of very great complexity and of enormous responsibility. Therefore, we shall not fear to ask the House for such time as may be necessary for us to give the subject the consideration which we think it requires. I was about to say that after that necessary financial Business has been gone through—and I named the 22nd of March as the date when the House will probably have disposed of the most urgent matters of Supply—by that time I shall hope to be in a condition to make some further indication to the House as to either the whole or some part of the proposals we may have to make for dealing with the substantive and positive—and I hope in a somewhat permanent form—with the great question of the state of Ireland. That, Sir, is what I have to say on the subject of the course of Public Business. If there is any other question which hon. Members wish me to answer I shall be very glad to do so.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH : We shall, Sir, I apprehend, upon the resumption of the debate on the Address in answer to Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, have an opportunity of commenting upon the somewhat surprising statement of the right hon. Gentleman with reference to the intentions of the Government towards Ireland. It would

not, of course, be in Order for me to make any comment upon that matter now ; but I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to be good enough to inform us precisely of the grammatical Amendments—as he has been pleased to characterize them—which it is the intention of the Government to make in the Address, so that we may have an opportunity of considering them before being called upon to resume the debate. I would further ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will place on the Paper the terms of the Reference to the Select Committee on the subject of Procedure ; and whether it is his intention to frame any Resolutions or Standing Orders of the nature of those which I placed on the Paper when I was responsible for the Business of the House, in order to give that Committee some material for its consideration with the authority of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE : Undoubtedly I will place upon the Table the terms of the Reference to the Select Committee as we shall propose them ; and I will then make such a statement of our intentions in regard to the proceedings of the Committee as I hope will, in substance, meet the views of the right hon. Gentleman. With respect to the grammatical Amendments which we propose to make in the Address, I will explain them at once to the right hon. Gentleman, if he has the Address in his hands and will be good enough to follow me. I conceive the Address to have been substantially, though not formally, adopted by the House down to the word "tenure" in the paragraph relating to agriculture which was adopted upon the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings). The first Amendment is in the paragraph relating to Ireland, in the last paragraph but one of the second page, the ninth line from the bottom of the page. The next paragraph will not require any amendment whatever, as far as I can see, until we get to the word "leads," towards the close of the paragraph. When we get to near the end of the paragraph, in the fourth line from the end, I shall propose to substitute the word "led" for the word "leads ;" and in the last line but one to substitute the word "look" for the word "looks." The next paragraph relates to the mea-

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asures which it was the intention of the late Government to submit to Parliament; but as we could not very well recognize any responsibility in reference to their intentions, I propose to substitute the word "would" for the word "will," in the first line of that paragraph. In the last line but one of the same paragraph, after the word "Ireland," I propose to substitute the word "was" for the word "is;" and after the word "measures," in the same line, to substitute the word "would" for the word "will." The next Amendment is one which is intended to correct an error in the original drafting of the Address. The last paragraph but two of the Address runs thus—"Humbly to thank Her Majesty that a Bill for facilitating the sale of Glebe Lands," and so forth. That passage will require the insertion of certain words. We do not mean to be critics of the style of those who have gone before us; but we think the paragraph requires the insertion of some words to thank Her Majesty for making known to us that the Bill for the sale of Glebe Lands "would" be introduced. Then, in the second line, I propose to strike out the word "will," and insert the word "would." The next paragraph—the last but one—does not appear to require any amendment whatever; and in the last paragraph we propose to strike out nearly the whole of the second line. The paragraph now runs—

"Humbly to assure Her Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to our attention, and to the measures which may be submitted to us."

(Of course, we cannot refer to the subjects and measures which the late Government proposed to submit; and we, therefore, propose that the last paragraph should read as follows:—

"Humbly to assure Her Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the measures which may be submitted to us."

These are the Amendments which we propose.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE—GREECE AND TURKEY.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether

he is in a position to inform the House as to the condition of the affairs of Greece; what action Her Majesty's Government will take in the event of the Greek Fleet attempting to attack the Turkish ports; and, whether the Government is acting in concert with all the Powers of Europe; and, if not, what Powers have dissented?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): I should like to answer the Question with the greatest caution. I should have answered with greater advantage if I had had a little Notice of the Question; but I have before me the substance of a statement which will be made by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the House of Lords. My noble Friend and his Colleagues with him are of opinion that it would be most injurious that there should at this moment be any ambiguity as to the views and intentions of Her Majesty's Government. It might be most injurious to leave in doubt what those views and intentions are. We recognize the critical state of affairs in Eastern Europe, and we are aware how much depends upon the action which may be taken in respect of Greece. The affairs in the Balkans are by no means settled; but, of course, those affairs may be very materially affected by what happens in regard to Greece. Reference has been made in the Question to the Concert of Europe, and it is a matter of full satisfaction that the Great Powers of Europe have been acting together upon this occasion; and in the spirit of that Concert we shall, undoubtedly, continue to act. It is a great satisfaction to us to be able to follow without any deviation, so far as I am aware, in the course which appears to us, according to our best knowledge, to have been marked out by our Predecessors in Office with respect to this very important question of peace in Eastern Europe. On entering Office I may say that the very first step taken by us was to ascertain precisely—in fact, it was taken by myself individually at the moment when I had accepted Office at the hands of Her Majesty—to ascertain exactly the state of the engagements of the late Government—that being the point which it was our first duty to consider—and to let it be known beyond all possibility of doubt that these engagements would be strictly adhered to. Of

course, it is possible to draw a distinction between engagements and the policy which led to those engagements; but I am bound to say that, while adopting the engagements as a matter of good faith, we see no reason to separate ourselves from a policy which we believe to be directed to the peace of Europe and to the maintenance of public right, and I must also say, in our judgment, to the true interests of Greece herself. I think that is the substance of what will be said by my noble Friend in the other House.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: I only further wish to ask whether all the Powers are in concert on this question, or whether there is anyone dissenting?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: The Note which formed the basis of our proceedings is a Collective Note to which all the six Great Powers are parties; and all the six Powers have, I believe, in the strongest manner, as far as I am acquainted with their proceedings, urged upon Greece the wisdom and expediency of adopting the course recommended in the Note.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS—EXTRAORDINARY TITHE.

MR. T. H. BOLTON asked the Right honourable gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford, as an Ecclesiastical Commissioner, Whether he has seen a Report in *The Tunbridge Wells Advertiser*, of the 5th February instant, of a trial in the Tunbridge County Court of Kent (Eden v. Vinson), by which it appears that a Mr. Charles Gideon Stevens, a witness who described himself as "the Agent of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners" assisted the Vicar of Ticehurst in the levying of a distress for extraordinary tithe; and, whether it is part of the duty of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners or their agents to assist clergymen to distrain for the recovery of extraordinary tithe; and, if not, whether the Commissioners will instruct their agents not to interfere in such matters in future?

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY, in reply, said, Mr. Stevens was not an agent of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and that it was no part of the duty of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners or their agents to assist clergymen to distrain for extraordinary tithes; and they were

not aware that in any case any of their agents had ever interfered in such matters.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—MOUNTJOY CONVICT PRISON.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the representations made by the Catholic Chaplain in Mountjoy Convict Prison, and published in the last Report of the General Prisons Board, with regard to the punishments inflicted in that prison; and, whether it is a fact that men, the majority of them weak in body as well as in mind, sometimes to the number of twelve or fourteen at a time, are chained at the right wrist and the right ankle with a chain varying in weight from five to ten pounds, and sometimes so kept day and night, without intermission, for months?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I have seen the chaplain's letter referred to in the Question, and have been furnished with a Report from the General Prisons Board, from which it appears that the mechanical restraint of a chain is adopted in the case of certain refractory convicts, and it is used in England as well as in Ireland. It is regarded as of a more humane character than the alternative of separate confinement, as it permits of dangerous prisoners taking exercise and being employed in public work. It is never applied until after medical examination; and prisoners wearing it are put under periodical report with a view to its removal as soon as safety permits. The Medical Officer of Mountjoy Prison states that—

"In no case has he or would he certify a prisoner to be fit for such restraint if he were weak in body or mind."

If the hon. Member will kindly look at Appendix 31 of the Board's Annual Report he will see that particulars are published of all cases in which convict prisoners have been placed under this or other restraints. I should add that the heaviest chain applied is stated to weigh only 4½ lbs., while a lighter one is generally used; and that, at the present moment, out of 698 male convicts in Mountjoy Prison, only three are wearing chains.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to

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read, on this question, the Report of the Royal Commission which reported a few years ago.

PRISON (IRELAND)—SUICIDES IN GALWAY GAOL.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has observed, from the last Report of the Prisons Board, that the only prison in which suicide occurred in the year 1884-5 was Galway Gaol; and that there, within twelve weeks, three prisoners committed suicide by hanging; and, whether any special investigation was made into the circumstances of the prison, or the treatment of the prisoners therein?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): The three cases of suicide referred to by the hon. Gentleman were investigated by Coroner's inquests; and the jury decided in each case that no blame attached to any of the prison officials. In one case a special inquiry was held by a member of the Board, who came to a like conclusion. The prison was visited three times last year by Dr. MacCabe, Medical Officer of the Board; and he certifies that the treatment of the prisoners there is humane and considerate.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—REPORT OF INSPECTOR ON THE PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF PORTIONS OF THE DONOUGHMORE UNION WITH THE UNIONS OF ROSCREA AND ABBEYLEIX.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Local Government Board have yet considered the Report of their Inspector upon the proposed amalgamation of portions of the Donoughmore Union with the Unions of Roscrea and Abbeyleix; and, how soon their decision will be made known?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): The Report has not yet reached the Local Government Board. I understand the Inspector awaits some important Returns to enable him to complete it.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE BARROW.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Royal Commission, ap-

pointed last year to inquire into the drainage of the Barrow, has yet rendered its Report; and, if not, how soon it is likely to finish the inquiry?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY) (who replied) said: Sir, as the Irish Government are responsible for this Commission, my hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has asked me to answer this Question. The Report reached us yesterday, and will be laid upon the Table without loss of time.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—THE LONG VACATION.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he will consider the possibility of making arrangements for preventing the annual delay in Taxation and other Chamber business during every Long Vacation in both the Queen's Bench and Chancery Divisions?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR. CHARLES RUSSELL), in reply, said, he had drawn the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the inconvenience referred to, and he hoped steps would be taken to remedy it. Indeed, some steps in that direction had already been taken.

BURIAL ACT, 1880—BURIAL AT CHELMSFORD.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has seen in *The Essex Weekly News*, of January 15th, a statement to the effect, that at the burial of Mrs. Grinter, of Springfield, Chelmsford, a Wesleyan, under the Burial Act of 1880, the grave was dug in an isolated portion of the burial ground, near a rubbish heap, and where the mourners had to stand nearly ankle-deep in mud; and also that the gates of the churchyard through which the burial ground is ordinarily approached were locked by order of the Reverend A. Pearson, the Rector, and the mourners were obliged to enter through a gate used only for carts and workmen; whether he will inquire into the facts of the case, and, should they be authenticated, if he will cause proceedings to be instituted against the Rector for obstructing the burial; and, if he will consider the expediency of including in any measure for improved local government the transfer of the control of parochial burial grounds to authorities elected by the parishioners?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the hon. Member I have to say that I have received a Report from the clergyman of the parish, together with a map, showing the exact arrangement of the ground. It appears that the gate made use of on this occasion was certainly the nearest approach to the grave, and the only public entrance. Considering, however, the inclement state of the weather and the presence of the heap of rubbish, of which the clergyman said he was not aware, it would, no doubt, have been better if the gate had been unlocked and access allowed by the cleaner path. But it does not seem a matter for any further interference on the part of the Secretary of State. With regard to the last paragraph of the Question, I am not at present in a position to express any definite opinion.

POOR LAW—OUTDOOR RELIEF DURING THE EXISTING DISTRESS.

MR. ISAACS: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which I have given him private Notice—namely, Whether, having regard to the large amount of distress now unhappily prevailing consequent upon the want of employment among artisans and others, Her Majesty's Government were prepared to name an early day for the discussion of the Motion on the Paper suggesting that the Local Government Board should be instructed temporarily to relax their rules as to the granting of outdoor relief?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): Perhaps the hon. Member will put the Question to the President of the Local Government Board, as it more regularly refers to that Department, and the Question is new to me.

MR. ISAACS: I put it to the President of the Local Government Board, and it was at his suggestion that I now ask the Prime Minister the Question. I have copies of the correspondence. ["Order!"]

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (after a brief consultation with Mr. CHAMBERLAIN) said: I understand that there is a mistake on the part of the hon. Member. The effect of the answer of my right hon. Friend was that he had not control of the Business of the House.

MR. ISAACS: And suggested that I should put the Question to the Leader of Her Majesty's Government. I beg

to throw myself on the indulgence of the House while I read the letter received from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. I should not have taken this step if my statement had not been doubted. [*Cries of "Agreed!"*]

MR. SPEAKER: There does not seem to be any need of explanation on the part of the hon. Member. If he proposes to put his Question to the Prime Minister he is perfectly at liberty to do so.

MR. ISAACS: I have put the Question, and the Prime Minister has suggested to me that I should have addressed it to the President of the Local Government Board. I did so address it.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member will address himself to the President of the Local Government Board he will, no doubt, receive an answer.

MR. ISAACS: Then, Sir, with the leave of the House I will address the Question to the President of the Local Government Board, and I will take the opportunity of asking the right hon. Gentleman whether the letter which I hold in my hands from the Local Government Board was written at his direction—

"Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Chamberlain to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 9th instant, and to remind you that it is not within his power to regulate the Business of the House of Commons. Mr. Chamberlain can only suggest that your Question might be addressed to the Prime Minister on the re-assembling of Parliament?"

I thereupon wrote to the Prime Minister a letter, of which I have a copy, telling him it was my intention to address a Question to him on the re-assembling of the House.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: I am not quite certain what the Question put to me is. Certainly, I admit the authenticity of the letter which the hon. Member has just read. He has not, however, read the letter to which it was a reply; but that was to the effect that he had a Motion on the Paper, and he wished to know from me whether the Government would give facilities for its discussion? I made the reply which the hon. Member has read. Of course, I assumed that he would communicate with the Prime Minister, and gave him full Notice that he proposed to ask a Question with regard to the Business of the House. I may add that if the hon.

Member desires to call attention to the subject-matter of his Motion I cannot conceive that he will have any difficulty in doing so during the debate on the Address, and I shall be prepared to give him any information in my power.

**DISTURBANCES IN THE METROPOLIS
—ACTION OF THE HOME DEPARTMENT—EXPLANATION.**

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have to ask the Secretary of State for Home Affairs a Question of which I have given him private Notice—namely, Whether he will give the House any explanation of the entire absence of any preparation for the maintenance of order in the streets of the Metropolis on Monday week last, on the occasion of a demonstration in Trafalgar Square; why a small mob was allowed to commit riot and robbery for nearly two hours without any attempt whatever being made during that time on the part of the authorities to put an end to the disturbance or to arrest the offenders; whether steps have been taken to prevent the possibility of the repetition of such disgraceful proceedings; what orders were given to the police by the Home Office on the occasion referred to, and how the sufferers by the disturbances are to be compensated?

MR. ALGERNON PERCY: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers I would ask him whether he will state to the House the precautions, if any, taken previous to the meeting in Trafalgar Square on February 8 to prevent a breach of the peace at that meeting; what orders the police had received as to their behaviour at the meeting; and from whom those orders had proceeded; what communications and orders had passed between the police and the Home Office during the day of February 8, and at what time such communications took place; and, whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to provide full compensation for those who have suffered loss of property, and in some cases ruin, in consequence of the riot of February 8?

SIR ROBERT FOWLER: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will, before he answers the Question, give to those who think that the conduct of the police in this matter has been grossly maligned an opportunity of discussing that most important question?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): I have received on this most important question, as my hon. Friend has just said, no less than 11 Notices of Questions; and I am most anxious to give the House the very fullest answer in my power to those Questions. It appears to me, considering how much those Questions dovetail into each other, and refer to different times and different days in connection with the events of last Monday week, that perhaps it would be for the convenience of the House if, instead of giving a dry answer to each Question as it comes up, I give to the House a narrative, as short as I can make it, of the events to which these Questions refer; and then, if I have missed any point in these Questions, I will conclude by answering that particular point separately. If that is the wish of the House, I will give now the best narrative I can of this most lamentable event. I returned on Saturday, late in the evening, from receiving from Her Majesty the Seals of the Home Office; and on Monday the 8th, at 11 o'clock in the morning, I took over the business of the Office. It was my first duty to see the principal officers of the Department itself, and also to see the principal officers of the Departments under the Home Office. Of the latter, of course, the Chief Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner of Police were among the first; and I specially requested them to see me as early as they could in the day, in order that I might ask them what had been done in respect to the meeting in Trafalgar Square, which was gathering at the very time I saw them. I saw them, I think, between 12 and 1 o'clock that day, and I asked them to tell me what arrangements they had made in view of that meeting. They assured me they had taken ample precautions for the preservation of the peace; and they told me they had given the same assurance to my right hon. Friend and Predecessor (Sir R. Assheton Cross), who held the Seals of the Department up to the evening of the previous Friday, and whom they saw on Friday morning. They told me more than they had been able to state at that time to my Predecessor, because they were able to give me the exact number of persons whom they proposed to employ. They had decided to employ on

the occasion 560 men in reserve round Trafalgar Square, besides the double patrols in the Square and the men who were necessary to guard the Monument and the works in the Square itself. The House is doubtless aware that on these occasions it has never been the custom—indeed, it has always been considered unwise—to show what is called the entire force you have at your disposal, from the natural fear of irritating the populace by showing a large number of policemen; but the whole of that force was, as I have said, in the immediate vicinity of the Square—part of it in the Square itself, and 560 men at the police office close by, and in what is known as the St. George's Barracks, on the North side of the Square. I asked the Chief Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner whether they were aware of the special character of the meeting—that this meeting was not, as many of those with which they had to deal—called and frequented by persons with one single object, but was a meeting in which two antagonistic bodies were expected to take part. They told me they were fully aware of, and had made full allowance for, that fact; that they had determined to bring together a very much larger force of police than would have been brought together under ordinary circumstances; and they explained to me the communications which had taken place on the subject, and what was the opinion of what was known as the Working Men's Committee—I believe the proper title is the London United Workmen's Committee—who wrote to them for the first time on the 1st instant, the Monday preceding the Monday to which I am referring. That is the answer to one of the Questions. They said that not only had they provided a very much larger force of men than would have been the case under other circumstances, but that the Chief Commissioner himself would be on the ground during the day; and that was, I believe, the case. Perhaps, in passing, I may inform the House that it is not the custom of the Police Department to submit detailed arrangements as to the handling, or as to the numbers, of police on these occasions to the Home Office. All that is done—and this was done in the present case—was to furnish the Home Office with the printed order, detailing the number of men, and how they were to be employed; and that,

Mr. Childers

which is sent as usual to the Home Office for record, was received by the Home Office in the early part of that day. Well, Sir, with these assurances and these details given me by the Chief Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner, I felt no anxiety as to the power of the police to deal wisely with what might arise in the course of the day. During the day I remained at the Home Office, except for a little more than half-an-hour, till half-past 7 that afternoon, attending to the regular work of the Office. At about half-past 6 o'clock I received from my own house in Piccadilly a note relating to other matters, but which mentioned that there had been a riot in Piccadilly—[*Laughter*]—and that certain damage had been done. [*Renewed laughter.*] It is not, Sir, a laughing matter, and I am stating to the House precisely and frankly what occurred. I at once telephoned from the Home Office to Scotland Yard, asking for information on the subject of the message which had so reached me; and a little before 7 o'clock Sir Edmund Henderson and Colonel Pearson, the Chief and Assistant Commissioners of Police, came to the Home Office, and told me, in general terms, what had happened during the day, especially what had happened since the meeting had broken up—that a disorderly body of men went Westward, doing great damage on the way, through Pall Mall, up St. James' Street, in Piccadilly, and then, after passing through the Park, in South Audley Street and North Audley Street. Sir Edmund Henderson reported to me that at that time there was no further disturbance, and I told him to be careful to report anything which might arise, and if there was any renewal of the disturbance. However, Sir, nothing of the kind occurred. Perhaps, at this moment, I might say, what is evidently not the impression of some hon. Gentlemen, that it is not, and never was, usual, during the progress of meetings of this character, to make periodical reports to the Secretary of State. I have made careful examination of the question, and I am stating what has strictly occurred. It is obvious that, in the case of an ordinary meeting, any interference by the Secretary of State would only hamper the operations of the police. But it is usual, and also proper, to report any incident of great

consequence external to the meeting; and in this case I am only telling the House, without any remarks or observations of my own, what Sir Edmund Henderson told me—that he was waiting, before informing me of what had happened, for full reports from the several Inspectors of the divisions. I make no remark upon that statement. I proceed to what happened on Tuesday. I came to the Office very early in the day, and I considered what were the duties that were incumbent upon me. It appeared to me that three duties lay before me—first, to take most active steps to prevent any recurrence of anything approaching the disorders of the day before, and also to take the most efficient steps to calm the public mind. The second was the duty of punishing those who instigated the riot of the day before; and the third was to inquire whether the proceedings of that day were due, in any degree, to official neglect. The first was our primary duty, and I will tell the House what I did in that matter. In the first place, I instructed the Chief Commissioner of Police at once to strengthen his force by calling up all the recruits who had been already accepted. This gave him immediately an additional force of 600 men, and those I arranged with him should be sent at once to the less exposed divisions of the town, so that the best men could be brought in from those divisions to help to keep order in the more exposed and central divisions. In the second place, I asked the War Department to instruct the General Commanding the Home District to hold at our immediate disposal men belonging to each battalion of the Foot Guards and each regiment of the Household Cavalry, and thus in that way to add several thousand men to the force we might require to meet any emergency. Lord Wolseley, the Adjutant General, came to the Home Office, and these arrangements were concerted with him; and I made also the necessary arrangements for magistrates to accompany the military force who might be called out to assist the police. Thirdly, I instructed the Chief Commissioner to take all possible measures to calm the public mind. I will here say at once there is no truth whatever in the statements which have appeared to the effect that orders were issued, either by the Home Office or the Police Authorities, to barri-

cade streets or houses, or to warn tradesmen to shut up their shops. I have looked very carefully into this, and I find these rumours which have been so prevalent were absolutely without foundation. ["No, no!"] It is possible, of course, that out of 13,000 constables, some individual constable, without authority, may have used language which was not of a prudent or pacifying character; I have to say distinctly that no such orders were either directly or indirectly given by the Home Office, or by the heads of the police, and that these remarkable telegrams I have received during Tuesday and Wednesday, each of which was the subject of investigation, were thoroughly unfounded. The result of these measures was that by Thursday these apprehensions had calmed down, and the public felt that the arrangements made by the police under our superintendence were sufficient. The second duty which it appeared to me was incumbent upon me was to bring the instigators to justice, and I tell the House what we did in this respect. These instigators were not persons connected with either the Fair Trade movement or the leaders of the unemployed, who had convened the meeting; but they were the Socialist agitators, who came in such numbers to the Square. No delay was allowed to occur in dealing with these men. Early on Tuesday I called a meeting at the Home Office of the three Under Secretaries there, of one of the Commissioners of Police, and of the Treasury Solicitor; and, after taking preliminary steps, those gentlemen met again a short time afterwards in the afternoon, and the Attorney General was present on the occasion. We decided at once that the head of the Criminal Investigation Department of the Police—that is, Mr. Monroe—should at once collect evidence, and, with the aid of the Treasury Solicitor, should get up as rapidly as possible a proper case for summary proceedings against these people; and on Wednesday, the following day, the evidence so collected was reported to me at the Home Office. On Thursday a fresh meeting of those who had met before took place at the Home Office, at which the whole of the evidence collected was carefully considered; and I then found that the prevalent opinion was that proceedings ought to be taken, not in the

nature of summary proceedings, but that the people ought to be committed, if the magistrate would commit them, for trial in the usual way by indictment. This view was supported by the most eminent legal opinion; and I have to tender my thanks to my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), who was the Attorney General in the last Liberal Government, and who, in the necessary and enforced absence of the present Attorney General that evening, rendered us most valuable assistance. I gave, accordingly, final instructions on Friday to the Treasury Solicitors for the necessary steps to be taken for the prosecution of these persons. The summonses were, I believe, issued on the following day. They were returnable on Wednesday last. The four defendants were brought before the magistrate, and from that moment the matter left my hands, and will be dealt with according to the usual process of law. So much for the steps which we took to punish the instigators of these riots. Meanwhile we were considering the third branch of my duty in this respect—that is, the best way of inquiring into the disturbances, and especially into the conduct of the police in connection with the matter. My personal difficulty, in which I am sure I shall have some sympathy from the House, was that I had only gone to the Home Office on the very day that the Department itself was new to me. I had never served as Under Secretary at the Home Office. I had no knowledge of the police arrangements, except that which any Member of the Government might have; and I thought I should be undertaking a very serious business with considerable inexperience if I decided to act alone in an inquiry under these circumstances. I therefore asked four Gentlemen to associate themselves with me in conducting this inquiry—four Gentlemen whose names I thought would be a sufficient guarantee that the inquiry would be conducted in a most thorough, most impartial, and most intelligent manner. The results of the inquiry will not relieve me of a single shred of responsibility. I wish to state this to the House in the most emphatic terms. Although associated with me in making the inquiry, they will have nothing to do with the action which it will be my duty to take in consequence of what is disclosed by this in-

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quiry, which I shall take strictly on my own responsibility. The aim of the inquiry was to ascertain who was to blame, and why and wherefore this system has broken down. Those who are associated with me in the inquiry have met four times during the present week, after the preliminary meeting of Saturday last; and I may state to the House that at this moment the inquiry approaches completion, so far as the conduct of the police on Monday last was concerned. I hope it will be completed before next Monday. I shall lay the Report on the Table without any delay, and with it a Memorandum of the decision at which I have felt it my duty to arrive; and I feel confident, when the result of this inquiry and the evidence and the whole proceedings of those who have acted with me and my own decision in the matter are laid before the House, both hon. Members and the public outside will be satisfied that the inquiry has been a most searching one—that no stone has been left unturned to get to the root of the matter, and to do so without bias or prejudice. I greatly regret that the inquiry is not completed at this moment; but when the evidence and the proceedings of the Committee are before the country I think it will be seen that that was entirely inevitable. I feel it my duty to acquaint the House with this—that the evidence has disclosed a state of circumstances in respect to the administration of the police which will require my serious attention with the view to an immediate remedy. There seems to be some misconception with respect to the relations between the Home Office and the Police Authorities. These relations are practically the same as those of the Secretary of State for War with the General of an Army in the field, though in each case, whether with respect to the War or Home Department, administrative and financial questions are submitted to and dealt with by the Secretary of State, and he is responsible for the appointment of the principal officers. The details of movements of such as those on Monday week are purely under the responsibility of the Chief Commissioner, and a perusal of the evidence we have taken will show this clearly. But if, after the inquiry is complete, a change in any respect of this kind appears to me desirable, I shall lose no time in making any necessary

amendment, and at once communicating to Parliament my intentions. I have, in the course of this narrative, answered several of the Questions that have been put to me. As to those put by the late Home Secretary, I think he will find that I have substantially answered them, except, perhaps, as to the last, which refers to a matter which is the subject of the inquiry now proceeding, I shall prefer not giving an answer now. The Questions of the right hon. Gentleman

Mr. W. H. Smith; also refer to matters which are subjects of the present inquiry. In reply to those Questions that I have not yet answered, I may say that efficient steps had been taken to prevent a repetition of such occurrences. The hon. Member for one of the divisions of Glasgow asks me two Questions. One is, whether it was true that the powers of the Metropolitan Commissioner of Police are so circumscribed as to render him powerless in the case of the recent riots? No; there is no truth in that. The powers of the Commissioner of Police were ample and full, as I have described. He then asks me whether there is any truth in the statement that the Chief Commissioner made an application to the Home Office for necessary powers, and that these were refused? No, Sir; there is no truth in that statement. The Commissioner of Police made no application for any power which was refused. In reply to the Question of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Algernon Percy), I have to say, positively, that no special orders were issued to the police as to their behaviour at the meeting in question. Their orders are contained in the Regulations of the force. The noble Lord also asks me whether Her Majesty's Government propose to give any compensation to the persons who suffered in the riot? I can only say, in answer, that compensation to persons who suffer by riots is supposed to be regulated by law; but I cannot say that in my opinion the law is clear; and it, therefore, is not in my power at this moment to give any opinion as to what compensation—as to how persons who have suffered can receive compensation for those losses. I hope I have now answered clearly all the Questions that have been put to me.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I wish to ask why some portion of the 500 men who were in reserve were not used to arrest

the riot during the two hours which it lasted? I am informed that 50 men at any time during those riots might have put a complete stop to the riots.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I wish to ask, in the first place, whether the right hon. Gentleman has told us everything which took place between the Home Office and the Police Authorities during his period of Office? Whether any communications had been made further than he has told us by himself or the Under Secretary of the Home Office with the police in reference to these transactions; and I also wish to ask as to the statement he has made that the Home Office were not in the habit of having communications with the police in the course of the day when a meeting was to take place? I was astonished by what he stated of the matter, because, by the experience I have had at the Home Office, it entirely differs from the usual course. I have had constant communications with the police. I also wish to ask how it happened, if there were these reserves, none of them were brought forward, when it was clear that a small amount of force would have stopped the riot? I wish to ask, also, whether any mounted police were on duty at the time, because they are extremely useful? The right hon. Gentleman has made a full and long statement; but I think he has not satisfied the House on the real point which it wanted to know, as to how this matter happened; and I think we ought to have some opportunity of discussing this at greater length than we can now, because he has had the opportunity of making this statement, which it is impossible to answer or to make any comments upon, as it would be out of Order. Therefore, I wish to ask what opportunity will be given of discussing this question?

Mr. PICTON: I also wish to ask whether it is a fact that at the very time the mob was marching along St. James's Street and Piccadilly breaking windows a considerable force of police was idly guarding Buckingham Palace, where there was no riot; and whether any denial can be given to the allegation that warnings had been given to the shopkeepers in the City by the police?

Mr. CHILDERS: Two Questions are put to me almost in the same words by the right hon. Gentleman and by my

right hon. Friend; and those are how it was that these people were in the position to commit this riot? To that Question I can only say that it is what we are carefully inquiring into. The fact is that a large body of men went away westward from Trafalgar Square, and they committed these depredations; and the question we are examining at this moment is how they came to be allowed to do so, and that is the question which the Police Authorities are inquiring into, and as to which it would not be proper for me to say more. My hon. Friend (Mr. Picton) asks me a Question whether there was a force near Buckingham Palace? It is perfectly true. There was in the Mall a considerable force of police, and the circumstances under which they were sent there are also amongst those being investigated. The right hon. Gentleman also asks me if other communications passed between the Police Authorities and the Home Office? So far as I can ascertain there were none. I can only speak of those which passed between myself and others. I am told that none passed either between myself or other members of my Department and the Police Authorities. As to the alarming rumours in the City, it is perfectly true I received a telegram from a Gentleman who is a Member of this House, and I believe an Alderman of the City. He sent to me a very alarming telegram begging me to take steps to prevent what was going to happen. We have nothing to do with the City Police whatever. The City Police are under the control of the Corporation, and we referred to Colonel Fraser to ascertain whether there was any foundation for the rumour, and we were told that there was no foundation for the rumour. That shows how easy it is to circulate unfounded rumours. The right hon. Gentleman also asks me whether any mounted police were present? No mounted police were employed during the day. He further asks me a Question which I thought I had already answered. I can only speak for myself, but I have asked the officials at the Home Office and Scotland Yard, and they both tell me that during the progress of a meeting it is not customary that communications should pass between Scotland Yard and the Home Office. I am informed that it has only been done in one case, during the great Reform Bill of 1884, when two

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communications were made to my right hon. Friend. With respect to the general practice as to these meetings, I think I said before that it is not customary for communications to pass between the head of the police and the Home Office until the meeting is over; but I carefully excepted from my statement any allusion, as a question of duty, of reports made of occurrences after such as those which took place on Monday week. I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will wait for the result of the inquiry which is being got through with as fast as possible. The Committee sit four hours daily, and the evidence is being printed from day to day; and not an hour will be lost in laying it before the House, together with such decision as I have arrived at.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER: At what hour did the right hon. Gentleman receive the telegram from the City?

MR. CHILDERS: It did not come on Monday at all, but either on Tuesday or Wednesday.

MR. RITCHIE: The right hon. Gentleman made use of one observation which might lead to misconception. I understood him to say that the inquiry was to ascertain who was to blame for the riot. I presume he used it in the sense as applying to the police?

MR. CHILDERS: Yes, Sir.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE: I wish to ask whether any information reached the Home Office on Tuesday, the 9th, the day after the riot in the West End, of alarming rumours prevailing in the South of London to the effect that a great body of men were marching from Greenwich and Deptford, in consequence of which many thousands of persons assembled in Newington Butts and Causeway and at the Elephant and Castle, and created so much alarm as to cause the shopkeepers to close their shops; and, if the rumours reached the Home Office, what steps the right hon. Gentleman took to allay the alarm?

MR. CHILDERS: It is a rather difficult Question to answer off-hand. Undoubtedly on Tuesday and on Wednesday very alarming rumours did reach the Home Office. In every case we made inquiry, and found those rumours were, almost without exception, unfounded; and we did our best to allay public uneasiness by instructing the police to give in-

formation that there was no foundation for the rumours.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER: I have to ask the right hon. Gentleman what facilities he will give the House for discussing the matter?

MR. CHILDERS: I can promise to do nothing more than to lay on the Table as early as possible the evidence now being taken before the Committee; it then rests with the House.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government will answer the Question.

MR. GLADSTONE: It is impossible for me to enter into that question. We must have an opportunity of seeing the evidence and the Report before we can fix any day; besides, after what I have stated about Supply, I cannot pledge myself by giving any precise undertaking.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Home Department whether there is any truth in the report that while the mob were breaking the windows in Pall Mall 50 police were marched across Waterloo Place to the Duke of York's Column, with distinct orders not to interfere; and whether 15 police were not afterwards sufficient to prevent the mob from proceeding from Oxford Street down Bond Street?

MR. CHILDERS: The noble Lord has given me Notice of some; I will ask him to give me Notice of all his Questions. No order was given by anybody for the police not to interfere. As to the movements of particular bodies of men, I could not answer the Question without Notice.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I wish to inquire what has been said by the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler)—that the House should be allowed full opportunity of discussing a matter which is a disgrace to the Metropolis and a discredit to the Police Force. I am surprised that no one has got up—[*Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. SPEAKER: I hope the right hon. Baronet will confine himself to putting a Question.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: Yes, Sir; I will. I wish to ask whether an opportunity of discussing the matter will be given on Monday?

MR. CHILDERS: I am myself in favour of discussing the question; and, so far as I am concerned, there will be no delay in placing the Papers before the House.

MR. PULESTON: Will the Papers be printed?

MR. CHILDERS: Yes.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I wish to know whether this Court of Inquiry, when it is established, will be precluded from reporting that the Home Secretary himself is to blame?

[No reply.]

ITALY—ARREST OF PROFESSOR NICHOL.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question, of which I have given him private Notice, Whether he can give the House any information as to the arrest at Naples, reported in to-day's *Times*, of Professor Nichol, of Glasgow University; and, what steps have been taken by the Foreign Office to procure Professor Nichol's release?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BRYCE): In reply to the Question of my hon. Friend, I have to state that the Foreign Office are not in possession of full details connected with Mr. Nichol's arrest; but having heard of the fact, and at the instance of his family, the Secretary of State immediately instructed Her Majesty's Ambassador at Rome, by telegraph, to address prompt representations on his behalf to the Italian Government. The charge against Mr. Nichol was that he had carried a swordstick in the street, an act which, as we are informed, is severely dealt with by the law of Italy. I am happy to say that Sir John Lumley, on the day following, informed Lord Rosebery, by telegraph, that Mr. Nichol was not in custody, and had arrived at Rome from Naples. The Italian Government have shown great courtesy in the matter, and it is now believed that it will be disposed of by the imposition of a fine.

THE DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS— PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. LLEWELLYN said, he wished to make an explanation. He understood that certain words of his at a poli-

tical meeting in the country had given offence to the hon. Member for Northampton. He desired to withdraw the words, and to express his regret to the hon. Member and the House for having used them.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he need hardly observe that he accepted the withdrawal of the words in the spirit in which it was made.

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION.

EAST INDIA, BURMAH (EXPENSES OF MILITARY OPERATIONS).

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (SIR UGHTRIED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): I beg to give Notice that on Monday I will move—

"That, Her Majesty having directed a Military expedition of Her forces charged upon Indian revenues to be despatched against the King of Ava, this House consents that the revenues of India shall be applied to defray the expenses of the Military operations which may be carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian possessions."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Is it absolutely necessary to move that on Monday?

SIR UGHTRIED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I believe it is quite necessary.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [FIFTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question, as amended [26th January.]—[See page 92.]

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. PLUNKET said, he thought the House would agree with him that it was not very easy, on the first blush, to follow the explanation which had been given by the Prime Minister of the course which he and the Government intended to take with reference to the Address in answer to the Speech from the Throne. At first he did not himself fully understand it; but, so far as he had been able to realize the effect of it, he would ask the leave of the House to

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call attention to what that effect must be. There were about that explanation, in a very remarkable degree, evidences of the appropriateness of that epithet which the right hon. Gentleman had applied to himself—"an old Parliamentary hand." It was a very skilful way of getting rid of the difficulty, and of a disagreeable subject, and of preventing, as far as possible, any discussion of it by the House of Commons. It was on the 10th paragraph of the Address that the late Government was defeated; and the 11th paragraph was that which dealt with the agitation for the Repeal of the Union. Now, no Amendment was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman; and, in point of fact, there would be no opportunity of referring to that subject in the debate on the Address, or, so far as he could see, until a long time after the 22nd of next month, unless some hon. Member who had not already spoken called attention to it. His right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had unfortunately already spoken; and, therefore, he (Mr. Plunket) ventured to call the attention of the House to the position in which they now stood. The right hon. Gentleman had said that, in substance, he was prepared to accept the Address; but what did that mean in the light of the qualifications given by the right hon. Gentleman when the Address was last discussed? The right hon. Gentleman said that by no means involved any acceptance of the statements in the Address; and in order to make that clear the right hon. Gentleman proposed to strike out certain words enumerating the subjects to which consideration was to be given, and to substitute the words "the measures which may be submitted to Her." Thus the Government were avoiding all reference to the question of Ireland, the subject upon which the late Government were really and practically defeated, and the question which was absorbing the attention of the whole country at this moment; and, instead of leading public opinion, the Government were depriving Parliament of the opportunity of discussing this question beyond the point to which it had already gone. That course was fatal to the best interests of the country. It would not be possible on that occasion to enter upon that large subject. But he desired to call the attention of the House to the position in which they

stood—not for the purpose of Party re-
crimination or Party advantage, but
speaking as an Irishman—[*Laughter.*]
He was, perhaps, entitled to say to the
hon. Member interrupting him that he
had lived longer in Ireland, and knew
more of Ireland, than he did—he
told the Prime Minister most seriously
and solemnly that if he permitted that
question to drift away to some time in
the dim and distant future—if he did
not assure them that on the 22nd of
March Parliament would have an oppor-
tunity of gravely discussing his pro-
posals—as any settlement would be
better than the state of unrest in which
the country now was—every energy
for good in Ireland would be completely
paralyzed. He would ask the right
hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister,
would he go out into the open with his
proposals, whatever they were, and give
the House an opportunity of discussing
them? Would he give his Colleagues
in the Cabinet an opportunity of dis-
cussing them? He trusted the House
would pardon him if he spoke warmly.
That great question of the Repeal of the
Union had been brought much to the
front, partly by the fact of the return of
86 Members pledged to that policy, and
partly by the existence of an organiza-
tion in Ireland which was overpowering
the Government of the Queen in that
country. The late Government had met
Parliament with a definite proposal to
deal with the organization which had
set at defiance, and to a great extent
overpowered, the Government of the
Queen in that country, and with a defi-
nite declaration on the question of Re-
peal of the Union. They had made a
distinct declaration of policy on the
question of Repeal, and offered a direct
challenge on the question of bringing
forward a measure to deal with the or-
ganization which he referred to. But
the Prime Minister, for his own part,
declined to take advantage of the pro-
posals of the late Government, or to be
“led into a trap” by taking up the
challenge thrown down; but imme-
diately afterwards, on a side issue,
which had nothing to do with the real
issue, defeated the late Government, and
took upon himself and his Colleagues
the responsibility of dealing with this
great subject. The right hon. Gentle-
man accepted the Address in answer to
the Gracious Speech from the Throne, but

told the House also that for the present
he did not mean to take any measures at
all of a coercive character to put down
the National League in Ireland, but in-
tended at some distant date to name
certain measures dealing with the Land
Question, and any other question which
might call for the attention of Par-
liament. What was the practical
effect of this very skilful manner of
dealing with the subject? It left the
National League in possession of the
field. It left the National League
triumphant through a great part of Ire-
land, and postponed to some distant date
the discussion of the question of the Re-
peal of the Union; and this after the en-
couragement which the right hon. Gen-
tleman had given to the agitation by
everything he had said and done. The
great charge against the late Government
was that it had, by the experiment of
dispensing with exceptional legislation,
purchased the support of the Separatist
Party in Ireland at too high a price. He
thought that the present Government
was open to the charge that after that
experiment had failed they had adopted
the same course of procedure—they pro-
posed to proceed in Ireland without ex-
ceptional legislation at double the price.
How had that arrangement been brought
about? By reliance on the vague
phrases used by the Prime Minister,
which might mean anything or nothing,
that there was nothing in the agitation
which meant the Repeal of the Union.
He had stated that he would insist on
the authority of the Crown and the in-
tegrity of the Empire, and such Parlia-
mentary guarantees as might be neces-
sary to preserve that integrity. The hon.
Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Par-
nell) was gracious enough to say that
there was nothing that he could see in
granting Home Rule that interfered
with these conditions. The hon. Member
was, of course, willing to let the Govern-
ment down as easy as possible; but on
this question they had the fresher mind
of the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr.
Dillon), who stated that nothing short
of absolute and uncontrolled indepen-
dence would meet the demands of Irish-
men—

MA. DILLON: I beg to say that I
did not use those words, nor was I re-
ported as having used them.

MA. PLUNKET: Of course, if the hon.
Member said he did not use those words

he would withdraw them at once. He had the report of what the hon. Member had said. The hon. Member (Mr. Dillon) stated that although he might be called an extreme Irishman, he would say that he, for one, was ready to shake hands with Englishmen. They would turn over a new leaf in regard to them if they would restore to them the complete and absolute power to make laws for their own country. Those were the words used by the hon. Member; and he (Mr. Plunket) had not misrepresented his meaning.

MR. DILLON: You used the word "independence" where I said "absolute power to make laws."

MR. PLUNKET said, he thought that he had not misrepresented the meaning of the hon. Member to any considerable extent. He believed that the powers the hon. Gentleman asked for could not be reconciled with anything but a separate Legislature, uncontrolled by the British Parliament. No Member of the House would be more sincerely glad than he if it were possible to devise some means by which the views and desires of hon. Gentlemen representing a large number of constituencies in Ireland could be met and reconciled without setting up a separate Legislature, which, he believed, would be fraught with consequences the most fatal to the best interests of his country, and which must quickly lead to the separation of the two countries. Now, in what position would the matter stand? When, at some distant period, the right hon. Gentleman would be compelled to come forward with his policy on this subject—for the hon. Member for the City of Cork was very willing to make a surrender of the Government as easy as possible, for he would gain everything by the delay—the question would then be lifted out of the category of measures which great statesmen had frequently declared could not be entertained as a practical proposal. This was because it was believed to be deadly and destructive to the best and most vital interests of the country. Besides, the measure would, in the meantime, receive the reputation of having the, at least, qualified support of the Prime Minister. They would find that those who were their enemies in Ireland would have their hopes raised to the utmost; and the task of dealing with the question,

Mr. Plunket

and, in the end, disappointing those hopes, would be more difficult than ever. The Government would find many of their friends in Ireland fall away from them, because they could not expect men to stick for ever to a cause that seemed hopeless and helpless. He did not expect the Prime Minister to bring forward his proposals at once; but he, for one, desired to enter his protest against a policy which he feared was too likely to be to the convenience of right hon. Gentlemen opposite—namely, letting this question drift along.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): Sir, I rejoice to hear a speech from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) on the subject of Irish policy. If there is anything to regret in the existence of the late Government, it is that the right hon. Gentleman—one of the greatest ornaments of the House, and an Irishman of whom Ireland is proud—was dumb on the question of Ireland. To-night we have heard what Lord Beaconsfield called the "first wild shriek of liberty." In July and August last, when the most important determinations, which changed for ever the policy of the Irish Government, were taken by the late Administration, I desired, above all things, to know the views of the right hon. Gentleman upon those critical decisions. On that occasion we had speeches from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) and the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), then the Member for Woodstock, explanatory of that policy. There were speeches from the late Solicitor General (Sir John Gorst) which we do not forget, nor the response they received at the hands of the Ulster Members. Mr. Gibson, then one of the most distinguished Members that ever sat for Dublin University, who was subsequently Lord Chancellor of Ireland, approved of the Irish policy of the late Government. In the Recess we had a remarkable revelation from the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) at Sheffield, in which he stated that a consultation had been held many weeks before the last Liberal Government was turned out as to the course of Irish policy without the knowledge and without the responsibility of Government, and that the Gentlemen who afterwards formed the late Administration were

determined to take a different course. Those were important decisions affecting the present situation, and it is surprising that the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr Plunket) was not then heard. The right hon. Gentleman complains of delay on the part of the present Government in stating a definite policy for Ireland, and asserts that the late Administration had made up their minds as to what they were to do in reference to the National League. Is that a fact? Did the late Government announce a definite policy on that subject in the Queen's Speech? What was the meaning of those "hypothetical paragraphs?" What was the meaning—to borrow another phrase from Lord Beaconsfield—of that "transient and embarrassed phantom" which went upon so hurried a mission to Ireland? The noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill), in an address to his new constituents at Paddington, described the late Administration as a fortunate Government till the day of the Queen's Speech, when it met for the first time with a bit of bad luck. But the fortunate Government which met with a bit of bad luck on the day the Queen's Speech was settled lost "a respectable and estimable Nobleman" (the Earl of Carnarvon), who, to use the language of the noble Lord, threw up the government of Ireland. That was the Government which had so decided a policy, and which had made up its mind with regard to Ireland. But the noble Lord, in this same speech which he delivered the other night to his new constituents, stated that he had no particular reason for doubting that Lord Carnarvon had differed from the Members of the late Cabinet. Well, I should have thought that it ought not to be a difficult thing for one Cabinet to describe the sentiments of another upon a given policy of the Government. The noble Lord is not positive whether the late Lord Lieutenant for Ireland did or did not agree with the policy of the last Cabinet; but I will assume that he did agree with his Colleagues. Then why did this estimable Nobleman throw up the government of Ireland on the day the Queen's Speech was delivered? Then there is another official who is not altogether regarded as immaterial to the government of Ireland—I mean the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. But he has not even been mentioned, and

until within a few hours of the special mission of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) one would have supposed that the late Government never knew of such a person as a Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, responsible for the government of Ireland. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) also disagreed, but for what reason we have no information. All we know is that after the special and inspired mission of the right hon. Gentleman to Dublin in the position of Chief Secretary, the eminent and estimable Nobleman left Ireland; and the change of policy of the late Government, agreed upon, it appeared, in December, was then announced to the public. That is the history of what I venture to say will remain to the latest period of political history the most extraordinary paragraph ever occurring in a Speech from the Throne. But we are almost as badly off as the late Government, for if their Lord Lieutenant threw up the government of Ireland, ours has hardly arrived there. Now, if a Government which had been in Office seven months could not announce a policy because their Lord Lieutenant had thrown up the government of Ireland on the day of the meeting of Parliament, it would certainly be unreasonable to expect the present Government, whose Lord Lieutenant had hardly reached Dublin, to make a definite statement with regard to their Irish policy. We must have time to receive official information. I know we are inferior to the late Administration, because the noble Lord has told us that their determination not to renew the Crimes Act was taken weeks before they took Office.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: No, never. The right hon. Gentleman is mistaken.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Well, that is my recollection, and I think if the noble Lord will consult the unauthorized version of his speech I am not very incorrect.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The right hon. Gentleman leaves out a very important qualification. I said some hon. Gentlemen who formed the late Administration came together some time before the question of renewing the Crimes Act came up in Parliament, and came to the conclusion that in absence of official information that might be subsequently furnished, it did not

appear on the surface of things that there was cause for a renewal of it.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am sorry I did not read this qualification. There is not the least doubt that if a Government finds information that leads them to reverse their policy they will do so. I admit that it was a very important decision; and though, no doubt, the noble Lord wished it kept a secret, as it was from his own Party, people are indiscreet, and it must have got out. But I will not dwell on that except to say it is not usual and not very prudent for a Government with responsibility to come to such a determination. But I do not feel justified in detaining the House upon what is really a question how long we shall continue to debate the Address. We cannot be expected now to make a declaration of Irish policy. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) has said he will make his declaration at as early a period as he prudently can. The difficulties surrounding the question, the complexity of the social condition of Ireland, and the difficulties of the political situation, have been admitted. We must be cautious, and must discuss this matter in as temperate a spirit as we can. No man can admire the eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman more than I do; but the question is hardly improved, nor can it be determined, by eloquence. There are hard questions of fact to be dealt with. My right hon. Friend at the head of the Government does not intend at the present time to make any proposal, and has given his undertaking that this matter shall be brought forward at as early a period as the difficulty and complexity of the question will permit. It is premature and profitless to proceed with an imperfect discussion. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) says the Prime Minister proposes a skilful course; but I say it is a common-sense course, and that any other would have only provoked the bitterest discussion upon a question not yet ripe for discussion, and upon which we are not prepared to announce a policy.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he should not have taken part in the debate if it had not been for the remarkable speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), in reply to the temperate request of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Plunket). They

were now asked to assent to the Address in reply to the Speech, which contained paragraphs declaring that the Union was a fundamental law of the Realm, and announcing that measures for the restoration of social order in Ireland were to be introduced. Now the Prime Minister asked them to assent in substance to those paragraphs.

MR. GLADSTONE: Assent to the whole substance of the Address.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Assent to the whole substance of the Address; and what his right hon. Friend wanted to know was, whether they were to assent in all sincerity, or merely for the purpose of gaining time and lulling to sleep suspicions which the right hon. Gentleman had created in every part of the United Kingdom? To this request they had the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) just delivered, which was merely a repetition of one of his hustings harangues. It was unwise of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to call attention to past controversies; and if the Government did not tumble to pieces in the next few weeks, his impression was that the right hon. Gentleman would be very glad not to be reminded of the expressions which he had used in those speeches of his. The last occasion on which the right hon. Gentleman addressed a public audience, subsequent to the elections, he made certain remarks of a peculiar character. He declared that he was not anxious to turn out the late Government. What he wished was "that they should stew in their own Parnellite juice." And he proceeded to say—

"They would then stink in the nostrils of the country; and when they were flung, discredited and disgraced, to the country, the nation would pronounce final judgment upon them."

That was the opinion the right hon. Gentleman expressed a few weeks ago with reference to one section of that House—the followers of the hon. Member for the City of Cork. Did the Chancellor of the Exchequer still entertain the same views?—because, as had been pointed out, the National League were, at the present moment, in a great part of Ireland in possession of the field. Was it to be supposed that because, in June last, the late Government were not prepared to renew the Coercion Bill, the present Government—

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things having developed much since in Ireland—were justified in withholding all mention of their policy for the reason stated? What was that reason? That, although the Government came into Office on the Irish Question, they were in such a position that they were not even ripe for the announcement of any policy. Speaking for himself, having lived a large part of his life in Ireland, he would, under the same circumstances, arrive at the same decision which he arrived at last June as to the Coercion Act; and if the right hon. Gentleman thought they were wrong, he might have reflected upon the argument of Mr. Shaw Lefevre, who stated that it would be absurd with the one hand to largely extend the franchise, and with the other deprive the Irish people of their civil liberties. This only showed that greater value ought to be attached to their ultimate decision, because they had shown that they were most reluctant to introduce coercion. As the late Government had been practically turned out on the Irish Question, their Successors ought to be prepared with an alternative policy. What was the course which the Government proposed to take? They proposed to leave them absolutely in the dark for a month as to their Irish proposals, and then to commence an examination of the question.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: We have commenced it now.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: You have commenced it now?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Yes.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, the examination which had commenced was to apply to a noble Lord (Lord de Vesci), one of the most prominent members of the Loyal and Patriotic Union. Why, the right hon. Gentleman had adopted the very policy which he had most energetically condemned a short time back. Some years ago a proposal was made to examine into the grievances of Ireland, with the view of suggesting some remedy, and the right hon. Gentleman expressed himself with great clearness on that policy. Here was the passage which he happened to come across a few days ago—

"What is the proposition? He (Mr. Butt) says great dissatisfaction exists in Ireland, and we are to promise to inquire, with a view to a removal of this dissatisfaction. If dissatisfaction exists in a country, does he think the

vague promise of an intention to inquire into it can be held a fitting mode in which a great Assembly like the Imperial Parliament should meet that state of things? I say, on the contrary, it is a dangerous, a tricky method for Parliament to adopt to encounter national dissatisfaction, if it really exists, with the assurance that may mean anything or nothing, which may . . . attract a passing breath of popularity, but which, when the day of trial comes, may be found entirely to fail them. It is a method of proceeding which, whatever Party may be in power, or whatever measures may be adopted, I trust this House will never condescend to adopt."

That was the course which the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues were now adopting. [MR. GLADSTONE: No.] Well, if any Minister would get up and state that they had made up their minds on the two important questions mentioned in the Address, they would remove many doubts entertained in different parts of the country. During the recent elections the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) was very sarcastic on the course adopted by the late Government. He spoke of it as a policy of "soft words and hard cash." If they had initiated such a policy, they did it for the purpose of preserving the Union; but the Government was now borrowing the policy of soft words and hard cash, as far as could be made out, to undermine the Union. If there was any one person in the House who ought to have been prepared with a policy, and to whom they had a right to look for explanations, it was the Chancellor of the Exchequer. No man had used such violent language towards the hon. Member for Cork and his Friends as the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He recollected him denouncing the doctrines of the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon) as those of assassination and treason, and he declared that the object was to gain "nefarious ends by felonious means." That was the language the Chancellor of the Exchequer applied to an Association which he proposed to leave paramount over Ireland, and who, to-night, declined to indicate any step for putting down what he had so strongly condemned. When, last year, the danger in Ireland of the extension of the franchise was pointed out, the Prime Minister, when confronted with the possibility of 85 Members being returned to Parliament pledged to Home Rule, said he had sufficient confidence that hon. Mem-

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bers would be true to themselves, and that any combination for the Repeal of the Union would be met by the English and Scottish Members. Well, 85 such Members were returned, and the right hon. Gentleman was true to himself, because the moment he found he could not obtain Office without the co-operation of those 85 Members their co-operation was invited. The circumstances under which they now met were of a very grave character; and they desired some more definite expression of opinion from Her Majesty's Government than any that had as yet fallen from them. He admitted that they had only been a short time in Office; but during the last six years they had held Office continually, with the exception of about six months. It was often supposed that in Ireland those who were opposed to the views of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and the separation of the two Kingdoms incurred great obloquy; but the person whom the Irish hated above all was a treacherous friend; and that was the part which Her Majesty's Government had been playing. Either the Government intended to maintain the Union, or they did not intend to do so. The longer they delayed in announcing their decision the greater would be the difficulties which they had to encounter. On that side of the House, therefore, they asked for further information to be given, not in any Party spirit, but in all sincerity, because they considered themselves bound in duty to do so.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN said, he did not propose to take up much time in replying to the speech just delivered by the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton), and which, he could not help thinking, must have been prepared in consideration of some different course than that which had actually been taken by the Government. The noble Lord had spoken as though the Government were asking the House to pledge itself definitely to views to which the noble Lord and his Friends were opposed in the matter of Ireland. On the contrary, the Government had accepted in the usual form the Address in answer to the Queen's Speech, and was neither giving any pledge nor asking any pledge from any Member of the House. The noble Lord, however, wished to obtain a pledge; for he asked,

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both at the beginning and end of his speech, whether the terms of the Address were to be accepted in all sincerity as committing the House and the Government to the propositions contained in the Address? The noble Lord had had a larger Parliamentary experience than he had had himself; and the noble Lord ought to know, by this time, that the Answer to Her Majesty's Speech was always so worded as to commit the House to nothing except that they thanked Her Majesty for giving them the information contained in the Speech. In fact, throughout the whole Address they re-echoed each paragraph of the Queen's Speech; and, of course, as a matter of Constitutional law, it was perfectly understood that Her Majesty, in giving them that information, was acting on the advice of the Government which was in power at the time when the Speech was delivered. Under these circumstances, he wished it to be distinctly understood that, in accepting the Address to the Throne practically as it had been prepared by the late Government, they were not asking the House to pledge itself to anything; and they did not consider that the late Government, in putting the Address before them, asked them to commit themselves to anything either. The noble Lord now said that the time had come when the Government must express themselves definitely on the question of Ireland. The noble Lord had even gone so far as to tell them that they had turned out the late Government on the question of Ireland. Clearly the late Government had fallen because it was utterly impossible that it could retain Office any longer. He thought it would have been a little more decent if they had left Office a little earlier. As a matter of fact, it had been absolutely beyond the power of Gentlemen on his own side of the House to keep it in Office any longer. It was a physical impossibility to keep an empty sack upright; and the late Government had been in that position when they had met Parliament without having any policy at all, either upon the question of Ireland or upon any other question. Had the late Government had any policy on any subject? Had they any policy, for instance, with regard to the question of the condition of the agricultural labourer upon which

they had fallen? Well, perhaps they had had two policies; but the two had been utterly different, and inconsistent with each other. There had been the policy of the right hon. Gentleman who had been the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Chaplin), which had been announced in the beginning of the evening of the debate; and then they had had the totally different policy of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) who had preceded him in the Office which he now held. Now, hon. Gentlemen opposite were very much interested in the condition of the unemployed, and wished to call the attention of the House to it by the Queen's Speech. But had hon. Gentlemen opposite any policy with regard to relieving the distress of the unemployed? As to Ireland, they had had no other policy than one of hypothesis. It seemed that even in a Tory Cabinet they had not altogether been a happy family; and it was only under the pressure of actual Parliamentary conflict that they had made up their minds to say something definite. The noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton) had informed the House that he had warned them as to the danger of extending the franchise in Ireland. But what was the action taken by one of his noble Colleagues? In a speech which the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) had just delivered he had reminded them of the dangers incurred by conferring the franchise on the Irish people, and the inevitable result of creating a majority hostile to our institutions. At the time when the question was being discussed a Motion had been made by an hon. Member opposite (Mr. Brodrick) to refuse the extension of the franchise to Ireland. The noble Lord had then spoken of this proposal as a re-actionary one, and as a slur and a stigma upon that country.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL:
I was below the Gangway then.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN wanted to know if the noble Lord's opinion changed in accordance with the particular seat in the House on which he sat?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL:
I do not suppose that anything said below the Gangway could possibly bind anyone sitting here.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN said, that the views expressed by the noble Lord had been those of a large section of his Party, of the right hon. Gentleman who was now the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), of Lord Iddesleigh, who was then in that House, and of the noble Lord the Member for East Leicestershire (Lord John Manners), and some six or seven prominent Members of the then Opposition, who had walked out of the House rather than vote in favour of the Amendment for refusing the extension of the franchise to Ireland.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, that he had not been near the House at the time.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN said, the right hon. Member for West Bristol had been worse than he had supposed. It appeared that on the occasion of this important Amendment, which, according to the noble Lord, was calculated to prevent great disaster, and the return to that House of a vast majority of Irish Members, whose action would betray the interest of the country, the right hon. Gentleman was not anywhere near the House. Then the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) told them that they had turned out the late Government upon the Irish Question. That was not the fact; but, even if it were so, surely the noble Lord did not mean that they were to have an alternative policy the first day they entered Office. That view was a different one from that which had been consistently held by the Tory Party for almost a generation. Sir Robert Peel had refused to prescribe until he was called in. It was perfectly monstrous to ask them, in a matter of this difficulty and complication, to come to a conclusion on all the details of their policy in a few days, when, by their own confession, the Members of the late Government took six months to consider their policy, and had not come to a conclusion even then. In a speech, again, which the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) had made at Sheffield he had referred to the sources of accurate information which the late Government had possessed with regard to Ireland, and had told them that weeks before the late Government had fallen they had come to a conclusion. They had been told at first that there had been nothing which

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would warrant the Government in applying for exceptional powers in Ireland. When had the late Government received the information upon which they had determined to apply for these exceptional powers? All that the Queen's Speech had done was to express the opinion that it might be necessary, under certain circumstances, to make some further proposal on the subject. On the Thursday when Parliament met for the discussion of the Queen's Speech the Government had no policy, although they had had six months in which to get special information. The late Government had had six months' official information, and the reports and the advice of the Nobleman whom they appointed as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and whose services were deemed so valuable that he was appointed to this position—though it was known that he could only hold it for six months; and yet they could not make up their minds that it was necessary to introduce coercive measures. Then came the little incident to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred. They sent a distinguished Member of their Administration (Mr. W. H. Smith) as Chief Secretary to Ireland; and within 24 hours information sent by him by telegraph was deemed sufficient to outweigh all the previous information supplied to them by Lord Carnarvon and by the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. In 24 hours there was a grand new policy, and a declaration that the Government had determined upon coercive measures. The motives which led them to adopt this policy, when they knew that they were going to fall on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), were very obvious. The present position was a very simple one. The Irish Question was a matter of the utmost gravity, complexity, difficulty, and importance. As it presented itself to the present Government, it was a question of much greater gravity and importance than that which the late Government appeared to have considered it. They, it appeared, had only this simple point to decide—whether or not they had sufficient information of outrages in Ireland to justify them in introducing a coercive or restrictive measure. But the present Government had always said that nothing could induce them to limit their consideration to such a point as that without considering the condi-

tion of the Land Question and the demands now for the first time formally promulgated by Representatives who were clearly entitled to speak for five-sixths of the people of Ireland. These were all questions which Her Majesty's Government insisted on considering together; and they had so far extended the limits of the inquiry, and made it the more desirable that time should be given for arriving at a conclusion. If hon. Members asked them to-night to declare their policy, they would frankly tell them that they had not one to give. They pledged themselves to pursue an inquiry which should enable them to state their policy. That inquiry commenced on Monday. It was one not yet concluded. It was their desire and intention to conclude it at as early a date as possible; and as soon as they could his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister had stated that the result of Her Majesty's Government's deliberations would be communicated to the House.

Amendment moved.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I do not wish to prolong this debate to the inconvenience of the House; but the circumstances under which the House has met this evening are of a very peculiar and grave character, and there are certain matters on which I think Members of this House have a right to ask for the clearest and fullest information. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, for technical reasons of procedure, has not been able hitherto to take part in the debate which has been going on; but the Amendment which is now before the House will afford him an opportunity of answering any inquiries, if he thinks it wise or prudent to do so. The Government have told us that it is not, at the present moment, in their power to lay their statement of Irish policy before Parliament. They have not told us at what time they will be able to make that statement. The Prime Minister seemed to think that on or about the 22nd of March this might be done; but, fortunately for the public, a day has been definitely mentioned in the House of Lords by the Representative of the Government there on which the Irish policy of the Government is to be disclosed. The date is a most interesting one, though of a most ominous character; for it has been stated in the House of

Mr. Joseph Chamberlain

Lords to-night that the day on which the Irish policy of the Government will be disclosed to Parliament will be the celebrated 1st of April. I cannot think it accidental. I imagine it must be a coincidence that the day has been chosen for the commencement of the Government's Irish policy. But there are indications of a policy on which I think we have a right to question the Government. We have a right to question the Government on the indications of their policy, which are afforded by the appointment as Chief Secretary of the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). We have a right, before we part with this Address, to ask that right hon. Gentleman, who has avoided taking part in this debate as yet, whether he still adheres to the sentiments about Ireland which he expressed a short time ago—in the month of January—at Chelmsford—sentiments which were distinctly made, which were evidently most carefully prepared, and in giving which to the public he expressly said that he spoke "advisedly." We have a right to know—for he does not require time to make up his mind on this subject—whether he adheres to the policy which he then considered necessary? I know that the right hon. Gentleman is a man of honour, and I am perfectly certain he is not only acquainted with, but is possessed by, all the honourable traditions of English statesmanship. Would the right hon. Gentleman have stated as definitely as he did that nothing short of the "absolute and total removal" of the Irish Members from Westminster was necessary in January, and take Office in a Liberal Government in the month of February prepared to abandon that policy? I know he would not; therefore, there is an indication in the appointment of the right hon. Gentleman of the policy which the Government are going to pursue. If this is so, why could not the Government state it now? The Prime Minister has seen many Governments come into Office; and I would ask him, was there ever a Government which came into Office which did not, at the earliest moment, afford to Parliament a general outline of what their policy was to be? The late Government, at all events, did not err on that point. They occupied precisely the

same time as the present Government had occupied in getting themselves together; and on the day they met Parliament my right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) stated clearly to the House what the general outline of their policy would be, not only with regard to Ireland, but with regard to the general affairs of the country. But there is another thing on which we are bound to ask for information. I have alluded to the indication which is afforded us of the policy of the Government with regard to Ireland by the appointment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle; but there is another indication which, if possible, is stronger still. When I look on the distinguished array of right hon. Gentlemen opposite I miss a well-known face. No light, or ordinary, or trivial reason can be alleged why I do not see opposite to me the noble Marquess the Member for Rosendale (the Marquess of Hartington). Viewing the great position which the noble Marquess occupied before the country and in the Liberal Party, viewing the fact that almost since the year 1859 or 1860, in every Liberal Government which has existed since then, the noble Marquess has taken a part—and in the last two Liberal Governments a most prominent part—I say we are entitled to ask, solely on public grounds, why the noble Marquess has refused to co-operate with the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government? Bearing in mind the unequivocal and straightforward manner in which the noble Marquess has, on more than one occasion, given to the public his views about the government of Ireland, the absolutely unequivocal manner in which he has pronounced for the maintenance of the Legislative Union between the two countries, we are entitled, in the absence of any explanation, to assume, even more positively than we assumed from the appointment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, that the policy of the Government towards Ireland is not the maintenance, but the destruction and the repeal of the Legislative Union; and I will appeal to the noble Marquess to say whether we are, or are not, justified in arriving at that conclusion? These are points on which the public require information. The whole country wants to know from one of the men at the head of public affairs—one whom

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the Prime Minister specially referred to in his first Mid Lothian address—why he no longer is a Member of the Government of the Queen, and why he no longer is willing to co-operate with the present Prime Minister? I think that we are pretty correct in surmising that the same reason that brought about the inclusion of the right hon. Member for Newcastle led to the exclusion of the noble Marquess. If Repeal of the Union is your policy—and obviously it is, because I do not believe that on any other question the noble Marquess would have parted from you—if that is your policy, why cannot you say so in general terms? You could say merely that the Government have come into Office to carry out the policy of independence which five-sixths of the Irish people demand. That must be your policy, judging from the inclusion in the Government of the right hon. Member for Newcastle, and from the exclusion of the noble Marquess, and why not avow it? There is a reason for this delay, and beating about the bush, and these references to old speeches—a most incautious proceeding of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. [*Laughter.*] I speak with the utmost seriousness. I believe that the Repeal of the Union would be a fatal policy for Ireland; but if there is a policy which can by any means be more fatal it is the unnecessary prolongation, for the lowest Party purposes, of the dreadful state of uncertainty which exists in that country. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary came to the conclusion that he would destroy the late Government because their Irish policy was inadequate. That was the statement of the Irish Chief Secretary, who brushed away all the nonsense about three acres and a cow.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I beg the noble Lord's pardon. I made no statement of that kind.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I have a very clear recollection of reading the right hon. Gentleman's speech with the greatest interest and attention; and I noticed with the utmost delight—not only for controversial purposes, but generally for the credit of the new Government—that he stated in so many words that what the late Government fell on was the question of Ireland, and what the present Government had come

in upon was the question of Ireland. If I am wrong in that I apologize to the right hon. Gentleman; but if he will do me the favour of referring to, I think, his first speech at Newcastle, he will find I have not misrepresented him. That being so, the Government are hardly entitled to the large amount of time which they claim to decide on their Irish policy; and, certainly, if it is to be put in the form of a Bill they may take more time. But respecting the general outline of their policy with regard to social order, the question of legislative independence, and the Land Question, they are bound to take the public into their confidence at a far earlier date than the 1st of April. But if they will not accede to this suggestion, the right hon. Gentleman will not think it unreasonable in us to call upon him, missing from his side one of his oldest, his most tried, his truest, and one of his most experienced Colleagues, to say why that noble Marquess no longer forms part of his Government. To that information the public is entitled. I have risen to extract it; and I do not think that any Member will assert that it is an unreasonable or unjustifiable proposal.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I shall not attempt to interest or amuse the House by following the speech of the noble Lord in the spirit in which it was delivered. If I understand him rightly, he, on the first day of our meeting Parliament three days after our first Cabinet Council, thinks it necessary to accuse us of unnecessarily prolonging the state of uncertainty in Ireland for the lowest Party purposes. This is what he is throwing off in the character of a Member of the Opposition. That is the accusation for which he thinks he has already got sufficient ground. All I can say, Sir, is this—that if that be the spirit in which, either by the Government or by an Opposition, either by a Liberal Party or by a Conservative Party, or by an Irish or Nationalist Party, the great questions connected with the condition and future of Ireland are to be treated in this House, it is idle for any man, or for any set of men, to address themselves to the settlement of the difficulty. Hope is extinguished, and nothing but despair is found in its place. I shall not, therefore, reply to the noble Lord in the spirit of that speech. I have laid down a resolution

Lord Randolph Churchill

for myself, and I will adhere to it as long as human nature will permit me, that in addressing myself to this, the most difficult and arduous of all the questions which in 53 years of political life I have had to deal with, I will renounce from the very first every motive, every topic, every phrase of Party accusation, and will studiously avoid to the best of my humble ability, and with allowance, perhaps, for human infirmities—I will studiously avoid every word which can justly excite a sentiment of animosity, either on the part of Gentlemen opposite or on the part of those Irish Members now constituting a large majority with whom upon so many occasions in the former Parliament we were so frequently in conflict. That, Sir, is my apology—an apology which will, I hope, last and hold good for some time—for not noticing the accusations of the noble Lord. Nor will I comment on the circumstance of his striving at the very first moment of his appearing on the Opposition Bench to envenom this difficult and arduous question by the introduction—[*Cries of "No!"*] Well, I would take away even that word if you like. To envenom a question, I think, is not an unnatural comment upon the speech of one who, before he has facts, either good or bad, to speak upon, thinks it necessary to accuse us of prolonging the state of uncertainty in Ireland for the lowest Party purposes. I will say nothing to perplex or embarrass the question; and, therefore, instead of saying to "envenom" it, with regard to the meaning of the noble Lord, I will answer it in such respects as it has reference to me with respect to my noble Friend the Member for Rosendale (the Marquess of Hartington). I heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol Sir Michael Hicks-Beach a compliment to my noble Friend in the debate on the Address, on account of the clearness with which he, at any rate, had delivered his sentiments on the subject of the Repeal of the Union, and had exempted himself, therefore, from all necessity of further appeal on that subject. Then I apprehend, if I am competent to speak, there can be no doubt or question whatever about the views of my noble Friend in that matter. In respect to the conduct of my noble Friend, the noble Lord appeals to me to

explain the motives for that conduct. It is, however, not my duty. It would be a gross intrusion on the rights of my noble Friend were I to undertake anything of that kind. Whether there be occasion for the question or not, it is a proceeding entirely unprecedented in this House to call upon any one Member of this House to explain the motives of another. With respect to the legitimate portions of the appeal, and questions of the noble Lord, I will answer. The noble Lord says that the appointment of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) is an indication of the spirit and tendency of the Government. Well, Sir, he has asked my right hon. Friend whether he adheres to the expressions of a particular speech delivered by him. I cannot presume to doubt, speaking for a Colleague, that to the general purport and spirit of his expressions he adheres. For my own part, I am not in possession, nor would it be possible for me to be in possession, of all that has been said, or even all the important declarations that have been made by my Colleagues; but this I will say—that, so far as I know, the opinions of my right hon. Friend—and I have had some opportunities of learning them—I anticipate the greatest advantage from the accession of my right hon. Friend to the Government; because I believe that in a perfectly open and liberal spirit he will apply himself to the consideration of this difficult subject, and will afford to us the most valuable assistance in our efforts at its solution. Now, the noble Lord appears to think that I am bound, on this occasion, to discuss the Repeal of the Union. Sir, I do not mean to discuss upon this occasion any Irish question whatever. If I enter upon a discussion of the Repeal of the Union on this occasion, how am I to resist, as I have intimated my intention to resist, the appeal which the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. W. O'Brien) is, of course, from his position, perfectly entitled to take, that upon this occasion we shall discuss the subject of evictions in Ireland? That is a question of the deepest interest, and of greatest importance; and there are many other questions of the deepest interest, and of the greatest importance, which are open and before the public mind with respect to Ireland. For example, the question of

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social order in Ireland may admit, and does apparently admit, of doubt as to the manner in which it should be dealt with. But were I to discuss one point connected with this social order, or with the integrity of the Empire in Ireland, on this occasion, I could not refuse to go over the whole circuit of those great and important subjects with the certainty of occupying much of the time of the House, and with no advantage whatever. I pass on from this portion of the speech of the noble Lord with one observation. The noble Lord has said that whatever indication may be drawn from the appointment of my right hon. Friend (Mr. J. Morley), he must observe that the intentions of the Government are to be inferred from its general composition and its general temper. It would have been a singular thing if we had inferred the intentions of the late Government from the speeches made by the noble Lord while he still sat below the Gangway, and when nobody could be bound at all by the utterances he gave forth. Sir, the noble Lord has appealed to me on another point, which is this—he says that he appealed to me to know that upon every occasion Governments have begun with a general declaration of policy. I answer the noble Lord frankly in the negative. It has not been the rule for Governments to begin with a general declaration of their policy. Upon rare and exceptional occasions declarations of that kind may, perhaps, have been made; but I would almost venture to say, fully admitting the truth of the noble Lord's observation, that I have witnessed the entrance of many Governments to power, and I would venture to say that, excepting in, perhaps, two or three instances out of something like from 15 to 20, no such thing has been done. The earliest case of an important Government which I was connected with was the Government of Sir Robert Peel. In the case of Sir Robert Peel's Government, which entered Office in September, 1841, the policy of the Government was inferred, if I remember right, from what had taken place out-of-doors; and although Sir Robert Peel came into Office known to be a friend of the principle of the Corn Law, but intending to amend the Corn Law, five months were allowed to elapse before Sir Robert Peel declared his intentions with regard to that

law. Now, with respect to the case the noble Lord quoted, he says that when the late Government entered Office the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) declared the policy of the Government. What policy did the right hon. Baronet declare? Let no one suppose for a moment that I am finding fault with him. I received the statement of his policy in a spirit with which I think I may say the spirit shown to-night does not correspond. The opening statement of the right hon. Gentleman, which was perfectly judicial, was a statement that there was much in the conduct of Earl Spencer that he disapproved, and the statement that the late Government had determined to try the experiment of governing Ireland without the aid of the old method of repressive criminal legislation. They were not prepared, in the state of circumstances they had before them, to apply to Ireland the old method—which they considered an antiquated and very doubtful method—of repressive criminal legislation. That was the length to which the right hon. Gentleman went; and I am bound to say that I think it was as far as he could be fairly expected to go. Well, Sir, that length we have gone already; that declaration we have already made. It is made in our addresses to our constituents. It has been made by me in this House. I have told you that according to the knowledge we are able to acquire of the condition of Ireland, although that condition is grave, and requires our closest consideration with a view to remedy, yet that we are not prepared, and do not think we should be justified in the state of the facts as they have come before us, in asking you at this moment to choose for your form of remedy the mode of repressive criminal legislation. We have gone, Sir, a great deal further on our accession to Office than the right hon. Gentleman went; because while he in a very great degree, I think, confined himself at that time, with the exception, perhaps, of a very limited reference to a renewal of the Land Purchase Act—while he confined himself in the main to the great negative announcement, which was, in point of fact, a most important announcement, of policy, and was destined, as he ought to have seen, to exercise infallibly, whoever might be in Office, a most important influence on the future policy of

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this country with regard to Ireland—while he confined himself to that negative statement, we have not confined ourselves to such a negative statement; but we said that it will be our duty—that it is our immediate duty—that it is a duty the execution of which has already been begun—to consider carefully and in detail what are the measures of a positive and substantive character which we ought to adopt by way of applying a remedy to what, I think, on all hands, amidst all our differences of view, is admitted to be the greatest evils. Therefore, what I say is this—the noble Lord found it necessary to have six months of experience and inquiry and consideration about the state of Ireland; and at the end of that time he had not been able to make up his mind whether coercive legislation was or was not necessary. He admitted an approximation towards making up his mind. He thought it was likely to be necessary; and he introduced that somewhat novel form in the Queen's Speech of acquainting the House with the workings of the mind of the Cabinet on this difficult and doubtful subject, affecting the condition of that country. That, Sir, is the answer I have to make to the noble Lord, and indeed substantially it amounts to this. The noble Lord says that to ask till the 1st of April as a date is requiring a time unreasonably long. Well, Sir, I would say it appears to me that that is rather a questionable declaration on the part of the noble Lord. The noble Lord took six months to consider whether he should or should not apply coercive legislation in Ireland, and could not make up his mind.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Where does the right hon. Gentleman gather that?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: From the Queen's Speech, which you advised.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The Queen's Speech was adopted before Parliament met.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Exactly so; I am perfectly aware of that circumstance. Queen's Speeches are not made after Parliament meets. He made up his mind, I admit, in three days afterwards; and it is a subject as to which it will be necessary to question the Members of the late Government what were the events which passed in those three days which made them adopt the resolution

they announced; what was the course of events with regard to outrage, evictions, and order, and the various points bearing on the subject; what were the events that occurred between the 21st of January, when the Speech was made in this House, and the 25th of January, when we were told that, in 24 hours, the policy had been declared—what were the facts belonging to these four days which caused the mind of the Government to be changed? We are very anxious that the House and the public should be in possession of the interesting information; and that information will be most interesting, as bearing upon the actual political situation, as well as upon the views and proceedings of the late Government. Sir, we have frankly given a pledge to the House that no time will voluntarily be lost by us; that we have before us a great and complex question, the most complex I have ever had to deal with. If I am told that the uncertainty in Ireland has been unnecessarily prolonged—I must say I am so desirous to avoid crimination that I do not like to make the reply that suggests itself to me—I want to know why it is that the public mind has been in a state of uncertainty as to the Government of this country and the mode of treatment of Ireland since the result of the General Election became known? Why was it that we heard so much, and hear so much to-night, about the overthrow of the late Government, as if, forsooth! it was a remarkable circumstance that this House should not be contented with the continued maintenance of a Government that had 250 supporters out of a House of 670 Members. It would be a marvellous thing, if a debate be raised, whether on the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) or on the prospects of the Irish Question, that this astonishing event should take place—that a Government with 250 supporters should continue to sit upon a Bench which is uniformly occupied by those who have the confidence of a majority of the House of Commons, or, at the very least, by those who have some reason to suppose that the House is not prepared to do otherwise than support them. Well, Sir, when the late Government—and I do not make any accusation about it—determined that with their 250 supporters they intended to

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meet Parliament, I did not, in my own mind, condemn them; but I said this—they are perfectly aware of the principle that a small minority of this House, those connected with a small minority of this House, are not the persons who are intended to carry on the government of the country; and the conclusion I came to was this—that they were going to continue their association with the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and to endeavour to examine whether they could not meet this great Irish question with some worthier, safer, and more permanent method than the old, often and unsatisfactorily-tried method of special criminal legislation. Sir, I should have rejoiced if that had been the case. [*Opposition laughter.*] I hear the jeers, if I may so call them. They proceed from Gentlemen who are shocked at the very barest idea of friendly relations with the hon. Member for the City of Cork, and almost every man of that Party. How many Members of the Party opposite are there who gave utterance to such an idea in July last, in August last, in September last, in October last, or in November last, or until the elections were decided, and that influence upon the English boroughs had been secured, which has so greatly contributed to swell the ranks of the minority opposite into a respectable minority? I was drawn into this remark from the interruption which came from that quarter of the House, and which actually suggested to me an idea I had no intention of expressing. I should have rejoiced if Her Majesty's Government had arrived at the bold resolution to face this question as a substantive question, and to act on the proposition which the Earl of Carnarvon gave utterance to in the House of Lords at the end of the last Session, that you could not be always resorting to coercion; that you must look for something better than coercion as a means of governing Ireland; for I am quite sure of this—that if the right hon. Gentleman opposite and the Marquess of Salisbury had been able to brace themselves to such a resolution, it is possible that they might have given dissatisfaction to a portion of their own Friends; it is possible that they might have made one of those Party sacrifices which seem now to have gone out of fashion, but which, in other days—the

days of Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington—were deemed the highest honour—namely, when they saw the opportunity to serve the country, to cast to the winds every consideration of the effect upon the Party, and to secure to the nation the benefits which they alone—Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington—were capable of securing. I believe that is the case we have before us; but I do not presume—I feel the overwhelming difficulties of this question to any Government that takes up the matter—the late Government came, I think, to a wrong decision; but such are the difficulties of the case that I do not presume to blame them. I had thought, and I still think, that there were some among them who would have been able to face the danger and the difficulty. I have a strong impression that men among them, and eminent men among them, were prepared to take that course. They could not command union among themselves, and before their difficulties they have fallen. Of their action I say I do not complain. I make no charge against them. In doubtful cases and in entangled cases of this kind it is very easy to make accusations, and the more violent the accusations are the more easy it is to make them and the louder are the cheers they evoke. I wish to renounce all feelings of that kind. We have before us a severe labour. We will not lose any time; but continue to address ourselves, as we have addressed ourselves, to it. We will not rest upon the example of the noble Lord, and say we must have six months' experience, inquiry, and consideration before we do what he did not do—arrive at a conclusion. I have been bold enough to indicate to-night—so earnestly was I desirous to meet the feeling which must prevail in this difficult state of circumstances—that within no long time after the necessary transactions connected with the Estimates are concluded, I hope to be able to open to some degree the views of the Government with regard to those positive and substantive measures of a remedial character for Ireland which we may separate by calling them the question of social order, the question of the land, and the question of Irish government; but which I believe are essentially associated together by bands so strong that it is not in the power of man to disjoin them. We can do no more.

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We cannot speak of the future. We stand in an attitude in which it would have been absurd, and in which we would have been guilty, if we had pretended to do more than I have indicated. I hope the House will accept our declaration in the good faith in which it has been given, and not approve the noble Lord's attack, and accuse us of prolonging uncertainty about Ireland for Party purposes. All these charges of the noble Lord we pass by with considerable equanimity; we shall strive to do our own duty to the best of our ability, and the best of men can do no more.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I had some expectation that the noble Marquess the Member for Rosendale (the Marquess of Hartington) might have answered the appeal of my noble Friend near me (Lord Randolph Churchill), which certainly was addressed more directly to him than to the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone). But the right hon. Gentleman made some remarks, in the course of his speech, which I think it is necessary, very shortly, to notice. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to question the conduct of the late Government in resolving to meet Parliament after the circumstances of the General Election. I can only say that that was a decision which we arrived at, to no small extent, upon the statements of the right hon. Gentleman himself as to his own position. We had the best of reasons for believing that he, at any rate, did not consider that he commanded a majority of the House of Commons. Whatever be our position in regard to this Assembly, in our belief no Party has a majority in this House. There are three Parties in this House, and time alone can show which has the confidence of the House of Commons. But no sooner did we meet the House, and announce a policy with reference to Ireland which included, but was by no means solely composed of, repressive legislation, than there was that combination between the right hon. Gentleman opposite and his followers and those hon. Members who sit in that (the Irish) quarter of the House, by which he succeeded in obtaining that majority on which, I suppose, his Government is now based. I repudiate the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman that our pro-

posals with reference to Ireland were solely composed of coercive legislation. In our belief, and in the belief, I suspect, of many others besides ourselves—I suspect in the belief of the noble Marquess the Member for Rosendale—the primary and most urgent necessity in the present condition of Ireland is to secure the supremacy of the Government of the Queen throughout the whole of that country, and vindicate the authority of the law. But when we undertook to submit to Parliament measures for that purpose, at the same time we undertook, if we were successful in passing those measures, that they should be immediately followed by further legislation on the great question of the land, with which, I may venture to say, my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) has, in past years, shown himself singularly qualified to deal. But what is the present condition of affairs? I do not complain, for a moment, that the right hon. Gentleman has not disclosed to us his Irish policy to-night; but what I do think, in common with my right hon. Friend the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Plunket), is that this House, and especially Members connected with Ireland, have great cause to complain that, after all that has been said by right hon. Gentlemen who sit on the Front Bench opposite with reference to this question, the declaration of that policy is to be postponed for more than a month to come. Now, we were told by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that this matter has been his daily and his nightly study. We were told by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain), one of his principal Colleagues, that the result of the General Election in Ireland had made it imperative that attention should be immediately called to the condition of the country. Therefore, this question has not for the first time occupied the attention of the Members of the present Government on their accepting Office. It has occupied their attention, by their own admission, for many weeks past; and the only thing, in fact, of which they could stand in need when they assumed Office was that official information which, of course, is only at the disposal of the Government of the day. Well, now, what was our conclusion on the official information

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which reached us, and which we very acrefully considered, with reference to the state of Ireland? The right hon. Gentleman has twitted us with having been six months in making up our minds as to the policy—

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I found no fault whatever with the Government for taking six months to make up their minds; I found fault with the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) for demanding from us a declaration on the first day of our meeting Parliament as a Government.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Well, but, Sir, it is not accurate—it is not the fact—to say that we took six months to make up our minds in the matter at all. We arrived at a certain conclusion, which we announced to the House after our acceptance of Office, with reference to the non-renewal of repressive legislation for Ireland. We stated, at the time, that we came to that decision in the belief that the powers of the ordinary law would be sufficient to enable the Government to deal satisfactorily with the state of Ireland. That, of course, was a decision that required time to test. It was tested throughout the autumn—I announced myself, during the autumn, that if we found that the powers of the ordinary law were insufficient for the purpose we should have to apply to Parliament for further powers. At the time that Parliament met in January we were in this most difficult position—that my noble Friend the late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (the Earl of Carnarvon) had resigned that post, and the Minister primarily responsible for the government of Ireland was necessarily new to his work. What did we do? We did not alter our policy between the delivery of the Gracious Speech from the Throne and the day upon which I announced the intention of my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) to bring in a Bill for dealing with the National League and other societies of the kind. But we stated plainly in the Speech from the Throne that—

“Although there has been during the last year no marked increase of serious crime, there is in many places a concerted resistance to the enforcement of legal obligations, and I regret that the practice of organised intimidation continues to exist.”

The Speech went on to say—

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach

“No effort will be spared on the part of my Government to protect my Irish subjects in the exercise of their legal rights and the enjoyment of individual liberty. If, as my information leads me to apprehend, the existing provisions of the law should prove to be inadequate to cope with these growing evils, I look with confidence to your willingness to invest my Government with all necessary powers.”

That was the statement in the Speech. What did it point to? It pointed to this—that we had not, at that time, actually decided what were the precise means by which the state of things which we described would be most successfully met. That was a matter which necessarily had to occupy very grave attention; and as soon as it was possible I stated to the House the decision at which we had arrived upon the recommendation of my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster. I will venture again to assert that there was absolutely no change between the declaration in the Gracious Speech from the Throne and the announcement subsequently made to the House of Commons. That announcement was based upon the very serious fact which appears somehow to have been forgotten or overlooked by the Government in the course of this discussion. We stated our opinion as to the serious condition of Ireland in regard to social order, and the necessity which had grown into existence of adopting exceptional measures for dealing with it. Were we right, or were we wrong, as to the facts of the present social condition of Ireland? Were we right, or were we wrong, as to the power exercised by the National League in many parts of the country, as to the supersession by the National League of the ordinary government of the country, and, indeed, of law itself in many cases? If we were wrong, if the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. John Morley) has different information from that which reached us, if he can show that the state of Ireland is not what it was described to the House of Commons by my right hon. and learned Friend the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes), then let him say so to the House. Let him put that information before the country, and no one will receive it with greater pleasure than the Members of the late Government. But if we were right in our estimate of the condition of

Ireland, then all I can say is this—that it appears to me nothing can be graver than the responsibility which the present Government are incurring by postponing for more than a month any attempt to deal with a state of affairs which would be a disgrace if suffered to continue in any civilized country. The right hon. Gentleman, I remember, in one of his speeches, twitted us with what he supposed, at the time, to be our policy of neither governing Ireland ourselves, nor allowing Ireland to govern itself. Well, Sir, it seems to me that, at any rate for some little time to come, he will be following a course precisely similar to that which he so wrongly attributed to us. He is Chief Secretary for Ireland; but I will venture to say this—that in the present state of affairs in many parts of Ireland he is Chief Secretary by the grace of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and is compelled to act according to the bidding of the National League. Well, if that be not so, let him show it to the country. Let him come forward and prove that my right hon. Friend the Member for Dublin University, who spoke to-night, was wrong in his description of the condition of the country, and then the Government will have said something in justification of their present position. Before they came into Office they pressed on us, through the Prime Minister, the immediate necessity of dealing with this question. Mr. GLADSTONE: Of declaring your intentions. Well, of "declaring our intentions" as to the mode in which this question should be dealt with. He told us "that whatever should be done for Ireland should be done with all the promptitude that the nature of the case required." Whatever we thought adequate for the case, whether with respect to social order or the land, "let us know what it is; state it frankly to the House." That is now our demand to him, and that demand cannot be met by a postponement of the whole question for more than six weeks. Looking at what we believe to be the present condition of Ireland, I think nothing can be graver than the responsibility which is incurred by any Government of this country in doing what my right hon. Friend the Member for Dublin University so well described as "allowing matters to drift." I trust we may have from the right hon. Gentleman who has succeeded to the

very difficult Office of Chief Secretary for Ireland, and whose abilities, I am sure, we all admire—I trust we may have from him some statement which may, at any rate, show that he is sensible of the grave nature of the organization with which he has to deal, the objects at which it is aimed, and the evils from which the country must suffer if it is not coped with in a very different spirit from that which has animated the speech of the Prime Minister to-night.

SCOTLAND—CROFTERS AND COTTARS.

Mr. MACFARLANE, in rising to move, as an Amendment, the insertion, at the end of the 15th paragraph, of the following additional paragraph to the Queen's Speech:—

"This House humbly expresses its regret that in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech the reference to the condition of the people in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland is of a vague and indefinite character, and contains no satisfactory assurance that such Legislation as the serious nature of the case demands will be undertaken, and is of opinion that, until a Land Bill dealing in a comprehensive manner with the proved and admitted grievances of the Highland People has been passed into Law, the Civil or Military Forces of the Crown should not be employed to evict those People from their hereditary homes."

said that, no doubt in common with a great many, the House would be glad to hear the announcement of the Government that, on Monday next, it was their intention to bring in a Bill to deal with the Land Question in Scotland; but it was a question of great urgency, and he regretted that that declaration on the part of the Government did not meet the case which he proposed to provide for, if the House would accept his Amendment. His Amendment was not to force the Government to legislate for a settlement of the Land Question, for he imagined no pressure was required to be put upon any Government to compel them to see the absolute necessity of legislating upon the question with a view to its settlement. It was different a few years ago, when he first took the liberty—which was then thought to be a great liberty—of moving on this question. It was considered a great liberty because, though he was a Scotchman, he represented an Irish constituency. That reproach—if reproach it were—could no longer be applied; for he had come back now to the House without that stain upon his character; and he appeared, as a

Scotch Member, to plead as earnestly as he could on behalf of those people in whose interests he had put down his Amendment. He had no wish to take up any long time in discussing the question, because his proposition was a very simple one. He could multiply instances by the hundred where, in public meeting, resolutions were carried, praying that House to grant suspension of eviction, pending the passing of the legislative measures proposed by Government. His proposal, he thought, was not without precedent; because, although not in the exact form, it contained the substance and spirit of the ill-fated Compensation for Disturbance Bill of 1880. He moved, on this occasion, to ask this High Court of Parliament to grant an injunction to restrain one of the parties to a suit from ruining the other, pending the decision of this High Court on their case. That was literally the issue that was raised by the Amendment. It was an appeal for injunction against one who had the whole power—the power of totally ruining and banishing if he chose—from their native homes as many as happened to reside on his property. He had no doubt there were plenty of good landlords in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; but it was not the good landlords, but the bad landlords, they had to legislate for; and he was only now asking the House to compel the bad landlord, who brought shame upon the others, to do that which the good landlord would do of his own accord. By the law of the land a landlord had perfect liberty to evict a man, whether in arrears or not, upon six months' notice; and the reason he asked the House to accept his Amendment was because, before it was possible for the Government to pass their Bill through Parliament and bring it into effective use, the eviction season would have passed. Hundreds of evictions were now threatened in Scotland; people were having notices served upon them; and the right hon. and learned Gentleman (the Lord Advocate) knew perfectly well that in the month of May the eviction season would set in, and in order to prevent that he moved his Amendment. To show the urgency of what he asked for, he would cite a few instances, but without giving the names of the people or the places. The statement was that last Martinmas a number of crofters were

served with notices of removal. They had all their rents paid, and their crofts consisted of 2½ acres of the poorest soil. These crofts were in the immediate vicinity of the mansion house, and were of a character that no farmer would pay more than £12 for the whole seven. Yet the laird derived £84 a-year from these crofts. These people went on to say that it was impossible for them to pay these rents, and that hitherto they had been paid by contributions sent by their friends in the South. In their present circumstances they could not see what they were to do. They must submit to the law, and therefore prepare for eviction. None of them were in arrears, and they could only rely upon the Legislature passing some measure to stop these repressive and inhuman practices. In another case, reported by the Press on the 11th of February, it was stated that a meeting was held at Cromarty for the purpose of approaching the landlord for a reduction of rent; and the statement was that Mrs. MacKenzie declined, and said she would "put the whole estate under fallow rather than give one sixpence of reduction." These were the statements that came from a people in a state of despair. In most of the cases in which evictions were threatened it was, no doubt, on account of heavy arrears; but how did they arise? They were carried forward from one tenant to another, these being kept upon the factor's books *in terrorem* over the tenants. For instance, £6 was fixed as the rent in the books, but £5 was all that was paid; but after a time the tenant found that £1 a-year had been accumulating as arrears which provided the excuse for eviction. There had been no disturbances and no outrages of any kind throughout the whole of Scotland. This was a peaceful, legitimate, and Constitutional demand that was being made; and he appealed to that House, to the Gentlemen who voted for the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, who voted for similar measures for Ireland, for the Land Act in Ireland, and for all the legislation that had taken place in Ireland, to do something for the corresponding classes in Scotland, and not leave them in destitution because they were peaceable. Let them not teach them to break the law—that was a lesson that had been taught in Ireland; but he hoped that his coun-

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trymen would not learn it. Legitimate legislation was what they required; and he asked the House, as a first step, to stand between them and a wrong-doer, and not between them and good landlords—though even good landlords in Scotland had far too much power—more power than ought to be trusted to any individuals. They could sell their land if they chose to Mr. Winans, and the sale would entitle him to give six months' notice to the whole of the native population who were not under leases. He appealed to the House and the Government to stand between those people and what was practically sending them out of the country. These people were attached to their own country, and he wanted to see them living in their own glens and native hill-sides, and not dwelling in the slums of big cities. He wished they had more of them in that position. If they had, they would not hear so much about the distress of the unemployed. There was plenty of land for the unemployed if they could get it to cultivate. He had not brought a large number of cases before the notice of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate; but it was not because he had not the cases to bring forward in witness of what he had said. The next time this matter was brought forward he would read case after case and take up hour after hour. He moved this Amendment with regret. He should have preferred if he had been in a position to move this Amendment when the late Government were in power—or rather in Office, for they never were in power. He was quite sure there were hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who would have supported this Amendment under those circumstances, but who, under existing circumstances, would not be able to support it, and he thought he would probably have carried it. He believed the present Government seriously meant to deal with this question, and that they would deal with it in a very different fashion from the way in which they proposed to deal with it last year, for a great many things had happened since then. But if the Government were prepared to take away from the landlords the power of evicting the people for no cause, why would they not do it by accepting this Amendment two or three months in advance of their Bill? He should be obliged to ascertain by a

division the state of opinion in the House upon the question, so that they would know who were their friends and who were the foes. In conclusion, he begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

Dr. CLARK, in seconding the Amendment, said, he wanted to bring before the House some facts in regard to the position of the crofters at the present time. Two or three years ago the hon. Member for Argyllshire (Mr. Macfarlane) managed to get the time of notice for eviction changed from six weeks to six months; and they knew that already a large number of crofters had received that six months' notice. Under the Scotch Act those who were in arrear might be turned out if they were 40 days in arrear before some date in May; and what he feared was that a large number of crofters who were utterly unable to pay rent in consequence of the new condition of things would be turned out. The crofter did not so much make his living out of the land as on the sea; and the crofter, in his capacity as farmer and in his capacity as fisherman, had lately met with an unparalleled condition of depression. As a farmer his stock had fallen about 50 per cent in the last two years. In his own county in six months the value of stock had fallen nearly 40 per cent, so that if the crofter sold his stock to try to pay his rent, even then he could not pay it. Of course, the large farmer felt the depression nearly as much as the crofters, and they also required protection. Only they had got capital, and the landlord might think twice before he killed the goose that laid the golden eggs—before making the capitalist farmers bankrupt. The crofter had been paying a great deal for his land because it was near the sea; but the depression in the land had not been so great as was the depression in the fishing industry. The poor people were told to go to sea and fish; and now, just as they were driven away from off the best tracts of the land, the steam trawlers came and drove them away from off the sea by destroying their gear and nets. The condition of things in the fishing industry was very deplorable. During the summer a large section of crofters from Ross-shire and Inverness-shire came round to Wick for the summer fishing, and expected to

make what would pay their rents and keep their families. But, unfortunately for the crofters, last year nearly all the fish-curers went bankrupt, so that men who a few years ago were worth £20,000 were now only worth a few pence. The fish sent to Germany and other foreign countries last year did not bring to many of the curers a price sufficient to pay the cost of the barrels in which they were packed, while there was great competition from other sources, and the price of the Norway fish had been reduced, altogether making a most unfortunate state of things. The fishermen had been content to get 5s. or 10s. in the pound from the curers, and next year it was difficult to conceive what their condition would be. One reason for the deplorable condition of things was because of the action of the Railway Companies, who had so much abused the power given them by Parliament to make a differential rate of carriage, which was much against the home producer, and in favour of foreigners. They charged no less than £4 per ton for fish, while they bought salt at 22s. and potatoes at 30s. But the crofter, though he was now, from circumstances which he was not able to control, unable to pay his rent, did not forget his right to the land. The homes of the crofters were generally those which they had themselves built, and they were beginning to feel desperate. He thought the new Scotch Secretary should think twice before he sent troops to the Highlands to teach the Highland people what had been often taught the Irish people—namely, that law often meant organized injustice. They wanted to get from the Government and the House an assurance that the men who were unable to pay rent from causes beyond their control should not be sent adrift, but should be secured until some remedial legislation was enacted. He had much pleasure in seconding the Amendment of the hon. Member for Argyllshire.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the 15th paragraph, to insert the words,—“This House humbly expresses its regret that in Her Majesty’s Gracious Speech the reference to the condition of the people in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland is of a vague and indefinite character, and contains no satisfactory assurance that such Legislation as the serious nature of the case demands will be undertaken, and is of opinion that, until a Land Bill dealing in a comprehensive manner with

the proved and admitted grievances of the Highland People has been passed into Law, the Civil or Military Forces of the Crown should not be employed to evict those People from their hereditary homes.”—(*Mr. Macfarlane.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

MR. RODERICK McDONALD said, he had lived for 20 years among the crofters, and could bear out the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Argyllshire. The fishery was in a dreadfully bad state, and the crofters were quite unable to pay their rents, which were greater than the holdings were worth. It was not proposed that the declaration in the Amendment should last for years, but only for one year, by which time the ejectment season would have passed, and they hoped for a satisfactory measure enacted by the Government. Surely for one year the landlords could afford to let the matter lie. If the landlords meant to force the people to pay rents it simply meant driving them off the land, and they all knew the results. An eviction was simply a sentence of death to many of those people. It was all very well for the landlords to say—“We must have our rights;” but the people had rights as well as the landlords. In the Highlands many of them had rights superior to those of the landlords. How many of the proprietors had bought the land? The Argyll and Sutherland families had paid nothing for those lands on which these crofters lived; and he hoped that in this 19th century such landlords would not be allowed by means of evictions to turn the people adrift. In many cases the land had been kept for the landlords by the strong arms of their forefathers, and by nothing else. It was no use trying to get blood out of a stone, and it was no use trying to get money from the crofters, because for a long time they had paid their rents from money they did not get from their crofts, and now they had no more to pay. He would heartily support the Amendment, hoping that by this time next year they would have no need for such a Motion.

MR. PICTON said that, as an English Member, he desired most heartily to support the Amendment. He had taken means of informing himself on this subject, and he was persuaded of the urgent necessity of speedy legislation. But

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expedient legislation would not be sufficient if evictions were to be allowed to go on in the interval. He had no sympathy with men who could and would not pay their rent; but occasions sometimes arose when a large number of tenants could not pay owing to special circumstances; and then it was only fair that other portions of society should take their part in the burden, and not throw it all on the poor. The Report of the Crofters' Commissioners in 1884 was a lamentable indictment against the whole system of the North-Western Highlands; and this state of things had been growing worse ever since, and evictions were becoming more and more cruel. The Report showed that a social revolution had taken place in these districts, in the course of which the poor toilers had been the sufferers, while the owners had up to very lately been the gainers. The Report showed that there existed a patent contradiction between the Statute Law and the immemorial tradition and custom of those districts. It also gave instances in which whole communities had been driven from the land, and had been huddled between the mountains and the sea on comparatively bare and barren tracts, on which the utmost industry would not enable them to live in any comfort. Rights had been unjustly invaded, and he hoped that the House would not trifle with this matter. Mr. Angus Sutherland, the late crofter candidate for Sutherlandshire, recently gave an account of what was known as the Rosehall case. He stated that in 1845 the estate of Rosehall was purchased by Sir James Matheson, who promised the tenants that they would never be removed from their holdings, at any rate so long as he lived. The tenants accordingly reclaimed much of the land, and made great improvements. The estate was then sold, or rather exchanged for another, and all the tenants were served with notices to quit by the new landlord. They were compelled to accept the landlord's terms or forfeit all their improvements; and thriving tenants were thus turned into rack-rented squatters. He said it was incumbent on the Government to take good heed lest the extreme pressure of what might be legal rights, but were moral wrongs, should drive a long-suffering people to desperation, and bring about bloodshed and disorder in hitherto comparatively peaceful regions.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (MR. TREVELYAN): I have listened with great pleasure to my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton); but, in some respects, I could almost have wished that the hon. Member had deferred his speech for a few days. I have no doubt, from his intimate knowledge of the Highlands of Scotland, he has much in reserve to tell us; and I should be glad if, some three or four days hence, on the Motion for the introduction of the Crofters Bill, and still more on the second reading, he moves again the sympathy of the House as he has moved it to-night. I cannot but think that his speech, and the interesting speech of the hon. Member for Argyllshire (Mr. Macfarlane), are somewhat premature, or somewhat tardy. They are premature if they are intended to excite the interest of the House in those provisions which the Government intends to bring forward, and which, I earnestly think and trust, will be of a nature, if not to satisfy, at any rate to gratify, those hon. Members. But they are tardy as applied to the present condition of the House of Commons and the Government. The Amendment to the Address which the House is asked to entertain to-night states that the House humbly expresses its regret that in the Queen's Gracious Speech the reference to the condition of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland is of so vague and indefinite a character; and contains no satisfactory assurance that such legislation as the serious nature of the case demands will be undertaken. That is the Preamble to the Amendment. I am not here to defend, I am rather here to adopt, the Address in answer to Her Majesty's Gracious Speech; but if I were here to defend it, I should say that the line and a-half referring to a measure for mitigating the distressed condition of the poorer classes of the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland would cover legislation of a sort which might be very satisfactory even to advanced Members of this House. But if there might be some justice in the Amendment three weeks ago, there is none now; because the Government, through the mouth of the Prime Minister, has promised—not that it considers that legislation about the crofters is of great importance, but that it considers it almost paramount, for the very first Notice of a measure that has been

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given by the present Government—at any rate, the first Notice of any measure of importance—has been for a Bill for improving the condition of the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. I ask the House whether it is a fair reward to a Government which has shown itself so anxious to grapple, and to grapple rapidly and thoroughly, with this great question—whether it is fair to reject the earnest appeal of the Prime Minister, who has given this pledge, which you may be sure he will make good—not to insert Amendments in this Address; and I think hon. Members will have to show very strong cause indeed for inserting this Amendment, because it is an Amendment of a very serious nature. The Amendment, after the Preamble that I have quoted, goes on to declare that the House is of opinion that until a Land Bill dealing in a comprehensive manner with the proved and admitted grievances of the Highland crofters has been passed into law the Civil and Military Forces of the Crown should not be employed in evicting the people from their hereditary holdings. I earnestly trust that before voting hon. Members will consider the very serious nature of the Amendment for which they are voting. The hon. Member for Caithness-shire (Dr. Clark), in his interesting speech, referred to the great distress of the fishing population, and to the manner in which they are suffering by the competition of trawlers, and by the discriminating rates of railways. I should like to ask the hon. Member for Caithness whether the fishing population of the Western Highlands are the only fishing population in the United Kingdom that are suffering from bad trade and depression? If that is not the case, why should we adopt such a strong remedy as that of suspending the ordinary operation of the law in their case, and in their case alone? I must frankly own that I would not assent to such a proposal. Before adopting it, two facts would have to be established. One of these two facts would be that the population that was going to be specially benefited by such a very strong proposal as this was suffering from any great grievance of a nature requiring to be remedied, or from any great danger; and the other thing that would have to be established would be that it had been

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up to this time entirely neglected by Parliament. But are the people of these Highlands and Islands suffering under any very great grievance from evictions, or from any danger of evictions? I am glad to think that at a time like this in England and Scotland the landlords are treating their people with that sort of consideration which ought to exist between the landlords and the tenants. ["Oh, oh!"] I will not say it is being done everywhere; but I know of many cases in England and in Scotland where large reductions are being given, and very freely given—permanent reductions—and where the eviction of an old tenant is the very last idea that would occur to the mind of the landlord. But are the Highlands of Scotland at this moment the districts where there is an exception to this rule? Are the Highlands, during the last two years, districts where evictions are being ruthlessly carried out? If there can be any charge brought against the late Government, or against the Government which preceded it, it would be—not that evictions in the Highlands were too easily carried out, but that, practically, there were no evictions at all, even where rents could not be obtained. There is no part of the country in which, at this moment, there is such immense and such general arrears as in certain parts of the Highlands; and to tell the House of Commons that during the last six months, that during the last two years, there have been any exceptional crop of evictions is to tell them something which is not a fact; and, unless it is confirmed by the most powerful evidence, the House could not be induced to accept such an extremely strong Resolution. But it is not the case. There is a general feeling among the landlords of the Highlands, as there is a feeling in the House of Commons, and in the country in general, that the crofters of the Western Islands are in a very unsatisfactory condition, which ought to have been altered long ago by legislation, and that that is the district in which, of all others in the country, the power of eviction ought to be less ruthlessly and most mercifully used; and I do not believe I am exaggerating when I say that there is no district in these Islands where the people have been in less danger of eviction than they were in the crofting districts of Scotland. Now, I come to the question of what

has been done for the crofters in this respect by the House of Commons. Never was so strong a Resolution passed, giving so very marked a lesson in the direction of doing the utmost to mitigate the rights of landlords to the Executive Government, as the Resolution that was passed on the 14th of November, 1884, at the instance of a distinguished Irish Member, who has vindicated his right to take up the cause of the crofters. The Resolution was as follows:—

Resolved "That, in the opinion of this House, it is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission upon the condition of the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, or to apply such other remedies as they deem advisable; and that this House censure in the opinion expressed by the Royal Commission at page 110 of its Report, that 'The mere vindication of authority and repression of resistance would not establish the relations of mutual confidence between landlord and tenant, in the absence of which the Country would not be truly at peace, and all our inquiries and counsels would be expended in vain.'"

That is the Resolution under which, at this moment, the Highlands of Scotland are being administered—the unanimous Resolution of the House of Commons, giving the greatest moral sanction in its power to the theory that the rights of the landlord should not be pressed. On that Resolution the landlords of the West of Scotland have acted, and since that Resolution was passed evictions have not been oppressive; and to say that they were numerous would be to say something which is very far from the fact in the Western Highlands. While I may have been willing to give a passive assent to that Resolution, I cannot go further; the Government cannot go further, and lay down the opinion that the law is not to be supported. The hon. Member asks whether the Government would be prepared to send troops to enable Mr. Winars to make any fresh evictions in order to extend his deer forests? During the last six months, under a Conservative Government, no troops have been sent into that district; and I do not think it is very likely that, under a Liberal Government, any troops will be sent for such a purpose. We desire to find a remedy, not in making any declarations of this sort, but in bringing in and pressing forward a Bill giving the largest measure of protection and comfort to the crofting population that the general sense of the

country and the wisdom of Parliament will allow us to give. I am bound to say I was rather struck by the speech of one hon. Member who represents the crofters, and by the fact that he insisted so very much upon one side of their difficulties and grievances—namely, that of the want of fixity of tenure and of fair rent, while he said so little of what I believe the crofters themselves feel is at the bottom of their difficulties, and that is the want of more land. I hope I have given sufficient reasons to induce the House to sympathize with me in my earnest appeal to the hon. Member and those who act with him not to press this Amendment on the Address. If he does press it he will be sure to find in the Lobby against him many right hon. Gentlemen who sympathize with his clients with a sympathy almost as strong as his own, and some who have a knowledge not immensely below even his great knowledge of what they really want. I wish to present a further argument to the House relating to this subject. It is a most important thing that just at this moment we should not pass a Resolution of the House of Commons which weakens the authority of the law, which refuses to allow the Government to discriminate between those cases in which rent is retained in the hands of the person who is able to pay his rent, and between those cases in which a crofter is suffering hopelessly under arrears brought about by an oppressive state of the law. There is another reason connected with the Western Highlands why, at this moment, we cannot afford to relax the authority of the law. There is the question of rates. The authorities have great difficulty in getting rates from the occupiers, and from other people besides; and if the House of Commons pass this Resolution, which I feel bound to say is an unjust and an improper one, and, in face of the legislation which the Government promise, a most unnecessary one, you will weaken the hands of the parochial authorities in collecting those rates, and bring about a state of things which will be most disastrous and most discreditable, and, to the education of those districts more especially, perhaps quite fatal. I trust that what I have said will not be considered as in any way showing a want of sympathy with the condition of the crofters; but I earnestly hope, in view of what I have

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said, and the promise of the Government to introduce a measure, the hon. Member will see his way to withdraw the Amendment.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY said, he begged to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his appointment in the Ministry as Secretary for Scotland. He seemed, however, to be but imperfectly acquainted with the condition of the Western Highlands. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman possessed any exact information as to the number of evictions, or the number of notices which had been served to produce evictions at the coming term. He had been informed that no fewer than 200 notices of eviction were served to become due in May last year. A difficulty arose as to the interpretation of the law. The crofters claimed the benefit of the Agricultural Holdings Act; and it was found upon trial in Edinburgh that the landlords must give six months' notice to the tenants, they having failed to do so. He had observed from the newspapers that some landlords had served notices of eviction in a wholesale manner. Those notices would come into force on the 15th of May next, and it was then that the difficulties of the situation would arise. Then was the time when the landlords in the Highlands would have to appeal to the forces of the Crown in order to carry out those arbitrary and unjust evictions. The hon. Member for Argyllshire (Mr. Macfarlane) did not ask the suspension of evictions to be carried out indefinitely, but only until the Bill of the Government came into effect. It was feared, and with too much reason, that a great number of evictions would take place in the Highlands in May next. Notice had been served by the landlords to that effect; and if the Bill of the Government became law, it would not come into operation in time to prevent the landlords carrying out the evictions at Whitsuntide. He thought the House was called upon to express its opinion on this question, and to say that the civil and military powers of the Crown should not be used for evicting tenants in the Western Highlands of Scotland. Unless the Government adopted some such opinion as this, there was great reason to apprehend serious difficulties in Scotland in May. The responsibility for maintaining the

peace of those districts would rest upon the right hon. Gentleman. He should be sorry to encourage any movement for the non-payment of rent; but those acquainted with the condition of the Highlands knew that the tenants had not, at the present time, the means of paying, either from farming operations or from fishing; and he thought Parliament ought to intervene to prevent the landlords taking advantage of such a state of circumstances to evict crofters. There were many cases in which the holdings of the crofters were worthless for the purpose of making rent. They were really a foothold for the men on the soil, and the rents had always been paid from fishing, or by some members of the family going to some other part of Scotland and paying the rent of those who remained at home. He considered that the case was sufficient to justify the action which the hon. Member had recommended to the House. The suspension of evictions would only affect bad landlords; and he thought the case of the crofters was quite as strong as that of the Irish peasants when the Government brought in a Bill in former years to suspend evictions. The people in the Western Highlands were a law-abiding, godly people, and no one would accuse them of turbulence unless they had good cause for the complaints they had made; and he should have thought the Government, under very difficult circumstances, would have been very glad to accept the Motion.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL wished to join the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) in congratulating the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) upon his appointment. The right hon. Gentleman had, in the course of his speech, shown an earnest sympathy with the grievances of the crofters, and in the indication which he had given that it was the intention of the Government to deal with those grievances in a strong Bill. At the same time, he thought that, in the language used by the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the suspension of evictions, he had taken a somewhat unfavourable view of the case of the hon. Member for Argyllshire. He thought that, at this moment, the relations between landlords and crofters in the Western Highlands were very much strained; and there was a fear that, unless notices of eviction

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were withheld, trouble would ensue in that region at an early date. On the whole, however, he thought the hon. Member would be wise in listening to the appeal which had been made to him, and not press his Amendment in view of the Bill promised by the Government.

Mr. BOYD KINNEAR said, that there were one or two points in the speech of the Secretary for Scotland on which he wished to make a brief remark. The first was the statement that had been made as to the improbability of troops being employed to carry out evictions under a Liberal Government. But it was a fact that under the last Liberal Government troops were sent to carry out the service of writs, the result of which would be the eviction of crofters; and, therefore, there could be no security that this would not happen again merely because a Liberal Government was in power. Another statement was that there existed in other parts of this Kingdom a general depression in agriculture calling for a remedy; but that was no reason why the remedy desired in this case should be refused because it did not embrace every other case. There was, however, one point in the speech of the Secretary for Scotland which would lead him to join in urging the withdrawal of the Amendment; and that was the promise given that in the proposed Bill of the Government it was intended to take powers for preventing evictions in all cases in which they ought not to be carried out. ["No, no!"] If it were not so he was very sorry, and in that case he did not see that it was easy to avoid voting for the Amendment. True, it proposed the stoppage of evictions of every sort, and he could not honestly support a Bill which should involve that principle, because there might be cases in which evictions might be legitimate and proper. There might be cases in which tenants could pay their rents and would not. The law ought to distinguish between the two classes of cases. But this could easily be done in any measure to be introduced. If he were mistaken as to the scope of the Government Bill, it was the duty of Scottish Members and of Liberal Members from every part of the Kingdom to vote for the Amendment. What he desired was that such modifications should be introduced into the present law as would be necessary to make it

more consistent with justice. No law would command the respect of the people of this country except in so far as it was based on justice. The great changes in circumstances which had taken place since the bargains and leases were entered into should be taken into consideration. Those changes had not been brought about by the landlord or the tenant. They had come upon us by causes altogether beyond the control of any human being; but it ought to be recognized that they were upon us. As he had said, what he and others desired was to modify and alter bargains entered into, so as to make them what fair and just-minded men would enter into at the present time. He would support the Amendment.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I only rise, Sir, on account of an observation which was made by the hon. Member for Argyllshire (Mr. Macfarlane), which, although not intended to be used in an offensive sense, was to the effect that the words in the Address may mean no more than that a measure was to be introduced for relief by the parochial authorities. I have no desire to protract the debate upon the Address; but, as such a suggestion has been made, I think it right to state publicly that there was no such intention on the part of Her Majesty's late Government in placing those words in the Queen's Speech; but, on the contrary, it was our intention to introduce a measure which I think the hon. Member for Argyllshire and the Members from Scotland who have spoken in this debate would have found to have been a somewhat comprehensive measure. I have only to say that no description of that measure could have been more unlike reality than the suggestion which the hon. Member for Argyllshire has made. I think it is necessary, however, to give some explanation on behalf of myself and my Colleagues in the late Government who propose to vote against this Amendment. We vote against it because we are satisfied that it can serve no good purpose. It expresses the regret of the House that in the Queen's Speech—

"The reference to the condition of the people in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland is of a vague and indefinite character;" whereas it is proposed to amend that condition by the Bill which is promised

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to be brought into the House. The latter part of the Resolution, if passed by this House, will declare—

“That until a Land Bill dealing in a comprehensive manner with the proved and admitted grievances of the Highland People has been passed into Law, the Civil or Military Forces of the Crown should not be employed to evict those People from their hereditary homes.”

Such a Resolution ought not to be passed. The word “satisfactory” is itself most vague. Satisfactory to whom, the nation or the crofters? and satisfactory on what basis? I have, therefore, no hesitation in supporting the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland, that the Amendment should be withdrawn.

MR. M'LAREN: My right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland has made an appeal to the Liberal Members to vote against this Amendment. He tells us that it would be injurious and improper in us to carry this Resolution in the face of the promise which Her Majesty's Government have made to deal immediately with this pressing question. But in the same speech he was candid enough to tell us, from his knowledge of the measures of the Government as a Member of the Cabinet, that the Bill proposed to be introduced will not deal with the salient point of the Amendment. He intimated that the Bill will contain no provision for suspending the process of evictions, which hon. Members from Scotland assure us will be put in force about Whitsuntide. A few Sessions ago we had a similar Amendment proposed in the Address by Members from Ireland; and the present Prime Minister on that occasion accepted the principle in the analogous case of that country. He caused a Bill to be brought in dealing with evictions, in the shape of compensation for disturbance; and so important was that Bill considered that all the Business of the House was suspended in order that it might be passed. We do not ask now for any revolutionary measures, or that criminals or offenders should be supported; but we simply ask that these unfortunate crofters who have had notice of eviction served upon them shall not be evicted unless their case does not happen to come within the four corners of the Bill. In the event of the Bill becoming law, I presume that it is

impossible to pass it between this and Whitsuntide; and I suppose that the landlords are not disposed to give any pledge that they will not carry out evictions in the meantime. We simply ask now that the Liberal Party, who have come back from the country pledged to deal with this Land Question, should give effect to the pledges which they gave to their constituents, and take the only opportunity which offers itself between this time and Whitsuntide to obtain a declaration from the Government that they will not use the Civil or Military Forces at their disposal for the purpose of carrying out evictions. The Government, not with any intention of being unfair, but owing, I presume, to a mistake, have mixed up this question with the analogous question of a refusal to pay rates and taxes. My opinion, and that of those who are acquainted with this part of Scotland, is that the refusal to pay rates and taxes has arisen from abortive attempts to enforce evictions for non-payment of rates. But the principal persons who are refusing to pay rates and taxes are not the crofters, but the landlords who have been evicting the crofters. All I ask is that the Forces of the Crown should not be used in turning out these unfortunate crofters pending legislation to meet their case; and unless I receive some assurance from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland that it is proposed to withhold the employment of the Forces of the Crown for that purpose I shall vote for the Amendment, and I trust that other Members on this side of the House will take the same course.

MR. DONALD CRAWFORD: I am very unwilling to protract the debate; but I think that the speeches which have already been made would convey a wrong impression to the House, and induce it to be believed that a majority of Members, who sympathize with the case of the crofters, are in favour of the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Argyllshire (Mr. Macfarlane). I think I am justified in speaking in the name of those who sympathize deeply with that part of the population, because in regard to my own constituency—North-East Lanark—although it is not a crofter constituency, and although it consists of a hard-working and industrious population engaged in industries different from that of the crofters, I may say that no

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question was pressed more strongly upon my notice during the election than the subject of the crofters; and there are very few Members in the House whose acquaintance with the Highlands of Scotland dates as far back, in the early period of their lives, as my own. I confess that I am not surprised, for certain reasons, that this Amendment has been put forward. In the first place, I think that the hon. Member for Argyllshire is justified in the observations he made with reference to the paragraph in the Address to the Crown. If anything more than some eleemosynary measure of relief was contemplated by the words which have been placed in the Address, I think that those words have been chosen with singular infelicity. There is also this further point. After the Resolution which was passed last year there was a Bill introduced by Her Majesty's Government—the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone)—dealing with the subject. That Bill might easily have been passed in the course of last Session; and the Prime Minister made an appeal to the late Government, when the change of Government occurred and they came into Office, that that Bill should be passed. That appeal was not listened to, and the request of the present Prime Minister was rejected; and I think that much allowance must be made for the crofters, after the patience which they and their friends have manifested, in seeing legislation promised year after year which would give them relief, but which, when the moment comes when it ought to be carried to completion, has been, by one accident or another, retarded and set aside. I submit, however, that there is scarcely anything which could justify such a sweeping interference with the ordinary action of the law in the enforcement of contracts as is proposed in this Amendment. I say “scarcely anything” because I think there is one state of circumstances which might justify it; and that is if evidence were produced of a systematic intention to evade a Bill just coming on by evicting as many persons as possible for the purpose of getting such evictions carried out before the Bill was passed. But we have no evidence of that kind, and no allegation of that nature at all; and although the hon.

Member for Argyllshire has said that he could string a number of instances together and lay them before the House, if it would not weary the House, he did not do so. Well, I appreciate his generous consideration for the House in that respect; but I submit that it is absolutely necessary to lay such evidence before the House before such an interference with the action of the law as this could be agreed to. It is a far more sweeping measure than the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, because that Bill proposed to arrest evictions under the provisions of an Act of Parliament, whereas in this case we are asked not to proceed under an Act of Parliament, but arbitrarily to stay the hands of the authorities. I think that the assurance of the Secretary for Scotland ought to satisfy the hon. Member who has moved the Amendment, and I hope that he will not press the Resolution. I can assure the hon. Member that there are many hon. Members in the same position as myself, who have the warmest sympathy for the object which he has at heart, and who will vote with him and speak for him if necessary, unless the promised measure is one of a thoroughly liberal and satisfactory character, and one which will completely satisfy the just demands of the crofters.

MR. SAUNDERS: The hon. Member who has just sat down has been pleased to state to the House that, in his opinion, scarcely anything can justify the adoption of this Amendment. Now, it appears to me that the case should be put the other way. Can anything justify the evictions which will take place unless this Amendment is passed? The very fact that the Government have promised to bring in a Bill to improve the condition of the crofters shows that these impending evictions will take place under unjust conditions. As an English Member and as a Member sitting on this (the Ministerial) side of the House, I am desirous of finding any reason, if I possibly can, for adopting the appeal which is made to us on behalf of the Government; but I can find no such reason. It is perfectly clear that no Bill can be introduced and carried through this House which will prevent the evictions which will take place next May, if the Amendment which has been proposed is not carried. I, therefore, cannot absolve

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my conscience from the necessity for voting for this Amendment, whatever inconvenience may arise to Her Majesty's Government in consequence. I am quite sure that if hon. Members realize the fact that the vote they are now about to give may cause hundreds of honest men to be evicted from their homes they will hesitate before they reject the Amendment which would save the crofters from such a fate.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 104; Noes 234: Majority 130.—(Div. List, No. 4.)

Another Amendment made.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Committee appointed, to draw up an Address to be presented to Her Majesty upon the said Resolution:—Mr. GLADSTONE, The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, Mr. SECRETARY CHILDERS, Mr. MUNDELLA, Mr. MORLEY, Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Mr. BRYCE, Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY, Sir UGHTRED KAY-SMITH, and Mr. ACLAND, or any Three of them:—To withdraw immediately:—Queen's Speech *referred*.

THE ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

Report of Address *brought up*, and read, as follows:—

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled, beg leave to convey to Your Majesty our thanks for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty's relations with other Powers continue to be of a friendly character.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the difference which existed, when Your Majesty last addressed us, between Your Majesty's Government and that of Russia, on the subject of the Boundaries of Afghanistan, has been satisfactorily adjusted, and that, in pursuance of a Convention which will be laid before us, the English and Russian Commissioners, with the full concurrence of Your Majesty's Ally, the Amir of Afghanistan, have been engaged in demarcating the frontier of that Country. We assure Your Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that Your Majesty trust

that their work may tend to secure the continuance of peace in Central Asia.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that a rising in Eastern Roumelia has given expression to the desire of the Inhabitants for a change in the political arrangements under which they were placed by the Treaty of Berlin, and that Your Majesty's object, in the negotiations which have followed, has been to bring them, according to their wish, under the rule of the Prince of Bulgaria, while maintaining unimpaired the essential rights of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that under a Convention, concluded with the Ottoman Porte, Commissioners have been appointed on behalf of England and Turkey to confer with His Highness the Khedive, and to report upon the Measures required for securing the defence of Egypt and the stability and efficiency of the Government in that Country.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that, greatly to Your Majesty's regret, Your Majesty was compelled, in the month of November, to declare War against Theebaw, the King of Ava; that acts of hostility on his part against Your Majesty's subjects and the interests of Your Majesty's Empire had, since his accession, been deliberate and continuous; that these had necessitated the withdrawal of Your Majesty's Representative from his Court; and that Your Majesty's demands for redress were systematically evaded and disregarded.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that an attempt to confiscate the property of Your Majesty's subjects, trading under agreement in his dominions, and a refusal to settle the dispute by arbitration, convinced Your Majesty that the protection of British life and property, and the cessation of dangerous anarchy in Upper Burmah could only be effected by force of arms.

"We assure Your Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that the gallantry of Your Majesty's European and Indian Forces under Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Prendergast rapidly brought the Country under Your Majesty's power; and we humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty has decided that the most certain method of ensuring peace and order in those regions is to be found in the permanent incorporation of the Kingdom of Ava with Your Majesty's Empire.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the time which has elapsed since Your Majesty assumed the direct Government of India makes it desirable that the operation of the Statutes by which that change was effected

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should be carefully investigated, and for commending this important matter to our earnest attention.

"We assure Your Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that a protracted negotiation respecting the rights of the Republic of France on the Coasts of Newfoundland under the Treaty of Utrecht has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion by an Agreement which will be laid before us and before the Legislature of Newfoundland as soon as it assembles, and that an Agreement has also been made with Spain, securing to this Country all commercial rights granted to Germany in the Caroline Islands.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that our consent will be asked to Legislative Measures rendered necessary by a Convention, on the subject of International Copyright, to which Your Majesty has agreed.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that the Estimates for the Expenditure of the ensuing year, which have been framed with a due regard to efficiency and economy, will be submitted to us.

"We assure Your Majesty that we learn with regret that no material improvement can be noted in the condition of Trade or Agriculture; and we thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty feels the deepest sympathy for the great number of persons, in many vocations of life, who are suffering under a pressure which Your Majesty trusts will prove to be transient; but we humbly express our regret that no measures are announced by Your Majesty for the present relief of these classes, and especially for affording facilities to the agricultural labourers and others in the rural districts to obtain allotments and small holdings on equitable terms as to rent and security of tenure.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty has seen with deep sorrow the renewal, since Your Majesty last addressed us, of the attempt to excite the people of Ireland to hostility against the Legislative Union between that Country and Great Britain; that Your Majesty is resolutely opposed to any disturbance of that fundamental Law, and that, in resisting it, Your Majesty is convinced that Your Majesty will be heartily supported by Your Parliament and Your People.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the social no less than the material condition of that Country engages Your Majesty's anxious attention; that, although there has been during the last year no marked increase of serious crime, there is in many places a con-

certed resistance to the enforcement of legal obligations; and that Your Majesty regrets that the practice of organised intimidation continues to exist.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty has caused every exertion to be used for the detection and punishment of these crimes; that no effort will be spared on the part of Your Majesty's Government to protect Your Majesty's Irish Subjects in the exercise of their legal rights and the enjoyment of individual liberty, and that if, as Your Majesty's information led Your Majesty to apprehend, the existing provisions of the Law should prove to be inadequate to cope with these growing evils, Your Majesty looked with confidence to our willingness to invest Your Majesty's Government with all necessary powers.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Bills would be submitted for transferring to Representative Councils in the Counties of Great Britain local business which is now transacted by the Courts of Quarter Session and other authorities; that a measure for the reform of County Government in Ireland was also in preparation; and that these measures would involve the consideration of the present incidence of local burdens.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for making known to us that a Bill for facilitating the Sale of Glebe Lands, in a manner adapted to the wants of the rural population, would also be submitted to us; as also Bills for removing the difficulties which prevent the easy and cheap transfer of land; for mitigating the distressed condition of the poorer classes in the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland; for the more effectual prevention of accidents in mines; for extending the powers of the Railway Commission in respect of the Regulation of Rates; and for the Codification of the Criminal Law.

"We assure Your Majesty that we join with Your Majesty in trusting that results beneficial to the cause of education may issue from a Royal Commission which Your Majesty has appointed to inquire into the working of the Education Acts.

"We humbly assure Your Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the measures which may be submitted to us, and that we earnestly trust that, with regard to these and all other matters pertaining to our functions, the keeping and guidance of Almighty God may be vouchsafed to us."

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: Before the House passes through this stage of progress, I should like to say a few

words with reference to some of the Irish questions raised by the Address, and which may be raised again on this stage of Report. An Amendment to the Address stood in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. W. O'Brien). That Amendment referred to the case of the Irish tenant farmers, and to the rigour and hardship of Irish evictions, and made an appeal to the Government in something like the same spirit as the appeal made on the part of the Scotch crofters by the hon. Member for Argyllshire (Mr. Macfarlane). We might have pressed that Amendment to the Address, and there were many reasons why it might be supposed that we ought to have done so; but hon. Members with whom I have the honour to act considered it better, on the whole, not to press the Amendment at the time, and under the circumstances. We felt fully, of course, the responsibility we undertook in refraining from pressing so important an Amendment. We feel most keenly, I need scarcely say, the hardships and miseries to which the Irish tenant farmers are exposed, and the dangers and penalties almost certain to fall on them during the next few months, or during the next few weeks, by the system of evictions in Ireland. We know full well, to our sorrow, what the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Government called a "shower of snow flakes" in the shape of eviction notices. These snow flakes are already beginning to fall, far and wide, over Ireland; and we know well the power of that "shower of snow flakes" to extinguish the fire on many a hearth. It was not, I need not say, from want of knowledge, or any want of appreciation of the importance of the Amendment, that we did not press it. We had more than one reason for the course we have decided upon taking. One reason was that we knew the Government has only recently been formed; that it is acting now under difficult conditions; and we cannot expect Ministers to be ready with a full and clear programme of policy on all points. Another reason was—we thought, if we pressed forward the Amendment, we might be misleading the Government and the House with regard to what we believe to be the relative importance of the great questions belonging to Ireland, and which will have to be discussed in this Session

of Parliament. We do think that the Government might have announced something in the nature of a measure to prevent indiscriminate evictions all over Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) was very strong in some of the statements which he made as to the use of Her Majesty's Forces in carrying out evictions in Scotland. He reminded the House that there had been little or no use made of the troops of the Queen to enforce the carrying out of evictions under the Tory Government, and therefore that it was not likely that there would be much use made of them under a Liberal Administration. I think he was reminded on his own side of the House that there was no such absolute guarantee for the crofters of Scotland in that matter; because, under a previous Liberal Administration, the Forces of the Crown had been used to carry out evictions there. I would hope, however, from the statements that have been made, that the Government at present in Office will be inclined to do all that they can to save and protect the unfortunate tenant farmer, and to stand between him and the reckless use of the landlord's power. A law may be used so as to be either indiscriminating and merciless, or it may be so used as to be discriminating and merciful. I hope that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. J. Morley) will endeavour to use his great power and influence to make the law discriminating and merciful as regards the tenant farmers of Ireland. I hope he will consider and distinguish between one eviction and another, and endeavour to use his power—and I am sure he is so inclined—in a manner to show mercy to those who would pay and meet their demands if they could, but who, from distress and poverty, have been forced into the condition of hopeless debtors. But whilst we thought all this, there were reasons, as I have said, to induce us to forego the moving of the Amendment. We did not wish to mislead the Government and the House as to our idea of the relative importance of the Irish questions. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, in his statement this evening, told us that the Government intend to deal with three important subjects concerning Ireland. First, the question of social

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order in Ireland; next, what he properly called the "great question" of land in Ireland; and, thirdly, the question of the future government of Ireland. Now, we were under the impression that if we brought forward an Amendment specially dealing with the Land Question, and no other Amendment, on the Address, we might lead the Government and the House to believe that we considered the Land Question the most important, and the most pressing of all the Irish questions of the Session. Mr. Speaker, we are not under that impression. I wish it to be distinctly understood by the House—and I believe I speak the unanimous voice of the National Party in this House—that we consider the great question of Irish National Self-Government above and beyond in importance all other questions, and compassing all other questions around in its magnitude and strength. Indeed, if that question were settled, all other questions would settle themselves. [*Ironical cheers from the Opposition.*] I perfectly understand that cheer from the Benches near me; but I can assure those hon. Members that even in their interests—in the interests of the landlord party—it would be better by far that the question of Irish National Self-Government should be settled in advance of all other questions. The Land Question might, no doubt, be settled before the question of National Self-Government. But the landlord party of Ireland in this House may be certain that if the settlement of the Land Question is to come before that of National Self-Government, the settlement will be a more arduous one than a settlement that comes after the arrangement of the greater question. Now, the Party who were in Office—the late Government—had an admirable chance of settling the question of Self-Government if they could only have brought up their minds to the level of the crisis. They might easily have carried a measure of Home Government, for they would necessarily have had the support of a large number of Members on the other side of the House below the Gangway, and they might have carried it, not only through this House, but most easily through the House of Lords. But somehow they lost the opportunity. They went near bringing the horse to the fence, but were not willing or able,

at the last moment, to take the jump. As Atterbury said to Swift—"There was a great opportunity lost for want of spirit." Then came that mysterious change in their policy of which we, the outsiders, only see the outward and visible signs, but about which I think there will be a great deal of very curious history to be written for the instruction of a future generation. The sending over to Ireland of a right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) from this House on a mission of inquiry, and the proposed visit of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), are amongst the incidents that will have to be recorded. They first sent over an inquiring Gentleman, a Gentleman with an ear-trumpet, and now they are going to send over a noble Lord with a war-trumpet. The speeches of the noble Lord on this subject remind me of a character in one of Charles Dickens's books—the famous Sim Tappertit. You remember that Tappertit is under the impression that a great social revolution is about to go on, and he declares that "something will come of it—I hope it mayn't be human gore." Thereupon he rushes forthwith to revel in as much of that said human gore as he possibly could. I hope the noble Lord is not about to emulate the mission of the immortal Tappertit. His sacred mission has, I trust, nothing to do with human gore; but I do not think we can congratulate him on this newest effort of the Tory Party to make history in Ireland. The Home Rule Question is now in the hands of Her Majesty's present Advisers; it is placed especially in the hands of one of the greatest of English statesmen, that statesman who, beyond all other men, is qualified, and I believe is anxious, to bring it to a satisfactory settlement. There is one other reason, and I desire this to be brought to the front. Though the statesman now at the head of the Realm is vigorous and equal to the great task, we cannot count upon very many years of his active services; and it is on him we chiefly rely, among all English statesmen, for the carrying through of this great measure of National Home Rule. Among English statesmen at present I can see no one anything like so well qualified as the present Prime Minister to settle the question

of Irish Home Government. Any statesman so inclined can accomplish the settlement of the Land Question; but at present I see no one so well qualified as the present Prime Minister to settle the Home Rule Question. That is, therefore, another reason why we are most anxious and most eager that there should be no misunderstanding as to the order in which these questions should be taken; that it should be clearly understood that the question of Home Rule must take precedence of every other. The Irish Representatives and the Irish people are anxious to settle the question of Home Rule, and are clear that it must come first. Nor would it be possible for us to accept with goodwill any programme or arrangement which would put that question later in point of time than any other of the great questions affecting the future of the country. These are the principal reasons why we forbear from pressing the Amendment. We claim precedence for the great national question of Home Rule over every other question affecting Ireland. We make that claim in the name of the Irish people, and in the interest not only of the Irish people, but of the English people as well. The tenant farmers of Ireland will undoubtedly suffer in the next few months. They have suffered much already; but they are a patriotic and self-denying class of men, and they will thoroughly understand why the Irish Members of the House of Commons demand that the National claim shall have precedence of any claim they have to make. I would, therefore, strongly urge on the Government, if they are determined to deal with this great question of Home Rule, not to interfere with the chance of a satisfactory settlement by postponing it to any question of secondary interest, however intrinsically important that question may be. Most cordially do I wish that the Prime Minister and his Colleagues may be able to settle this question, and most cordially should I rejoice if my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland should have a share in the great honour and gratification of bringing this long and perplexed dispute to a satisfactory conclusion. I urge upon him and all the Members of the Government to take it from me, as the strong and unanimous feeling of the Irish

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people, that until this question is settled nothing can be settled; but when this question shall have been once dealt with in a satisfactory way all the other difficulties will disappear and melt away almost in a moment.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON: Sir, I did not think that I should ever agree in any point with any hon. Gentleman who sits below the Gangway; but on this occasion I entirely agree with the hon. Member who has just sat down on one point, and that is that Her Majesty's Government should deal, in the first instance, with the question of Home Rule in Ireland. I quite reciprocate the sentiments expressed by the hon. Gentleman that that is the question of the hour, and that to deal in the first instance with social order and then with the question of land, holding out and dangling before the eyes of the Irish people the possibility of English concession which should culminate in the immediate future in the establishment of an Irish Home Rule Parliament, would be about the most disastrous course of policy which this House has ever pursued. I think we have a right to expect that Her Majesty's Government will give, not only to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, but to one-third of the Irish population whom I and other Members from Ulster represent, a distinct answer as to their intentions about a separate Legislature in Ireland. Her Majesty's Government has informed the House to-night—the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has told us that it is not fair to expect that when they have assumed the reins of power for so short a time they should be able to give to the House a clear definition of what their Irish policy will be. Certainly, I should not be so unfair as to imagine that we could ask them to place on the Table all the details of a complicated policy. But, Sir, we have had distinct indications that there exist in the Cabinet of the right hon. Gentleman three distinct ideas upon the subject of a separate Government in Ireland. We have the speeches which have been delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley). We have also the speeches of the hon. and learned Attorney General the Member for Hackney (Mr. C. Russell). But, more than that, we have had a telegraphic announcement of Home Rule policy from the Prime Minister himself;

and as the right hon. Gentleman has never denied the accuracy of that telegraphic announcement, I may take it for granted that, at any rate in the month of December, the right hon. Gentleman had become a convert to the policy of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). I would draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman and of the House of Commons to the remarkable fact that that suggestion of Home Rule being conceded to Ireland was the most expensive announcement ever made. Never, I think, was so costly an announcement made to England as upon that occasion. The very idea that the right hon. Gentleman was inclined to favour a Home Rule policy sent down the shares of the Bank of Ireland 45 per cent. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members below the Gangway laugh at that statement; but they have no money in the Bank of Ireland. Railway as well as Bank shares fell in an equally alarming manner. Every preparation was made for a political exigency of a most difficult and dangerous kind; and in the North of Ireland we prepared for civil war. [*Laughter.*] I speak in the House of Commons exactly as I would speak in Ulster, because I state what I know to be absolutely true; and that is the effect which the announcement of the right hon. Gentleman had upon the condition of Ireland. That effect was evidenced by the effect it had on his own Party in England, for it was not simply upon the imagination of excited Orangemen that this new policy of the Prime Minister produced an effect, but also upon his own Party; for we found that the moment that indication of policy was given his own followers in England took action, and declared that they did not coincide with that new policy. Consequently, it was something far more serious than one of those reports which occasionally find their way into the public Press. I think when the House of Commons recognizes the fact that even the supposition that a responsible Minister should conceive the policy of conceding Home Rule to Ireland had such a disastrous effect upon Ireland, I venture to say that the House of Commons may realize what effect the reality of Home Rule would have. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has told us, in the speech he made at the commencement of the debate upon

the Address, that he has been thinking of this Irish Question and its solution both night and day. Therefore it cannot have come upon him unawares. Is it too much, then, to expect of him that he will give us some definite declaration—"aye" or "no"—whether he has decided to concede the request made to him by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell)? I think it is a very reasonable request which the Loyalist part of the Irish population, forming one-third of the entire population, make upon Her Majesty's Government. We are placed in a very peculiar position at the present moment. We are told that until the 1st of April we shall not have any definite indication of what Her Majesty's Government's policy will be. One of the right hon. Gentlemen who spoke to-night—I think it was the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain)—told us that they have at the present moment no policy on the subject. But the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has given us an indication of how he intends to form a policy—he intends to enter into correspondence with the Irish people. Now, I do not think that that is a practical method, or a satisfactory manner of finally determining what the ultimate destiny of the Irish population shall be. The question of Ireland is to undergo a kind of incubation at the instance of the right hon. Gentleman; and the final hatching of the egg is to be some measure which will give peace to that country. That is a proceeding which I venture to protest against in the name of every man who values the peace and happiness of Ireland. But until the 1st of April we are to have no opportunity of speaking in the House of Commons upon the nature of the legislation proposed to be introduced for Ireland. Therefore, I must say a word as to the line on which that policy is to go. We object to Home Rule in Ireland for two reasons. We object to Home Rule because we believe that legislative separation would be an unmixed evil to Ireland herself. I admit, however, that that is a matter of opinion. Secondly, we object most strongly to the Home Rulers. There is one fact in the calculation which is an absolute certainty, and I think it may facilitate the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in his efforts to solve the Irish problem,

That certain fact, Sir, is this—that there is no doubt whatever as to the hands into which the reins of Government will fall if Home Rule is conceded. The question we have to ask ourselves is this. Have the Gentlemen into whose hands the reins of power will fall given us in the past any indication of their power to carry on successfully the government of Ireland if they obtain supreme power in that country? If I were to give the character in which I view hon. Members sitting below the Gangway, I might probably be looked upon as a prejudiced witness. [“No, no!” *from the Home Rule Members.*] I am afraid, notwithstanding, that it might be so; and, in fact, I might be called to Order if I used language as strong as that which I propose to read in a quotation. The words are those of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister himself in a speech which he delivered at Leeds. It is not what may be called absolute ancient history, because the right hon. Gentleman made the speech only five years ago. I admit that in the course of five years people do sometimes change their minds; but I think that if the right hon. Gentleman has distinctly changed his mind since this speech was delivered he would undoubtedly, from the very high position he holds in the country, have said that he had changed his mind on so very important a point. This is what the right hon. Gentleman said in describing the Party of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell)—

“For nearly the first time in the history of Christendom a body—a small body—of men have arisen, who are not ashamed to preach in Ireland the doctrine of public plunder. I take as the representative of the opinions I denounce the name of a gentleman of considerable ability—Mr. Parnell, the Member for Cork, a gentleman, I will admit, of considerable ability—but whose doctrines are not such as really need any considerable ability to recommend them. If you go forth upon a mission to demoralize a people by teaching them to make the property of their neighbours the object of their covetous desire, it does not require superhuman gifts to find a certain number of followers and adherents to a doctrine such as that.”

If I had used that language, I expect you, Sir, would have called me to Order. For my own part, I should never have thought of describing hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway as robbers led by a robber chief. But these are the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime

Major Saunderson

Minister, and the House will easily understand why even an Eastern dervish would object to place himself at the disposal of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. At that time the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had 40 followers. It is, therefore, our business to call the attention of the House to the fact that we absolutely accept this definition of the character of the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his followers as being perfectly correct. The House will easily understand that we have the most determined intention of opposing to the uttermost any Government formed of men of this description. But, perhaps, the House may imagine that we exaggerate the situation; and that if the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his Friends form a Government the minority will be treated with perfect fairness by that Assembly. Perhaps the House will allow me to read an extract from a speech delivered very recently by a rev. gentleman, a supporter of the hon. Member for the City of Cork; and if this speech describes accurately the treatment that we, the Loyalists, believe we are to receive if the hon. Member for the City of Cork ever succeeds, as I believe he never will succeed, in dominating the policy of Ireland it is necessary I should read it to the House. The speech was delivered in Dublin in the course of the late election for North Dublin, or rather upon the declaration of the poll. The language used was not altogether Parliamentary; but I think it is essential that the House should be acquainted with the kind of language which is used in Ireland by supporters of the hon. Gentleman. This speech appeared in *The Freeman's Journal*, in *The Irish Times*, in *The Dublin Express*, and in other papers; and I, therefore, suppose that it may be admitted to be accurate. As I have said, it was delivered at the declaration of the poll for North Dublin by the Rev. Father Beehan, who said—and I hope the House will pay attention to this quotation, for, at any rate, the words are remarkable—

“The Castle officials, with distended abdomens, would have to go, for it is time for them to be on the run. They (the Nationalists) were not struggling merely for a green flag; they wanted three meals a day—[*Cries of “Treason!”*—good clothes on their backs—[*Cries of “Shame!”*—and employment for honest men.] [“Shame!”]”

That does not apply to hon. Members below the Gangway.

"The election was over, and the real struggle was to begin now. What they wanted now was the spoils—the loaves and fishes of all those fellows who had the monopoly up to this. They wanted men of their own to be the officials for this country, to fill every situation and every occupation that they were qualified for. From the highest to the lowest, and the topmost man in the Castle must make way for one of theirs, and the lowest official in the poorhouse yonder must be replaced by one of theirs. What did their opponents do in their day? They kept everything to themselves; and now they might thank God that they (the Nationalists) gave them raw and unboiled justice."

Now, Sir, that is exactly the point that we thoroughly understand in Ireland. We have got sufficiently epicurean tastes not to desire that the article should be cooked for us at Westminster—[An hon. MEMBER: You have cooked juries.] The raw and unboiled article which would be served up by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and his Friends would entirely disagree with the constitution of the Irish Loyalists. Therefore, we ask the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues, in dealing with this question, to consider first of all the character of the men into whose hands the Government of Ireland must inevitably fall as described by their own Chief, and then to come to the House of Commons and say, with that character staring them in the face—"We have, nevertheless, consented to dismember the Empire, in order to satisfy men who have been described so aptly and so justly by the Prime Minister of England." I cannot believe that the House will ever consent to dismember the Empire on these terms. What would they gain? They would be supposed to gain one great advantage, and that is in the absence from this House of the Irish Members. But according to the scheme indicated they would not gain that advantage. You would have them here still. Indeed, Ireland appears to me to be to England what the Old Man of the Sea was to Sinbad the Sailor. Ireland has got its legs round England's neck. Take care, lest in taking Ireland off you do not break England's neck. The hon. Member for the City of Cork and his Friends appear to take this position in the House of Commons. They do not advocate a policy; but the hon. Member stands here as a political Warwick—to make and unmake Ministries at his will.

In the calculation the hon. Gentleman has made he has overlooked one great political factor. He may succeed once in performing this operation; but he has overlooked one factor which he will find in the end omnipotent to crush him and his objects, and that is the patriotism that is to be found in Ireland, and the love of England still to be found in the House of Commons. I have no doubt that when the House of Commons is brought face to face, as it must be in the immediate future, with the fact that in Ireland they must learn to face and crush the organization of which the hon. Member for the City of Cork is the head—that they must either do that or dismember and destroy the Empire to which they belong, they will form one united Party, and be able to deal most easily with the hon. Member and his followers, retaining still the honour and glory of England and the welfare of Ireland.

Address agreed to:—To be presented by Privy Councillors.

SUPPLY.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER) intimated that the House would be asked to-morrow to go into Committee of Supply.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked what the Estimates were which the Government proposed to take to-morrow?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The Civil Service Supplementary Estimates.

Resolved, That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Estimates referred.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolved, That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

SHOP HOURS REGULATION BILL.

(Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Burt, Mr. Macnaghten, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Rathbone.)

[BILL 56.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: I hope the House will allow me to proceed with the second reading of this Bill. The object of the measure is to provide that no child or young person employed in a shop shall be worked for more than 12 hours in a day. The second reading was passed by the House last year without a division. It has been said that the Bill has since undergone some modifications; but that is not so. The Bill is practically the same measure as was adopted last year. We did not propose any inspection last year, nor do we do so now; because we believe that it would be to the interests of all shopkeepers that the others should conform to the law. This is no question between shopkeepers and their assistants. The great majority of shopkeepers are anxious to close earlier. I have been several times asked whether there is really any need for this Bill; whether it is possible that any large number of young persons are actually employed for more than 12 hours in the day? On this point I may remind the House that last year I had the honour to present Petitions from almost all our large cities, and finally one monster Petition containing many thousands of signatures. A meeting was held last June in support of this Bill, which was warmly supported by the Bishop of London, Cardinal Manning, Earl Stanhope, Lady John Manners, and Mr. F. Harrison, while the Chair was taken by that eminent Judge, Lord Bramwell. Lord Bramwell is well known as a staunch supporter of individual independence, and an opponent of Government interference and over-legislation. But he warmly supported the present Bill. He said—

"No one had a doubt of the propriety of laws for the prevention of cruelty to animals. That must be admitted to be a right thing. Why? Because they were helpless; because they could not protect themselves. But they were not more helpless than the child—a two-footed creature, who was subjected to the orders and control of those against whom he was powerless to struggle. It could not be doubted that the Bill which Sir John Lubbock had brought forward was one which ought to receive the approval of that meeting. He believed a shortening of the shop hours would be a good thing for everybody concerned. He believed it would be a good thing not only for those who worked in the shop, but for their employers. It would diminish expenses, and the workpeople would be fresher and more vigorous

in the service of their master than they could possibly be now."

The Shop Hours' League have also collected a great deal of evidence on the subject—evidence which I am sure no one can read without warm sympathy and compassion. To make my case complete the House will, I hope, allow me to give one or two cases.

Louisa B—, aged 19, drapery, four and a half years at Battersea.

"My hours are from 8.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m., and on Saturdays until 12 p.m. As to meals, we are supposed to eat our food as quickly as possible, and then return to the shop. I was in perfect health when I entered the business, now I often feel ready to sink down for want of fresh air and rest. Before the end of the day, and especially on a Saturday, I feel exceedingly weary and depressed, and have difficulty in standing until the clock strikes 12. I am quite unfit to attend a place of worship on Sunday morning."

Amy J. L—, aged 19, drapery, King's Cross.

"I have been in business three years at Poplar, Hackney, and where I am now. At Poplar the hours were 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., at the other places from 8.15 and 8.30 a.m. to 9.30 and 10 p.m., and at 12 p.m. on Saturdays. It is often 12.30 and 1 on a Sunday morning before we get out of the shop. Meal times, about 20 and 25 minutes for dinner, and 15 minutes for other meals. I was in perfect health when I first went into the business. During the last 18 months I have been away from business three times through illnesses, which the doctor said was through the long hours. If I had a little out-of-door exercise I should be much better; and I think it might be arranged for us to sit some time during the day when we are not busy. I am always thankful when Sunday comes; but I am never fit to go to a place of worship till night."

E.M.—in a shop in Camberwell—says—

"Went into business between 15 and 16 years of age. The average hours are from 8 and 8.30 a.m. to 9.30 and 10 p.m., and from 11.30 to 12 p.m. on Saturdays. In my present situation we have no stated time for meals. We eat as quickly as possible, and then hurry back to the shop. Never before I went into business did I know what illness was; but since have scarcely known what it is to be free from pain. I have overflowing of blood to the head, which causes me to swoon after standing a long time. I scarcely know what it is to stand with ease for the violent pains in my feet and legs. My feelings at the end of the day are so dreadfully low and weak that I scarcely have the strength to undress. I never feel thoroughly rested when I have to get up."

Another girl, in a shop at Deptford, said—

"I begin at 8 a.m. and leave at 10 p.m., Saturdays 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. We have from 15 to 20 minutes allowed for each meal. We are very often called forward from our meals

to the shop to attend to customers. We leave our meals half consumed, and then the food is either cold or we get no more. When apprenticed to the drapery my health was good; but it is gradually failing, and the doctor says I am in a consumption. I am, therefore, obliged to leave at the end of the month. I have never been able to get for a walk except on a Sunday, as no respectable girl cares to go out between 10 and 11 at night. After the fatigue and worry of the week I am so thoroughly worn out that my only thought is to rest on a Sunday; but it goes too quickly, and the other days drag on slowly."

It is stated that probably one-half of the drapers' assistants in London never enter a place of worship, and those who do are so drowsy that they can scarcely keep awake. The cases I have given are by no means of an exceptional character. In Islington, out of 250 shops counted, 200 were open at 9.30 p.m.; at Hackney, 150 out of 200 at 9.30; in Hammermith, 200 out of 250; in Kentish Town, 120 out of 175; in Bow, 125 out of 175; in Bermondsey, 320 out of 400 at 10 p.m.; in Lambeth, 350 out of 450; in Battersea, 140 out of 200; Poplar, 120 out of 150; at Stoke Newington, 225 out of 300; in Whitechapel, 475 out of 600 at 10.15; while on Saturdays a large proportion of these shops continue at work till midnight. It must also, of course, be remembered that the assistants have to go on writing some time after the shops are closed. I have no reason to suppose that these districts are worse than others; they are merely taken as samples. Thus, as the assistants begin work, on an average, about 8 in the morning, their actual working hours are from 16 to 17 in one day, and from 13 to 14 on five days in the week. Probably it would be within the mark to say that the majority of shopkeepers' assistants work from 75 to 90 hours a-week. I have taken these illustrations from London; but the evil is by no means confined to the Metropolis. In Liverpool it is deeply felt, and my hon. Friend the Member for that City had last year a Bill dealing with the subject. The Shop Hours' League have instituted inquiries, and they state that at Brighton, for instance, the hours are about the same as in London; in Bristol they are excessively long; at Chester, Derby, Huddersfield, Leeds, York, and elsewhere they are about 80 per week. At Manchester most of the retail shops have terribly long hours. At Rochdale "they are far too long, and we do not

know how to shorten them." The Bill contains no new principle; it merely extends to shops that which is already the law in workshops; it suggests no machinery or inspection; it involves no expense; it would not interfere with trade; there would not be a yard of stuff or an ounce of tea sold less than now; and we should lengthen and brighten the lives of thousands of these poor children. Just let me ask the House to consider what 14 hours of work mean. We cannot reckon less than seven for sleep, one for breakfast or supper, half-an-hour for dressing and undressing, one hour for buying necessities, doing their room, &c., and if we allow an hour for getting backwards and forwards we have accounted for the whole 24; and not a moment is left for amusement, or self-improvement, for fresh air or family life, for any of those occupations which cheer, brighten, and ennoble life—in fact, we literally say that not only have they not a moment to themselves, but they are so hard worked that at the end of the week they are fit to drop with fatigue. I am convinced that all London would gain if the shop assistants had greater opportunities of intellectual, moral, and spiritual improvement. Moreover, the cruel effect of the long hours is considerably increased by the fact that the unfortunate assistants have to stand the whole time. This long standing is a terrible evil. How injurious standing is we may clearly see from the fact that though customers remain in a shop for so comparatively short a time they are invariably accommodated with seats. Considering, however, the relative need of rest as between the assistants and their customers, it must be admitted that the seats are on the wrong side of the counter. This is, happily, no question between shopkeepers and their assistants. There is no such difference. I believe the shopkeepers are almost as anxious to close as the assistants themselves. Perhaps, then, it may be said, why not leave the matter in their hands? Because in almost every case the arrangements for early closing have been rendered nugatory by the action of some very small minority among the shopkeepers. Over and over again we read that the shopkeepers in a given district are anxious to close, and have all agreed to do so with,

perhaps, a single exception. But that single exception is fatal. One after another the rest gradually open again, and the whole thing breaks down, and thus a small minority tyrannize over the rest. It seems clear that nothing but legislation can remedy the evil. Voluntary action has been tried and failed over and over again. For instance, in 1872 a South London Drapers' Association was formed in order to shorten the hours. An influential Committee was formed, and about 250 drapers joined the Association. After much labour and expense, and a great deal of canvassing, they agreed to close at 8. This arrangement began on the 2nd of September; but it lasted only about a fortnight. One by one the shops kept open. At last only the 20 Committeemen were left, and then the whole movement collapsed; but before finally breaking up they met and passed a unanimous resolution that nothing short of legislation would suffice to shorten the hours of labour in retail shops. I might quote many other cases, but will only refer to one. At Sunderland a similar attempt was made, but very soon broke down in the same way. Indeed, the great majority of shopkeepers would, I believe, welcome a Bill which would prevent a small minority of unprincipled competitors from obtaining an unfair advantage. The question naturally arises whether the passage of this Bill would have the effect of throwing young persons out of employment? Now, in the first place, it is estimated that from one-half to two-thirds of the shop assistants are young persons ranging from 12 to 21 years of age, and the conditions which regulate their employment would govern the rest. Moreover, the great majority of shopkeepers would be only too glad to close if the remainder would do so. There is, indeed, one objection to factory legislation which does not apply to a Bill like the present. It is obvious that interference with manufacturers, if carried too far, might drive them out of the country, and thus, by depriving our factory population of work, defeat its own object. In such a measure as I am venturing to recommend there is no such danger. The shops, on the whole, will obviously do as much business, whether they are open 12 hours or 14, though the shopkeeper who keeps open may fetch away a little business from

his more merciful or considerate neighbour. No one, then, can say that our proposals are of a character to injure trade, while they would brighten and prolong the lives of thousands of our countrymen and countrywomen. The hon. Baronet concluded by moving that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I entirely agree with the principle of the Bill. I think it is a sound one, in the interests of the community and of young people themselves. I certainly feel that young persons between 13 and 18 years of age ought not to be allowed to work more than 12 hours a-day; but I believe that the Bill will not entirely meet the circumstances of the case. I have had a great deal of communication with persons engaged in business on the South side of London; and I venture to say that the circumstances under which the businesses are carried on there are altogether different from those which apply to businesses in the West End of London, and that it might be injurious to the interests of trade to include indiscriminately all businesses in this Bill. I hope, therefore, although I cannot object to the second reading of the Bill, that after it has been read a second time my hon. Friend will agree to refer it to a Select Committee. I hold in my hand a letter from one of the principal traders of South London—the head of a very large firm indeed—and he tells me that they are obliged to begin business at 8.30 in the morning. They have to carry on the business, which is that of a drapery establishment, until 12 o'clock in the day, when the business itself begins to slacken; and from that time until 8 in the evening—I am speaking of a part of the Metropolis where almost the whole of the community are a labouring people—the writer informs me that he might, for all practical purposes, shut up his shop. But at 8 in the evening the business begins again, and it is found necessary to conduct the greater part of it between 8 and 12 o'clock at night. I cannot help thinking that if the Bill of my hon. Friend were referred to a Select Committee we should get evidence from persons engaged in business under different cir-

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circumstances from the shopkeepers and tradesmen of the West End, and that we should get some evidence which might enable us to modify the provisions of the Bill, so as to render it useful to all classes of the community. I am afraid that if we pass it in its present form it may press hardly upon many persons who are not in over-flourishing circumstances at the present moment, and who will feel inclined to say that we have been legislating for the poorer parts of London on lines altogether inapplicable, however suitable they may be for the West End of the Metropolis. Firms like those of Marshall and Snellgrove and others may be able to shut up their establishments at 6 or 7 o'clock in the evening; but in districts inhabited by the poorer classes I am quite certain that the shops have to be kept open for a much longer time. This correspondent of mine says—

"From 8 until 9.30 we take as much or more money as in the whole of the previous part of the day."

He states, further—

"Trade is not prosperous at the present moment."

And, speaking, perhaps, a little angrily, he asks—

"What is the need of legislation of this kind?"

He calls attention to the fact that most of the shops at present voluntarily close at 5 p.m. upon one day in the week; and he adds that the condition of the assistants employed in the shops is improving every year without pressure being brought to bear upon the employer. I believe that that is the case. I cannot, as I said at first, resist, and I do not think that I ought to resist, in the interests of humanity and good sense, the second reading of this Bill; but I do trust that when it has been read a second time my hon. Friend will have no objection to refer it to a Select Committee. The time of the Session is very early; and I hope that every Member who would serve upon the Committee would be anxious to report at as early a date as possible. I hope, also, that the Committee would be able to find out means by which businesses which require longer hours than others may be satisfactorily conducted.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr.

CHILDERS): I should like to say a few words before the Bill is read a second time, seeing that the matter is one which must come under the cognizance of the Home Office. I have not yet had time thoroughly to consider the whole question; but as far as this Bill lays down that young persons between the ages of 13 and 18 should not be worked more than 12 hours in the day, which is the main provision of the Bill, I think that everyone in this House will agree that young persons of that age should not be overworked. The Home Office look upon women and young persons such as these as being under their charge with respect to the amount of work which they may be called upon to do; and I cannot deny that it is a sound principle they should not be worked more than 12 hours. That is the principle of the Bill, and on that ground I shall not object to the second reading. But I am bound to say that, in my opinion, the Bill as it stands is altogether unworkable, and that it would not be possible to accept its provisions. My hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) says that the Bill proposes to exclude from its operation those employed in licensed public-houses and refreshment bars; but these appear to me to be the persons who, of all others, require protection, and who should not be allowed to be employed for more than 12 hours a-day. Therefore, I do not think that that is a provision which the House ought to adopt. Then I understand my hon. Friend to say that the Bill does not propose to appoint any additional Inspectors; and yet the object of the Bill is to extend the provisions of the Factories and Workshops Act of 1873 to persons employed in shops. But if you do not employ persons to carry on the duty of inspection, how are you to enact that these young people employed in shops are to come under the provisions of that Act? Without some provision in regard to inspection I am afraid the Bill would be altogether unworkable. I will only say that I will consider very carefully the nature of the provisions of the Bill, and will be prepared to state my view at a later stage. I would, therefore, respectfully recommend the House to allow the second reading of the Bill to pass; but I hope my hon. Friend will allow some

interval to elapse—say six weeks or so—before taking the next stage, so that we might, in the meantime, have the advantage of the advice and opinion of those who are interested in the matter, and who will necessarily be entrusted with the working of a measure of this kind. As to the suggestion of the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers) that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, I have no very strong opinion upon the matter; but I will be prepared to accept the proposal of my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), if he will consent to defer the Committee stage for a few weeks.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I hope that we are not going to discuss all the Bills that are down upon the Paper. I think it would be a wise plan to adjourn the House after we shall have disposed of this Bill. In my opinion it would be wise to adjourn before we come to the next Order of the Day. ["No!"] The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has said that he agrees with the principle of the Bill. I confess that I do not see anything in the principle of the measure, or the form in which it has been drawn, to which I object; but I would strongly recommend the hon. Baronet in charge of it (Sir John Lubbock), at this early period of the Session, and after the appeal which has been made to him by the right hon. Gentleman, either to postpone the Committee stage for six weeks, or else to refer it to a Select Committee. Such a course would not amount to the shelving of the Bill, but would simply insure that the question would receive full consideration, especially in regard to the difficulty which has been raised as to the class of persons to which it ought to apply. My own view is that the very wisest course to take, at this early period of the Session, would be to refer it at once to a Select Committee, in order that its provisions may be thoroughly discussed. I am quite sure that a Select Committee would be able to report long before the six weeks which the right hon. Gentleman has referred to. I therefore hope that the hon. Baronet will accept the suggestion of the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers), and refer the measure to a Select Committee; and after this Bill has been disposed of I hope the House will consent to ad-

Mr. Childers

jour without proceeding to discuss any of the remaining Orders of the Day.

SIR JAMES FERGUSON: Sir, I should wish to make one or two observations, as I happened to be the Chairman of the Factory and Workshops Committee, which some years ago sat and considered this very question. I may say that while we were very ready to give relief to young persons employed for long hours, yet, for the reasons given in our Report, we did not see our way to do so in the case of shop-workers. If the House will refer to this Report of the Committee they will find a great deal of information given on the evidence of persons from many quarters of the Kingdom. The question presented a good deal of difficulty; and I am of opinion that domestic industry is a thing with which it would be inexpedient to interfere, and that legislation upon it would probably do more harm than good. We must all feel very much sympathy with young persons, women especially, who are employed for long hours; and it is within my knowledge that young women are often employed for 14 or 15 hours at refreshment bars. That is much longer than the time during which young people are employed in shops, or, at least, in such as are attached to dwellings where they take their meals. Therefore I am glad my right hon. Friend (Mr. Childers) has exercised caution in giving assent to the Bill. I believe that hon. Members will, on consideration, see that there is great reason for caution before giving scope to their benevolent ideas with reference to this question.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: Sir, I should be very glad to adopt the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers). If the House agrees to the second reading of the Bill I will then move that it be referred to a Select Committee.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(Sir John Lubbock.)

Motion agreed to.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE: Sir, as the hour is late, and the next Bill on the Paper is an important one, which there will be plenty of opportunities of con-

sidering hereafter, I shall now move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Balfour Hope.*)

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, I rise to oppose the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman. The action of the right hon. Gentleman in moving the adjournment of the House is but too transparent, and it is one which I think ought not to be passed over without comment. At this hour I am not, of course, disposed to go against the will of the House; but I cannot agree to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman until it is ascertained. The next Bill upon the Paper is one of which the right hon. Gentleman does not entertain a high opinion; and that, no doubt, is the secret of his wish for the adjournment. But I do not see why we should not use the opportunity which is now before us of considering that Bill, as it is yet early—(*Laughter*)—in the morning. If I have the privilege of moving the second reading I shall not occupy more than five minutes in giving reasons in support of the Bill; and certainly there is no reason which I can see why the House should not be asked to agree to that Motion. I hope Her Majesty's Government will not accede to the Motion for the Adjournment without a more definite reason than that given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge, of whom the Earl of Beaconsfield once said that no sooner did we begin business in February than he wanted to know when we should rise for the Easter holidays. I trust the House will not agree to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 137; Noes 142: Majority 5.—(*Div. List, No. 5.*)

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN).—[BILL 70]

(*Mr. Woodall, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Yorke.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, when I opposed the Motion for the adjournment of the House I promised that I would

not occupy more than five minutes if I had the privilege of moving the second reading of this Bill, and I intend to keep that promise. I must apologize for appearing here for that purpose, because my name is not upon the back of the Bill; but the House will be aware that my hon. Friend the Member for Hanley (*Mr. Woodall*) has accepted the position of Surveyor General of Ordnance, and I can only regret that the Bill has now passed from his hands. In the meantime, until further charge of the Bill is taken by some hon. Member, I have promised to look after it. Sir, the simple ground on which I shall ask the House to accept the measure is one which I believe will commend itself to hon. Members on this side—it rests upon the principle laid down some years ago by the present Prime Minister, that the franchise ought to be extended in every case unless it was barred by personal unfitness or political danger. Now, I think it is impossible to allege that the enfranchisement of women comes within either of these qualifications. We have already given the franchise to women in the election of school boards, and also in the election of municipal councils, and in each case in the opinion, which has been verified by experience, that they were not personally unfitted to exercise the franchise. Now, what is the allegation made as to the political danger of giving them the franchise? I say it is an allegation which I am ashamed to hear, and one which I think those who make it ought to be ashamed to utter. They say that the giving of the vote to women would be politically dangerous; they refer to Primrose Leagues, and say that it will add to the Conservative strength in the country. Now I do not believe that. The experience we have had of the use of the vote given to women in connection with school boards and town councils is not consistent with that declaration. That experience shows that women are divided in opinion very much as men are between the two political Parties; and there is no reason to believe that the extension of the franchise to them would lead to any increase of Conservative strength. Even if it were so, I should not hesitate to extend it to them. I hope that the support of hon. Members who sit on this side of the House will be given to the Bill, and that they will not

say that they oppose the enfranchisement of women because they believe it will benefit one political Party more than another. Now, I believe that if there is any fear of danger from the Primrose League, and from the introduction therefrom of women into politics—an introduction not of a direct character—that such fear or such danger will be lessened, if not altogether removed, by giving women the privilege of claiming to vote; for, in my opinion, it is simply because they have not been allowed to have the vote as a privilege and as a right, and to feel what they owe to the country in giving their vote, that we have witnessed the action of women in respect of some elections which does not appear to have been inspired by the best possible motives. But, Sir, I look to this gift to have the greatest influence over the character of women themselves. Because it will give them a larger range of ideas, because it will introduce them to the highest and best in the public life of the country, I would give the franchise to women. I would give them the franchise even if I anticipated some temporary political danger. But there is no ground whatever for that anticipation; experience has shown that the danger is imaginary. There is only one other observation I wish to make, and that is in relation to the framing of this Bill. This Bill proposes to give the electoral vote to all women, being single, unmarried, or widows, who possess the same qualifications in respect to property which now gives to men the right to vote. I do not think it can be seriously said that danger would attach to the gift proposed to be given by this Bill; and I most sincerely and confidently recommend the Bill to the acceptance of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

MR. PULESTON: I do not propose to detain the House more than one moment. What I am particularly desirous of saying is that a large majority of the Members of the House will support this Bill upon grounds altogether different to those stated by my hon. Friend the Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall (*Mr. Courtney*). It is not for the House to consider whether there is any fear of danger involved in the en-

franchisement of women—the question is purely and simply whether women are entitled, under our Constitution, to the franchise. The supporters of this measure claim that the franchise rightly belongs to women. Personally, I do not share the opinion the hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Courtney*) entertains as to the effect which will not be produced, nor do I share his opinion as to the effect which will be produced, by the passing of this measure. Single women or widows who pay rates and taxes either have a right to the franchise, or they have not. I claim that they have a right to it. It was felt by many that the passing of the Franchise Bill last year afforded Parliament a fitting opportunity of adopting the principle embodied in this Bill. I regret to say, however, a great many hon. Members—the hon. Member for Bradford (*Mr. Illingworth*), and others whom I see sitting near the hon. Gentleman now—though pledged to the principle of this Bill, deliberately voted against the proposal to engraft it upon the Franchise Bill. I contend that there would have been very little difficulty in passing through both Houses a clause embodying this principle in the Franchise Bill, because it was shown that a very large majority of the Members of both Houses were then in favour of the enfranchisement of women. Such being the case, and knowing as we do that at least 100 Members upon the Ministerial side of the House pledged to support the Bill in obedience to a Party Whip deliberately went into the Opposition Lobby when the question was introduced during the passing of the Franchise Bill, I trust the second reading will be agreed to without further delay.

MR. EVERETT: I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of this Bill. I am fully convinced that there is no class of people now exercising the franchise in this country who would exercise it more intelligently and more independently than would the class this Bill proposes to enfranchise. I know many women who, but for the fact that they are women, would be voters, and they feel most keenly the deprivation they suffer in not being allowed to exercise any influence in the passing of the laws of this great nation. We have a lady as the Sovereign of this

Mr. Courtney

Realm; we have admitted ladies to exercise votes in respect to the lower departments of public life; and to exclude them from any voice in the doings of this House, where measures more important than any others are debated and passed, appears to me to be a very unreasonable and inconsistent proceeding on our part. With the certain knowledge that a large number of this class of persons would exercise the franchise intelligently, independently, and with an earnest desire to do good to the country, I most heartily support the second reading of this Bill. I believe that by passing this measure we shall still further add to the strength which was given to the nation by the extension of the franchise during the last Parliament.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE: I appeal to the House whether the length and character of the speeches to which we have just listened is not a very good argument that this is not the hour or the occasion on which we can properly debate this measure? Whether the Bill is a good or a bad Bill it is a very important Bill. It proposes an enormous and unknown addition to the franchise—an addition to the franchise of a class of persons totally different from those who have hitherto voted. It comes, too, on the very morrow of the largest addition to the franchise we have ever had, when I think everyone might have wished and have expected there should be a little breathing time to see how the addition of last year worked. It is only by the merest accident that it has been possible to bring this Bill on to-night—a Government night—and now we are asked to hurry it through with five-minute speeches. I dare say the speeches are excellent. Still, they are only five-minute speeches, and a Bill of this sort should not be dealt with in five-minute speeches. In point of fact, if the Bill is read a second time now it will, for all practical purposes, have been read undebated; and to carry a Bill of this nature, excellent as it may be—and I am not inclined to admit it is excellent—would be nothing less than a scandal: it would be a misfortune, because it would lower very considerably the national respect which is entertained for the way we do our business. I wish to spare the time of the House, and therefore I do not now argue the Bill on its

merits, as I should have done at another and more reasonable hour; to-night it is quite sufficient to argue on the points I have mentioned. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney), who moved the second reading, pointed out that it was only proposed to enfranchise widows and spinners, and not married women. Whether that is an advantage in itself or not—whether it is an encouragement of morality or not, I will not say. But this I do say—that the safeguard is tainted with the proverbial worthlessness of all safeguards. We know that a safeguard, generally speaking, amounts to dust to be thrown in someone's eyes. If we allow dust to be thrown in our eyes in this case, we shall in a short time see very respectable married women clamouring at our doors and demanding a share in the government of the country.

MR. JAMES STUART: I, Sir, also intend to make a short speech, although short speeches have been so much complained of by the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken (Mr. Beresford Hope). I am rather astonished that it should be felt that to debate a subject in five-minute speeches, if they are to the point, is a disgrace to this Assembly. I am sure that a Bill like this, which has been so long before the country, and so frequently before the House of Commons, is much more effectually dealt with in such short speeches as have just been deprecated than in long speeches. I have to argue in favour of this measure in the briefest possible manner. It is a measure of justice, Mr. Speaker; and on that ground I, for one, base my support of it. We give the franchise to classes or bodies of persons for a double reason—first, because they have their own interests to protect; and, secondly, for no less a reason—namely, that it is very difficult to ascertain what will benefit a given class of people, or what is the best way to deal with their difficulties, unless we have the opinions of that class before us. There is no officially recognized method by which the opinion of any body of persons is brought to the notice of this House, other than the recording of votes at the ballot. Women are at this moment gifted with a considerable amount of political influence. That political influence is now exercised free from any responsibility, and that is an evil and a misfortune. If we could stop their political influence we might get

rid of the misfortune; but we cannot do that now; and, therefore, why not attach responsibility to it? I believe that the varied misfortunes which have been so repeatedly foretold and indicated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University to which I have the honour to belong will vanish under the happy touch of responsibility.

MR. CONYBEARE: I do not propose to detain the House even for the proverbial five minutes, but merely wish to add one argument which seems to have been overlooked by hon. Gentlemen who have already spoken—an argument which, I think, is not unworthy of the attention of the House. It appears to me that one of the best arguments in favour of granting this measure of justice to those who have been denied it so long is that women, as the mothers of future generations, can and do exercise considerable influence upon the minds of those who are to come after us. We have every reason to believe that it will be to the interest of generations yet unborn that the mothers of our posterity should be able, by having the vote, to take such an interest in political matters as will enable them to educate properly the minds of their children. For during the early years of childhood, when the infant mind is most open to receive impressions, it is from the mother, rather than the father, that the child derives that instruction which it most readily assimilates. No one can have studied the history of this country without knowing that this question has been debated many years; and, therefore, if we can dispose of the subject now in five-minute speeches much good will result.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE: I am one of the many new Members of the House; and if I feel a little diffidence in making a short speech upon this Bill, the House, I am sure, will accord me its indulgence. Sir, it does astonish me, as an Englishman and as a Member of this deliberative Assembly, that at 1 o'clock in the morning, and in three or five-minute speeches, a great Constitutional change—a change greater than any that has ever been effected in any country in the world—should be made by a jaded Legislature. ["Oh!"] I suppose that I, a new Member, feel more tired than experienced Members, and that I have used an improper word. I heard some hon. Members who sup-

ported this Bill speak of having had experience of women franchise. Where? I think that it is only in the somewhat wild States of America—the Mormon State, for instance—that the franchise has been given to women. We are asked to make this enormous Constitutional change on such experience as that. The speeches of the two Members who last addressed the House were, I consider, strongly opposed to the measure. Those hon. Members spoke of the weight and importance in the country of married women. All the advocates of this measure based their support of it upon the circumstance that the grievance which one sex suffers springs from the action of the other sex, and that those grievances cannot be redressed because the one sex have not the vote. Now, the grievances of which women complain spring from the marital relation. I suppose, quite unconsciously, I have been very amusing; but if we read *The Woman's Suffrage Journal*, a copy of which was sent to me to-day, we find that it is because of the behaviour of the husbands, and the rights which they exercise over the property of their wives, that the women demand the franchise. It is because husbands come home drunk and kick their wives, and sometimes injure the children—it is for all these reasons, which seem to me to be associated with the marital condition, that the franchise is wanted for women. Well, the hon. Members who bring in this Bill propose to give the franchise to women who know nothing about these reasons, widows who had known something about them, and spinsters. Let us reverse the case. Let us suppose that in this country the franchise was conferred upon women, and not upon men, and that we, the men, wished redress from the grievances which we suffer from the women, those grievances arising only as they can arise, out of the marital relations. I have repeatedly said I suppose I am very amusing; but I would respectfully ask the House what grievances spinsters and widows suffer from men? Well, should we be satisfied if it was proposed to give the franchise only to old bachelors and widowers? The hon. Member based his argument upon the question of personal fitness, yet he seeks to exclude the fittest of their sex who are selected for the

Mr. James Stuart

most important function. [*Laughter.*] It is no laughing matter; it is getting beyond that. We are excluding the most fitting of their sex—namely, those who are selected for the most important functions. All the grievances suffered by women arise out of the marriage relation. Most Members in this House are desirous of seeing classes represented, and the class of women who suffer grievances at the hands of men are not the spinsters and widows, but the married women; and if women are to be represented at all, the married women ought to have their interests represented in Parliament. My hon. Friend on my right says that married women do not pay taxes; but that is not the point. The point is whether we shall give women, as women, the vote, or not. Further than that, if we pass this Bill, it is inevitable that we must eventually admit women to Parliamentary representation. I will tell the hon. Member why I think so. Will women be satisfied by being represented by persons of the opposite sex? Is it likely they will be satisfied by the franchise being given to widows and spinsters? It appears to me inevitable that they would demand to have women Representatives of women. We are not satisfied unless we have class Representatives; and it is obvious that the women will not be satisfied unless they are represented by their own sex. I have only one word more, and that is that a measure so important as this—more important than any Reform Bill that was ever introduced, whatever its scope might ultimately be—ought not to be left in the hands of a private Member, but should be dealt with on the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government.

SIR HENRY JAMES: I have risen so often in past Parliaments to discuss this question that I should not have taken part in the debate on this Bill if it had been brought on under ordinary circumstances. I do not intend to discuss the merits of the question now; but I think that an opportunity should be afforded for those who oppose the measure to be in their places. My hon. Friend was within his right in moving the second reading of this Bill; but I think I am also within my right in saying that it was not expected that the second reading would be taken to-night. That being so, I will not detain the House by entering into arguments to

show that this is a very grave question. We all admit that; for it is clear that the Bill would interfere with the political prospects of this country—and still more so on any future extension of the franchise hereafter. Such a question does not deserve to be dealt with in five-minute speeches. In this new Parliament, when the subject was being discussed before Members who had, probably, never heard it discussed before, I think that so important a measure should not be introduced for the first time at this hour. At all events, it cannot be dealt with, at least, from the point of view of those who oppose it in five-minute speeches; for they have much to say upon the subject, and the opportunity is not afforded them to-night to discuss it. I appeal to those who support the Bill. If it is to have any weight in the country, will it not be better, before voting for or against so grave a change, to learn the views of the occupants of the Ministerial Benches? I will keep my word, and I will not take part in the discussion of the Bill; but those who are opposed to the principle of the Bill ought to have an opportunity of addressing the House; and, therefore, with a view of enabling others to discuss the question, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That the Debate be now adjourned."
 —(*Sir Henry James.*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): There is a great deal of force in what my right hon. and learned Friend has said upon this subject. When the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) suggested that we should adjourn the House I quite concurred and voted with him, and I am sorry that the majority was not in favour of adopting that course. Although, after all, we might deal with small measures on the first night of a Session, it has never been according to custom to deal with Bills of first-rate importance on such occasions; and, as everybody knows that this is a measure of first-rate importance, nobody expected that it would come on at this sitting. My right hon. and learned Friend thought very properly that so important a question should not be taken when none of the Leaders of the Party opposite are in their places. It is perfectly certain that this division

will be regarded in the House and in the country as a snapped division. Everybody knows that it is so. Nobody expected that the question of female suffrage would be dealt with to-night; and it would not be fair to the House or to the country that in a new Parliament, and at such an hour, a question of such magnitude should be dealt with in this absurd way. I shall certainly support the Motion of my right hon. and learned Friend for the adjournment of the debate.

SIR JOHN GORST: I am surprised that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not second the proposal, because the Motion for the adjournment of the House was suggested by him to the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: It was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary.

SIR JOHN GORST: When the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir Henry James) rose, he had no intention of moving the adjournment of the debate until it was suggested to him by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We have heard a great deal on previous occasions from the Chancellor of the Exchequer about submission to the will of the House; and if ever there was a division taken which showed the will of the House, it was that which was taken a short time ago, when the House deliberately decided that it would deal with this question now. What is the objection to this course? It is that the question has not been adequately discussed. If this was a new question, there might be a great deal in that argument; but it is a very old question, and has been discussed over and over again; and although we have had amusing speeches to-night, there has not been one single new argument advanced on one side or the other. Now the House, which is a full one, has decided that they would come to a division on the second reading to-night. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knows, and we all know, that there will be ample opportunity for those who oppose the Bill to express their opinions upon it in its future stages; but I do not suppose that there are half-a-dozen Members in the House who have not made up their minds upon this subject years ago; and all I ask is that

in this full House, in obedience to the will of the House, we shall be allowed to express our opinion on the second reading of this measure. Under these circumstances, I hope the right hon. and learned Gentleman will not press his Motion to a division; but if he does, I trust the House will adhere to its former decision.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I should like to point out to new Members what the Motion for Adjournment really means. If the Motion for Adjournment is agreed to, all hope of passing the Bill must be abandoned, for it will inevitably be blocked or talked out on future days, and would have no chance whatever of being passed. The proposal to adjourn the debate is exceedingly disingenuous; but the effect of it, if passed, would be to prevent the Bill now before the House having any legislative effect. The supporters of this Bill are entitled, when they get a chance, to bring it forward; and they should have the courtesy of the House extended to them now that they have secured an opportunity of doing so.

MR. JAMES STUART: The history of this Bill shows that, for many years past, it has always been lost because of having been talked out on a Wednesday, or because of having been blocked after half-past 12 o'clock at night. On that ground, and because the measure has been fully discussed over and over again in past years, I beseech the House not to lose this opportunity of passing the second reading of the Bill, but to allow the subject a fair chance of being considered by the new Parliament.

MR. PULESTON: Reference has been frequently made to-night to the position of the Bill, and its chance of coming on again if this opportunity is lost. I may be allowed to suggest what will be easily understood by everybody—that if we take a vote on the question of the adjournment, it will be a direct vote against the second reading of the Bill, and not only a direct vote against the second reading, but against the principle of the measure. I would point out that this is not the first, or the second, or even the third time that this and similar Motions have defeated the Bill; and I shall be curious to know, after we have taken the division, how many hon. Gentlemen pledged up to the eyes to support the measure have gone into the Lobby on a Motion of this

The Chancellor of the Exchequer

kind to defeat it, as they did last year when the Reform Bill was before the House.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I wish to make an appeal to my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House (Sir William Harcourt) for one moment. It will be in his recollection that many Members on this side of the House, during last Session, and at a critical moment in the progress of the Reform Bill, deliberately supported the Government when they appealed to us not to give our votes in favour of this measure. Well, to-night I have been reproached by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston) for the course I took on that occasion. I would remind him that I got up on that occasion, and appealed to the House not to jeopardize the measure before it, but to postpone the vote on the principle of the proposed change to a time when the matter could be decided on its merits. I consider that that time has now come. I should be quite content if 25 out of every 100 Members have made up their minds on the Bill. When the Reform Bill was before us, and that curious move was made by the House in the sudden conversion of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who were supposed to be supporters of this measure, I had an idea that the feeling then was that it would embarrass the Government to extend the franchise to women, and might lead to the defeat of the Franchise Bill. I would remind my hon. Friend that it will be found that all those who honestly express themselves in favour—

MR. SPEAKER: The Question before the House is that of the adjournment of the debate; and I would remind the hon. Member that he must confine himself to that.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 102; Noes 159: Majority 57.—(Div. List, No. 6.)

SIR HENRY JAMES: I would crave the indulgence of the House just to say one word. I am not disposed, if I may say so, to press this matter further. We have made our protest in asking for the adjournment of the debate; but as the adjournment has not been agreed to, and as there is so large a majority against it, it would, it seems to me, be discourteous to continue further opposition. I would appeal to the opponents of the Bill not to take a division against

the second reading. If we do the result may be misunderstood in the country. For my own part, I shall take no share in any division, as I think it desirable to make our stand on another stage of the measure.

MR. CREMER: I understand the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir Henry James) appeals to hon. Gentlemen below him to postpone the consideration of the measure. I wish to observe that there are many Members of the House who would have been glad to have spoken on the subject if an opportunity had been afforded them—hon. Gentlemen who feel very strongly on the subject before us. For myself, I should be sorry to separate myself from my political Friends; but, in common with many others, I feel very strongly on the matter, and should have liked to have spoken. We have, however, come unprepared to do so, not anticipating that the subject would come on to-night; and, under the circumstances, I think we are entitled to ask the indulgence of hon. Members.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Tuesday 2nd March.

Resolved, That this House do now adjourn.—(Mr. John Talbot.)

House adjourned at half
after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 19th February, 1886.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

MINUTES.]—SESSIONAL COMMITTEES—Standing Orders Committee, appointed and nominated; Committee of Selection, appointed and nominated.

PUBLIC BILLS—First Reading—Lunacy Acts Amendment* (12); Lunacy* (13).

THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA.

QUESTION.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he would lay on the Table a Report of an inquiry into certain irregularities alleged to have taken place in connection with the matriculation examination in the University of Malta?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Earl GRANVILLE), in reply, said, that no Report upon the subject had been received at the Colonial Office. His Predecessor in Office, in consequence of a Notice which was given by the noble Viscount, wrote to the Governor of Malta to send a Report to the Colonial Office; but it had not yet arrived. When it came he would look it through, and inform the noble Viscount whether there would be any objection to its production.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR SCOTLAND.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had received (by post) from the Lord Clerk Register of Scotland,

Minutes of the election of the Earl of Dundonald as one of the sixteen Peers of Scotland, 4th February 1886, in room of Cunningham Lord Borthwick, deceased; and

Separate Return by the Lord Clerk Register of certain Titles of Peerage called at the said election, in right of which respectively no vote had been received and counted at any election for fifty years then last past (pursuant to Act 14th and 15th Vict., chap. 87.)

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:—

M. Winchester.	L. de Ros.
M. Bath.	L. Clinton.
Ld. Steward.	L. Saye and Sele.
E. Devon.	L. Balfour of Burley.
E. Carnarvon.	L. Boyle.
E. Cadogan.	L. Monson.
E. Milltown.	L. Digby.
E. Belmore.	L. Thurlow.
E. Chichester.	L. Hopetoun.
E. Powis.	L. Foxford.
E. Verulam.	L. Colchester.
E. Morley.	L. Silchester.
E. Amherst.	L. De Tabley.
E. Camperdown.	L. Sudeley.
E. Duce.	L. Belper.
E. Lathom.	L. Hartismere.
V. Hawarden.	L. Penryhn.
V. Hutchinson.	L. Wolverton.
V. Hardinge.	L. Sandhurst.
V. Eversley.	L. Colville of Culross.

PRIVATE BILLS.

All Petitions relating to Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present Session referred to the Standing Orders Committee unless otherwise ordered.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

The Lords following; viz.,

E. Morley.	L. Boyle.
E. Lathom.	L. Colville of Culross.

with the Chairman of Committees were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Acts relating to lunatics — Was presented by The Lord Chancellor; read 1st. (No. 12.)

LUNACY BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to consolidate the enactments respecting lunatics — Was presented by The Lord Chancellor; read 1st. (No. 13.)

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 19th February, 1886.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Stephen O'Mara, esquire, for Queen's County (Osney Division).

SELECT COMMITTEES.—Printing, appointed and nominated; Mr. Octavius Vaughan Morgan, appointed.

SUPPLY.—considered in Committee—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-6); CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Votes 7, 10, 15; CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS, Votes 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 15, 34, 41; CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE, Votes 5, 17, 27, 29.

PUBLIC BILLS — Ordered — First Reading — Coal Mines * [92]; Glebe Lands * [93]; Copyhold and Customary Tenure * [94]; Common Juries Remuneration * [95]; Ground Game Act (1880) Amendment * [96]; Railway Regulation * [97]; Education (Scotland) (School Fees) * [98]; Commons and Inclosure Acts Amendment * [99]; Parliamentary Voters Registration * [100].

First Reading—Land Registry * [91].

Second Reading — Theatres, &c. (Metropolis) [69], debate adjourned.

QUESTIONS.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS — HILLESDEN NATIONAL SCHOOL.

CAPTAIN VERNEY asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether his attention has been called to a case of severe corporal punishment inflicted by Ellen Scholding, schoolmistress of the National School, Hillesden, Bucking-

hamshire, on Monday 18th January 1886, upon Harriett Stuchbury, a mistress, aged fourteen years, for the offence of laughing in church the previous day; and, whether such a punishment for such an offence, inflicted by the school-mistress in school hours, and justified by the school managers, meets with the approval of the Education Department?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (SIR LYON PLAYFAIR), in reply, said, this was one of the cases, fortunately very rare, in which a teacher punished a child in the school for an offence committed in the church. The punishment was unduly severe, and the teacher was brought before the magistrates, who dismissed the case, but warned the mistress to be more careful in future. It had been the practice of the Department to abide by a magisterial decision. At the same time the mistress had been reprimanded, with a warning that a repetition of the offence would require more serious action than a reprimand.

EGYPT—WAR IN THE SOUDAN—THE GARRISON AT KASSALA.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's late Government took steps to relieve the Egyptian Garrison of Kassala; and, if so, what success attended those efforts, and what is the present condition of the town and garrison?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BRYCE): The relief of Kassala was the subject of careful consideration by Her Majesty's late Government, as appears by the Parliamentary Papers laid before the House. The various proposals made, the steps taken, and the results could hardly be explained within the usual limits of an answer to a Parliamentary Question; but the hon. Member will find full information upon the subject in the Parliamentary Paper, Egypt No. 20, 1885, recently distributed, and in a further Paper only distributed this morning, Egypt, No. 2, 1886.

MR. O'KELLY: Have the Government any information in regard to the present condition of the Kassala garrison?

MR. BRYCE: The hon. Member will find the latest information we possess in the Paper issued this morning.

VOL. CCCL [THIRD SERIES.]

EXPLOSIONS IN MINES—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

COLONEL BLUNDELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Why no Report has as yet been presented by the Royal Commission, appointed in 1879—

"For the purpose of inquiring and reporting whether, with respect to the influence of fluctuations of atmospheric pressure upon the issue of firedamp from coal, to the adoption of trustworthy indications of the presence of firedamp, and generally to modes of systematic observation of the air in mines; to improved methods of ventilation and illumination; to employment of explosive agents in the getting of minerals; and to other particulars relating to mines and mining operations, the resources of science furnish any practicable expedients that are not now in use, and are calculated to prevent the occurrence of accidents or limit their disastrous consequences;"

and, how soon the Commissioners may be depended upon to present their Report?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS), in reply, said, he had made careful inquiry as to the delay in the production of this Report. He was assured by the Chairman of the Commission that the delay had been inevitable, as the experiments on safer methods of blasting had been too important to be hurried over. The Commission was now sitting three days a-week, and hoped to have their Report ready by the end of the month.

THE LUNACY COMMISSIONERS (IRELAND)—THE REPORT.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Report of the Lunacy Commissioners, Ireland, for the year 1884, which should have been issued last year, has not yet been delivered; and, whether he will take steps to cause the Annual Report to be got out in a reasonable time after the expiration of each year?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY), in reply, said, the Report was in course of preparation, and no time would be lost in presenting it to Parliament.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS.

MR. DLXON-HARTLAND asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether an early reply may be expected from

METROPOLIS—LONDON MUNICIPAL REFORM.

Mr. JAMES STUART asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What are the intentions of Her Majesty's Government with respect to the Reform of the Municipal Government of London?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): My hon. Friend will understand that it is impossible for me at the present moment, within a few days after taking Office, to give any definite pledge of the intentions of the Government on so important a question.

CENTRAL AMERICA—THE PANAMA CANAL.

Mr. MAGNIAO asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any person has been authorised, as has been stated, to represent this Country upon the inquiry into the condition of the works in connection with the Panama Canal which is now being held upon the spot under the direction of M. de Lesseps; and, if so, who that person is, and what are his instructions?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE): The statement referred to is incorrect. No person has been authorized by Her Majesty's Government to represent this country upon the inquiry in question.

THE SUEZ CANAL.

Mr. MAGNIAO asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the legal opinion in regard to the question of widening the Suez Canal, which the late Government informed the House was being taken, has yet been obtained; if so, when it and the case submitted, and any other papers bearing upon the question, will be submitted to the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE): The opinion has not yet been obtained owing to the change of Government. The Reports of the Law Officers of the Crown are confidential Papers, and it would be contrary to usage and precedent to lay them before Parliament. As soon as the communications between Her Majesty's Government and that of Egypt have come to a definite issue Papers will

be laid on the Table which will afford full information upon the subject.

SCOTLAND—FARM SERVANTS—A ROYAL COMMISSION.

Dr. CLARK asked the Secretary for Scotland, If the Government, in view of future legislation regarding the agricultural labourers, will appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the condition of the farm servants of Scotland as to their system of service and hours of labour, and the extent to which the Bothy system is still carried on, and the physical and moral results of that system?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN): The Government have not had any complaint of late years with regard to the condition of the farm servants in Scotland which would appear to call for the appointment of another Royal Commission—always rather a serious matter when there are so many subjects into which inquiry is demanded. The condition of the Scotch agricultural labourer was very fully inquired into by the Commission on the Employment of Young Persons and Women in Agriculture. In point of fact, it was a Commission of Inquiry on all subjects relating to the agricultural population; and the Commission devoted to Scotland the whole of their Fourth Report, of the year 1870, some 500 pages long. I cannot think the state of affairs has changed sufficiently to demand fresh inquiry; and I would be very glad if hon. Gentlemen examine this Report very carefully before they make up their minds that further inquiry is necessary.

INDIA (BENGAL)—LEGAL APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. HUNTER asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Chief Justice of Bengal is about to take leave; whether, on a former occasion when the Chief Justice took leave, the senior puisne Judge, Mr. Mitter, was appointed to act as Chief Justice during his absence; and, whether, on the present occasion, the same course would be followed, or a Judge junior to Mr. Mitter appointed?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SMITH): Sir Richard Garth has found leave of absence to be absolutely neces-

easy, because of the state of his health. He has, at the same time, expressed a wish to retire; and I have reason to know that by the end of March his retirement will take place. In that case it is not likely that a temporary appointment will be necessary. I believe that what is stated in the second paragraph of the Question is quite correct. There has been a rumour that Mr. Justice Cunningham would be appointed to act in Sir Richard Garth's absence; but that rumour has no foundation. Nor it is true that there has been an intention to pass over Mr. Mitter.

DEPRESSION OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY—THE UNEMPLOYED—HARBOURS OF REFUGE.

Mrs EDWARD BIRKBECK asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will give his serious consideration to the advisability of employing workmen, who at the present time are without employment on account of the existing depression, in order to carry out at once the necessary works for the formation of harbours of refuge on the East and North East Coasts of England?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): It would more properly appertain to my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board to answer a Question relating to the employment of workmen who, unfortunately, are out of employment; but I am very glad to meet the Question after having communicated with my right hon. Friend. And, Sir, what I have to say is that there are many reasons which would prevent me from holding out the expectation desired by the hon. Gentleman—namely, that we would carry out the necessary works for the formation of harbours of refuge on the East and North-East Coasts of England. One among those reasons is that there has been, and there is, aided by the public in a beneficial manner, a large amount of private enterprise in connection with works of that kind; and I am afraid that an announcement such as the Question asks would paralyze that private enterprise, and very possibly lead to the dismissal of a number of persons now employed.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND—SALE OF ADVOWSONS.

Mr. BARTLEY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the sale by private

auction of the advowson of St. Catherine's Church, Abercromby Square, Liverpool, on the 11th of February last, when it was reported that the bidding began at £100, and increased by small amounts till it reached £700, the reserved price; that there was a large attendance, and the bidding went on amid considerable excitement till the sum of £1,055 was reached, when the advowson was sold; and, whether the Government will bring in a Bill this Session to stop such sales in the Established Church?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): I am cognizant of the evil practices connected with sales of the rights of Church property; and I am very desirous that Parliament should entertain favourably any reasonable measure for the purpose of checking or putting an end to these abuses. I have always endeavoured to promote and obtain facilities, as far as I could, for discussing measures of that kind in this House; but I own that measures of that kind might very well be left in the hands of private Members. I do not think the Government, in the present state of its actual and possible engagements, could undertake to bring in any such Bill.

DEPRESSION OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY—THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will state to the House the intentions of the Government with regard to the Commission of Inquiry into the Depression of Trade; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will provide the funds necessary for the continuance of the work of the Commission?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA): I am desired by the Prime Minister to answer the hon. Member's Question. I may say that there is no intention on the part of the Government to depart from the usual practice, and to interrupt or interfere with the work of the Royal Commission. On the contrary, I can say, on behalf of my own Department and of the Government, that they are willing to give to the Commission all the information and assistance in their power.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the latter part of my Question.

Mr. MUNDELLA: I think I have. I said we were willing to give "all the assistance in our power."

DEPRESSION OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY—THE INQUIRY.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he intended to lay before the House the information which he would obtain in answer to the inquiry he was now conducting as to the degree and the extent of the prevailing distress?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN): Yes, Sir. The inquiries I am conducting are very extensive. I have addressed Circulars to various local bodies and private individuals; and I have already received, and still receive, a great deal of information on the subject. As soon as this approaches completion I propose to lay Papers on the Table.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE RECORDERSHIP OF LIVERPOOL.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether a gentleman had been appointed to the Recordership of Liverpool; and, if so, whether he had received any communication from the Corporation of Liverpool with regard to the salary attaching to the office; and whether any reply had been sent?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he should reply to this Question on Monday, the Notice of it having only reached him a short time ago.

In reply to Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS,

Mr. CHILDERS said, that the appointment rested with the Home Secretary, and not with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question bearing on the Business of this evening. Supply stands as the first Order of the day. The House is aware that no hon. Gentleman has yet been appointed to fill the Office of Chairman of Committees. I think there

is a general feeling in the House that such an appointment should not be made without previous Notice, and without more formality than the ordinary Motion that a certain Member should take the Chair. Therefore, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he could now state to the House whom he intends to move into the Chair?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): My intention was to conform to the usual practice; and the usual practice, undoubtedly, is to name, at the time when Supply is called upon, a certain Member for the Chairmanship of the Committee. But whether that practice ought to be altered may be open to consideration, and I do not give any opinion adverse to such a view. I wish to reserve it for impartial consideration. Undoubtedly, if I had known that there was an anxiety on the subject, I should not have had the least difficulty in stating yesterday what we propose to do. I now willingly state to the right hon. Gentleman, in anticipation of the possibility of reaching Supply to-night, that my intention is to propose that my hon. Friend the Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall (Mr. Courtney), the Secretary to the Treasury under a former Administration, should be Chairman of Committees.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN asked, whether, when the new Rules were under consideration, it was not the understanding of the House that the Chairman of Committees should not be appointed without due Notice being given, and an opportunity afforded for full discussion?

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I think I can state what took place. I am not aware of any understanding to the effect just stated with regard to the Chairman of Committees. The choice of Chairman is a very responsible duty resting on the Government, who uniformly propose him; and I do not recollect any announcement of an intention to change the existing practice. What did exist, and may have led to the misapprehension, was a feeling that there ought to be some measure adopted to prevent the introduction of what were called, perhaps rather irreverently, "casual" Chairmen on occasions from time to time. In that opinion I entirely shared. We considered a plan for amending what we thought required amendment. I gave

Notice of this plan after it had been much considered, in the hope that it would receive universal consent; but a right hon. Gentleman, I think, if I remember right, of very considerable authority on such matters, immediately blocked my Notice, and gave intimation that it would have to be subject to full discussion, and it may not be in my power to find time in the House for the purpose.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman would revive his Motion?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I should be disposed to revive that Notice, provided I see a reasonable prospect of being able to pass it without a serious demand on the time of the House. I do not think I could undertake to find any considerable portion of time for its discussion.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL'S VISIT TO BELFAST.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, with a view to eventualities, he intends to detail any official shorthand writers to accompany the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington on the occasion of his visit to Belfast?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I have not hitherto thought of this course; but it shall have my best consideration.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

EVICTIIONS (IRELAND).—CASE OF THE WIDOW, ANNE SHAW, CO. MONAGHAN.—RESOLUTION.

MR. T. M. HEALY, in rising to call attention to the eviction of the widow, Anne Shaw, from her freehold in county Monaghan, by Mr. Jesse Lloyd, J.P., Clerk of the Peace of that county, and to the judgment of the Court of Appeal thereon in December last; and to move—

"That the falsification of the records of the Monaghan County Court by the Clerk of the Peace, observed on by the Court of Appeal, calls for the immediate removal of the officials implicated,"

said, he thought some apology was due to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) for the way in which the Motion had necessarily been brought on while the right hon. Gentleman was new to his Office, and therefore could not be supposed to be directly acquainted with the facts of the case. Dublin Castle, at any rate, had sufficient notice of the matter; and he thought it was most unfortunate that nothing would be done by that institution for the chastisement of officials in Ireland, except direct attention was called thereto by a Motion in that House. Mr. Jesse Lloyd was a J.P., and was Clerk of the Peace for the County Monaghan and Chairman of the Monaghan Board of Guardians. He was also a local landlord, and the person who did his evictions for him was his deputy as Clerk of the Peace—Mr. J. W. Johnson. Some two years ago a plot of ground, formerly belonging to the Presbyterian Widows' Fund, and held as a freehold by a Presbyterian widow named Anne Shaw, was, by some mischance, included by the Landed Estates Court in a conveyance of certain lands to Colonel Lloyd. Colonel Lloyd thereupon got a decree for possession against this poor woman; and on her appealing to the Judge of Assizes the Judge affirmed the decree for possession, but made an order staying the execution of the decree until she got a lease of the premises for her life at a nominal rent. In the course of a few months, however, Colonel Lloyd, with his deputy Johnson, turned the poor woman out of her holding, and levelled the house to the ground without giving her a farthing compensation. Mrs. Shaw then, by the aid of a public subscription—for she was a helpless poor woman of 80 years of age—brought an action against Colonel Lloyd for the specific performance of the order for a lease made by the Judge of Assizes. When this matter came before the Court it was found that either Colonel Lloyd or his deputy had falsified the record of the judgment given by the Judge of Assize in their own Court in a manner unfavourable to Mrs. Shaw; and this conduct on their part was sharply com-

mented upon by Lord Justice Fitzgibbon and Lord Justice Barry. After the judgment given by those two learned Judges he (Mr. Healy) thought Colonel Lloyd should not be allowed to remain one moment longer in the office of Clerk of the Peace. The case might appear a paltry one; but it was in miniature a picture of the violence of the oppression of the poor in Ireland. Landlordism ran through every pore of private and public life in Ireland, and poisoned and debilitated public justice at its very core. When those landlords committed crimes for which they ought to be whipped at the cart-tail, and even when their deeds had been branded as crimes by a Judge like Mr. Justice Fitzgibbon, they were allowed to retain their positions. They all heard a great deal about injuries inflicted in Ireland upon people who were very well able to take care of themselves; they could write to the newspapers and make the House and the country ring with their injuries, while this poor woman had been deprived of her rights by oppressors who were receiving public money. If this man's conduct was allowed to pass unchallenged, he would say that no matter how the figure-heads in public positions changed with different Governments, the men at the wheel were the same old hands, and Dublin Castle remained the same as regarded the protection of the oppressor. In conclusion, he begged to move the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the falsification of the records of the Monaghan County Court by the Clerk of the Peace, observed on by the Court of Appeal, calls for the immediate removal of the officials implicated,"—(*Mr. Timothy Healy*),

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (*Mr. JOHN MORLEY*): I do not suppose that any Member of the House will think that the hon. and learned Member (*Mr. T. M. Healy*) has done anything but his duty in bringing before the attention of the House what, for my own part, I must admit is a very serious and disagreeable-looking affair. The

hon. and learned Member was good enough to say that he could not expect me, who have been so short a time in my present Office, to have mastered all the details of the case; and that is perfectly true, and I have a right to some allowance in the matter. But, in fact, the details of the case between Colonel Lloyd and Anne Shaw are not particularly important in forming a judgment on the issue raised by the hon. and learned Member. As I am informed, Colonel Lloyd, who was Clerk of the Peace for the county of Monaghan, brought an action of ejectment against Anne Shaw. It was brought in the Civil Bill Court of Monaghan, and a decree got. Anne Shaw appealed; and, by consent, the decree was affirmed, Anne Shaw to get a lease of the place. After a considerable time, the lease not having been taken out, through Shaw's own default, according to Lloyd, he executed the decree, and, according to what I have long looked upon as a very barbarous usage, pulled down the house. Anne Shaw then brought an action compelling the granting of a lease, and for damage. Lloyd moved to remit the action from the Superior Courts to the County Court; the Court of Exchequer refused to grant the order to remit, and, on appeal by Lloyd, the Court of Appeal confirmed the order of refusal. Then comes the offence. At the hearing of the appeal two documents purporting to be copies of the Judge's order at the Assizes, and both signed by the Deputy Clerk of the Peace, were produced, one of which was less favourable to Anne Shaw than the other; and there appears to be no doubt that Lord Justice Fitzgibbon did make the very definite condemnation of this duplicate copy of the decree referred to by the hon. and learned Member. The difference between the two copies was relied upon by the Court as one of the grounds for not sending the case to be tried before a Court of which Lloyd was an official. No falsification was attributed by the Court, and no materials existed for forming an opinion on the question. As this and other matters relating to the case form the subject of an inquiry before a Judge and jury, I am advised that it would be contrary to usage, and it appears to me it would be contrary to common justice, to interfere in the matter of the falsifying, if I may use the word, of these documents until

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the case itself is decided. I can only promise the hon. and learned Gentleman that if I am still in Office when the case is decided, I will not lose sight of it, and every effort will be made to impress upon those whom it concerns my own very strong opinion of what is much wanted in Ireland—not more by one section of the people than another—a strict, and scrupulous, and literal adherence to the spirit of legality; and in this of itself not very important case it may be our duty to affirm a very grave principle, and possibly to read an important lesson.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that after the statement of the right hon. Gentleman he would not press his Motion further, and begged to withdraw it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed.

AFFAIRS OF SOUTH AFRICA.

QUESTIONS. OBSERVATIONS.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER, in asking the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to the land claims in Bechuanaland, the title of the Boers to land in Zululand, and the sale of intoxicating drinks in the Transkeian territory? said, he thought that, even though they might not go so far in opinion upon the drink question as Sir Wilfrid Lawson, they would all acknowledge that the drink traffic among uncivilized races led to great abominations.

Mr. A. W. HALL asked for an explanation of the meaning of the Suzerain rights which Her Majesty exercised over Bechuanaland; and for some information as to the commercial relations with the Transvaal?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN), in reply, said, that on the 7th of October a Land Commission was appointed in Bechuanaland, of which Mr. Justice Shippard was President, supported by two other Commissioners. The object of the Commission was to inquire into and report on the validity of land claims, and to ascertain what persons had good and valid titles to land. The Commission had been at work for about three months, and had apparently given satisfaction. The Instructions given by Sir Hercules Robinson to the Commissioners were in print, and would shortly be

issued to the House. Those Instructions made special provision for marking off a sufficient amount of grazing and garden land for the support of the Native tribes; and the Commission were also to report upon the validity of European claims. Affairs in Zululand would not be allowed by the present Heads of the Colonial Office to pass as matters of indifference to this country. He would admit that the country was not in a satisfactory condition; but he did not think it could be termed lawless. During the last three years, subsequent to the death of Cetewayo, numerous inter-tribal disputes had taken place, in the course of which, the Usutua having called in the Boers to assist them against the Chief Uabepu, the Boers had since remained in the country, and established themselves on land which they had appropriated to their own use; and, therefore, a telegram, dated the 4th of January last, had been despatched to Sir Charles Mitchell by the late Colonial Secretary, which he read to the House, and which marked out generally the policy which the present Government were prepared to follow in regard to the Boers in Zululand. With reference to the sale of intoxicating liquors in the Transkeian territory, he was not able at present to give an answer to the hon. Gentleman's Question, having been so short a time—only a week—in Office, and he thought he was entitled to fuller Notice; but if the Question were repeated next week, he would endeavour to give the fullest information which might then be at his disposal. He believed, however, there was a prohibitory Proclamation of the nature referred to by the hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Fowler) in force throughout the country.

SIR FREDERICK STANLEY said, he desired to express his satisfaction at what had fallen from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) with reference to the question of policy in Zululand, although he had not been able to hear his observations regarding Bechuanaland. He (Sir Frederick Stanley) was glad to find that Her Majesty's Advisers, like Her late ones, were not prepared to allow matters in Zululand to be viewed with indifference in this country. He must frankly take upon himself any blame

there might be for any want of action during the past six months with regard to Zululand. When Dinizulu, the son of Cetewayo, had invited some of the Boers in the Transvaal to assist him in the intertribal war beyond the Reserve, certain of the Boers took advantage of the Treaty that was made, being vague in its terms as to the extent of the land and the number of persons to whom it applied. He wished that he could think that both the Boers and the Zulus had been otherwise than willing to leave the Treaty in a condition that was as indefinite as possible. In fact, he fully believed that the terms, which were unnecessarily vague, were purposely left so with the knowledge of many persons upon both sides. A very much larger number of Boers, in consequence, than those with whom the Zulus had been in correspondence flocked in, and on the strength of the agreement began to settle down and survey or "ride out" part of the country. They had done this in the name of a body which was set up calling itself the "New Republic." Mr. Essellon, the so-called Secretary of State of that body, a gentleman of very great ability, came over to England to see him, and to ask for recognition from Her Majesty's late Government. On the advice of his Colleagues, he (Sir Frederick Stanley) was compelled to reply that recognition could not be accorded; and up to the present time the "New Republic" had not been recognized, except as a certain number of individuals acting together with no authority as a State. The "New Republic," however, or persons acting on its behalf, began to mark out farms right down to St. Lucia Bay, where, whatever might be the value of the territory as regarded the future, the Protectorate of this country had been declared. That was known to the Boers, and it was clear that Her Majesty's Government could not allow any interference with the territory. Perhaps he might say that having regard to the state of political affairs, and of the possibility of that which had since come to pass, he did not wish to lead the Zulus, or any persons, to believe that Her Majesty's Government were going to take a course of action distinctly in favour of the Zulus, or one distinctly against their claims; because, having in view—and he said this without meaning to be offensive—what had occurred in the case of

a reversal before, he considered it would be wrong to lead them to believe that this country would give them such active support as would induce them to take up a position which the predecisions of the late Government might not sustain. He had had an opportunity of consulting Sir Henry Bulwer upon this question; and his views as to what action with regard to Zululand would be practicable and expedient had been embodied in certain Papers. The policy which he (Sir Frederick Stanley) was prepared to recommend to his Colleagues, but which circumstances had prevented him doing, was embodied in a Memorandum which he frankly placed at the disposal of his noble Friend who had succeeded him in Office. His own view was this—he believed that the Boers, whether they called them the "New Republic" or not, had acquired moral rights to some extent by lapse of time, by tacit recognition on the part of the late Government and their Predecessors, and by right of Treaty, although the latter had been unduly strained. They could not, therefore, be treated as interlopers, and certainly ought not to be dispossessed by any force without full inquiry. On the other hand, as he had stated, there could be no moral doubt that the Treaty had been strained much too far; for some who certainly had taken no part in the war now claimed under the agreement. The Zulus had, for the first time, submitted the state of affairs to us, in order to effect an arrangement, so that now there were three parties concerned in these matters. There were the Boers who claimed the farms they occupied, there were the Zulus who asked to be defended, and there was Natal whose interests were the most important of all. He was not without hope that the services of some person possessed of influence like Mr. Randolph—a gentleman who had the rare merit of combining in his own person the confidence both of the Dutch and the English Colonists, and who, from his knowledge of the locality, was well qualified for advising what the Government should and should not allow—might be made use of in arranging a fair boundary. What he had seen in the newspapers that morning encouraged him in thinking that that might be done. He did not believe that the New Republic of the Boers would be dissatisfied if, whilst refusing

Sir Frederick Stanley

to treat with them as a separate body, we advised that recognition by the Zulus of certain terms to be prepared. He believed it would be perfectly consistent with the interests of this country, of the Zulus, and of the Transvaal, that a delimitation should be made by amicable arrangement, though, judging from the past, he did not suppose it would be altogether free from danger or difficulty. He thought he was doing the best in his power by bringing all three matters as far as possible upon a road which would be common to the late Government and their Successors. He was simply speaking for himself, and he was glad that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had said that Lord Granville saw no reason to depart from the course hitherto pursued; and he might possibly bring these matters, without the interposition of an armed force, to an amicable settlement. Up to the time he (Sir Frederick Stanley) left Office the latest information with respect to Bechuanaland was satisfactory. The Land Commission was either sitting or about to sit; and nothing could have exceeded the satisfactory nature of the general Reports that the Colonial Office had received on the subject. As those who took an interest in the matter were aware, the late Government departed, to some extent, from the general Protectorate which their Predecessors had assumed in respect of carrying the Protectorate up to, he believed, Parallel 22. They did not think, with regard to the territory immediately adjacent to the Cape Colony, that it was sufficient, on the one hand, to extend it, or, on the other, to annex it, to the Cape Colony. Therefore, they advised Her Majesty to extend her dominion, to take in Stellaland, and that over that territory British law might be administered in the same way as in other parts of Her Majesty's territories. In connection with this matter he must mention the name of Mr. Shippard, a gentleman who commanded the confidence of every place to which he had gone. Sir Hercules Robinson had visited Bechuanaland, and had seen how Mr. Shippard's work had proceeded; and he believed that the country might soon settle down and become quiet by means of the police which had been established. Those who knew the country said that the police were better, for all practical purposes, than a military

force. A certain attempt which might have turned to filibustering had been made soon after the establishment of the police; and it was necessary to take the precautionary step of arresting certain persons engaged in it. If filibustering was promptly dealt with in that way, a great deal would be done for the pacification of the country. The reports from Basutoland, also, were highly satisfactory. Too much could not be said in praise of the Resident, Colonel Clarke, who exercised a remarkable degree of influence over those with whom he came in contact. The Chiefs appeared to have come under his sway; and certainly the pacification of Basutoland was greatly due to the personal influence of that officer. He begged to apologize for intruding on the House; but as his own action had been alluded to he thought it right to state what had taken place when he was at the Colonial Office.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-6).

Order for Committee read.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): I beg to move that the hon. Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall (Mr. Courtney) take the Chair.

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £3,300, Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, that he congratulated the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney) on being nominated to the important Office of Chairman of Committees, and felt confident that the House and country would be well pleased to have the benefit of that hon. Gentleman's knowledge and experience in that Office. He (Sir George Balfour) would also add that as in the new Parliament there were a very large number of new Members, he presumed all of them were anxious, while securing the efficiency of the Public Service, to

bring about a more thorough condition of economy in the Public Expenditure than had existed hitherto. He trusted greater attention to the Estimates would be given than in past years. He regretted, therefore, to have to point out to new Members that there was no information contained in the Estimates now submitted to Parliament which could possibly afford any guide to them upon points of that nature. In point of fact, under such circumstances, it was almost a waste of time to enter into a discussion of the Estimates at all. It would be better to pass the whole of the present demand of £250,000 without discussion. It was only 1 per cent of increase in the Civil Estimates, and the amount annually added had been nearly £1,000,000 a-year.

Vote agreed to.

(2.) £500, Metropolitan Police Court Buildings.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR asked for some explanation of this Vote, which, upon the face of it, was intended to be applied in providing better accommodation for the Wandsworth Police Court. That was a question which had been before the House for some years, and invariably objected to both by Members and by the Government, the plea being that until the Municipality of London was settled the reform of the Wandsworth office could not be entertained. Now, without any warning the money was asked for, and he wished to know how the matter had been settled?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I wish to explain that the Vote is due to the necessity of providing better accommodation in the way of Police Courts in London. As the hon. and gallant Member has said, the case of the Wandsworth Police Court has been before this House for 10 years, and it has very frequently been a matter of discussion. Last year the House expressed a strong opinion that the Court ought to be improved, but that the charges ought to be thrown upon the Metropolis. Pending the passing of a measure for reforming Municipal Government in the Metropolis, it was deemed necessary, in order to secure the proper administration of justice, that something should be done with regard to the Wandsworth Police Court. It was suggested that a sum of £1,500

should be spent; but my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the then Home Secretary, would not sanction, in the first instance, any expenditure beyond £1,000. I am glad to say that the total cost of the alterations which have been made, including the hiring of the Town Hall at Wandsworth for police purposes, has not exceeded £800. Under the circumstances, I think that a very satisfactory settlement has been made in a matter in regard to which there has certainly been a considerable amount of public inconvenience.

Vote agreed to.

(3.) £300, Dover Harbour.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: I think that the Committee ought not to be called upon to pass this Vote, unless some assurance is given by the Government in regard to the nature of the works which are intended to be undertaken in the future. I am afraid that the unwise step already taken of building barracks for convicts before the House has had a full and clear detail of the kind of harbour works and cost thereof will be pleaded in urging on this costly harbour; and if this item is agreed to it will only be used to strengthen the cry of Parties for the commencement of a very large expenditure indeed, as to the propriety and utility of which there are very considerable doubts. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will recollect that Votes have already been taken for the erection of a convict prison at Dover, as it was intended to construct the works in connection with the harbour by means of convict labour. But although I have repeatedly asked to have Estimates submitted to the House, I have invariably been told that these expenses were only preliminary. More than once a distinct promise has been given that before any permanent expenditure was undertaken a full explanation as to the nature and extent of the works, as well as their cost, and saving from the use of canals, would be given to the House. I think I am entitled to complain of the manner in which the subject has hitherto been dealt with; and, so far as Dover Harbour is concerned, I am of opinion that the money proposed to be spent would be better used for improving the fishery harbours; but if, on the respon-

General Sir George Balfour

sibility of the Government, a harbour is deemed essential for the safety of the country, then we ought to have a thoroughly efficient harbour of a much larger area, with deeper water for our big vessels, so that the expenditure made upon it may really prove useful.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I quite agree with my hon. and gallant Friend that Parliament ought not to abandon the works which have already been commenced at Dover, and that hon. Members are entitled to know exactly what the nature of the step is which we are about to take. The House, however, has already decided that there shall be a harbour at Dover, and that that harbour shall be constructed by convict labour. Considerable works have already been carried out there in connection with the erection of a convict prison. The sum of £300 in the present Vote is incurred entirely in preliminary expenses for providing plans of the proposed works; and there will be in the Estimates of the coming year a Vote of £1,000 for surveying the site and taking bearings. After that has been done the House will be supplied with a proper Estimate of the cost of the works; but it is absolutely impossible, in the present position of the matter, to submit full plans and Estimates.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: I must confess that the answer of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury is very unsatisfactory. Here we are involving the country in an admitted expenditure of upwards of £1,000,000, and we are not yet in possession of plans to show what the nature of the work is to be, or what cost will be ultimately entailed upon the country. But, like most engineering works, it may be safely calculated to be three or four times this sum. No doubt, the steps already taken, and the money spent on barracks for convicts, will be pleas for involving the country in a large expenditure in connection with the employment of convict labour. But these works and the outlay were incurred in the face of strong opposition from me. I am sorry that the Committee has not received a fuller explanation, and I feel bound to raise my voice against the Vote by way of protest.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: As I understand, the money is required for the pur-

pose of making plans and ascertaining what ought to be the proper site.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): Yes.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: It is quite clear that plans are absolutely necessary before anything can be decided upon as to the future works, and before that estimate of the work can be made which the hon. and gallant Member desires, and which the House will, of course, require to see before any Vote for the actual work is taken.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: What I contend is, that before Government decided upon putting the country to this very large expenditure they ought to have made all the inquiries and prepared the plans and detailed Estimates which they say, by this £300 grant, they are only now beginning to make. But full inquiries have been already made, as hon. Members can find out by referring to a volume of harbour plans laid before Parliament in 1847-8. The Admiralty of that day, moved thereto by Sir Robert Peel, had Dover Bay carefully examined, and nine of the most eminent engineers were invited to prepare plans for a harbour, and the engineer estimated the cost at £4,000,000; and less than this sum, to form an efficient harbour, cannot be expected to be incurred. I believe that I speak the opinion of many hon. Members when I say that the large sum of money which will be laid out in constructing this great harbour may be used for far more useful purposes in other directions—40 or 50 fishery harbours being possible. I believe I am fully justified in saying that the late Earl of Beaconsfield strongly opposed the construction of this harbour, and that Sir Stafford Northcote took a similar course. Indeed, in the House of Lords one of the most convincing speeches against the harbour was made by Lord Beaconsfield, against the advocacy of Lord Granville in favour of a harbour at Dover. A Liberal Government has been generally understood to be anxious to reform the Public Expenditure; but I cannot say that they have been very successful in the present instance. I do not propose to offer any further remarks to the Committee in reference to this Vote; but I wish to enter a strong protest against the course now taken.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I am glad that the attention of the Secretary to the

Treasury has been called to this Vote; and I wish to know whether, after what has fallen from the hon. and gallant Member opposite, we are to understand that by passing this Vote of £300 we are pledging the House of Commons to the future expenditure either of a sum of £750,000, or of £1,000,000—the sum at which the works are, I believe, estimated?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): No.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: Then I am clearly to understand that we are not pledging the country to such an expenditure?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): This expenditure of £300 commits the House of Commons to no pledge whatever. It is simply for the purpose of obtaining plans for ascertaining what the works will cost. No doubt, works have been going on for some time in connection with the erection of a large convict establishment for the purpose of carrying out works for the extension of Dover Harbour. Some pressure has been put upon the Government to accelerate the works in reference to that harbour; and my Predecessor in Office (Sir Henry Holland) has stated that it is absolutely impossible to ascertain what the cost of the works will be unless this preliminary inquiry is made. The sole object of the Vote is to ascertain what the works will cost.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I wish to point out to the Committee and the country that we are now about to embark in works which will cost the country, according to an Estimate which has been already given, a sum of £750,000, or probably double that sum, before they are completed. Successive Ministries have, over and over again, refused to sanction that expenditure; and, therefore, I feel bound to enter my protest against the course which is now being taken. I think it would be a very injudicious thing even to vote this sum of £300, when it is more than probable that when the Estimate for the cost of the works comes before the Committee we shall be told that we have, by our vote on this small sum, already sanctioned the work. I entirely join in the protest which has been made by the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour) against this ship-shod

way of conducting business. If this large harbour is required at Dover—and it has been held not to be required by former Governments—let the Secretary to the Treasury, or some other Member of the Government, state the reasons which have induced the Government to change their opinion, and why they now consider it desirable to ask Parliament to undertake the work.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): The right hon. Gentleman may accept, without any doubt, the assurance of my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury that this is not a Vote which alters or changes in any respect the position of the House in regard to Dover Harbour beyond what is expressed on the face of the Vote—namely, that it is intended to procure certain plans for the purpose of enabling the House to form a judgment as to the nature of the work. I am not myself distinctly acquainted with all the details of this question; but I believe that the works at Dover Harbour are very much needed, in consequence of the absolute necessity of finding employment in some shape or other for the convicts. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was Home Secretary last year, will be able to say in what state he left the matter when he gave up the Office of Home Secretary; and, no doubt, some Gentleman on the Front Bench opposite will be able to explain what took place with regard to it when right hon. Gentlemen opposite were in Office. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that nothing has been done which is in the slightest degree irregular.

MR. BAKER: I rise for the purpose of asking for information. I have been given to understand that this is simply a question of preparing plans which may or may not subsequently be carried out. If hon. Members will look a little lower down page 7, where a statement is made in reference to the Expenditure, it will be found that the details of these preliminary expenses include hire of labour, rent of offices, and the salary of a foreman of works. Those who are at all acquainted with the building trade will be aware that the last thing you do before you commence the erection of works is to employ a foreman of works. I never heard of a foreman of works being employed before the plans

Sir Robert Peel

were regularly formulated; and, therefore, the explanation which has just been given in regard to this Vote is not one which is worthy of the attention of the Committee. As one of the new Members of the present Parliament, I must apologize for intruding upon the attention of the Committee; but I wish to point out to the Committee how impossible it is for those who are desirous of assisting in any way in obtaining the retrenchment of the Expenditure of the country to do so with justice to themselves, considering that the document containing these Estimates was only given to hon. Members this morning. I would submit that it is most desirable these Votes, whether only supplementary or on account, should be placed in the hands of hon. Members some time before it is possible for them to be brought forward.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER. SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I agree with my hon. Friend's remarks as to the time at which the Estimates have been laid upon the Table; but the Government are really not responsible for what has taken place. To-night is the very earliest night on which it has been possible to go into Supply; and my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government said last night that there were really very few days at the disposal of the Government before the close of the financial year on which it would be possible to deal with these questions. No doubt, it is inconvenient; but that inconvenience is inevitable. With regard to Dover Harbour, it is now two years since the matter was discussed in the House; and I stated then, with, I think, the acquiescence of both sides of the House, how the matter stood. I then occupied the position of Home Secretary; and I had to consider, as hon. Gentlemen who preceded and succeeded me know very well, that one of the questions which pressed for settlement when the Government came into Office in 1880 was what was to be done with the convicts who were likely to be set free by the approaching completion of the works at Portland, Chatham, and elsewhere. It is a most important part of our penal system that there should be some public works on which convicts may be employed. That is absolutely essential. We could not carry on our penal system with any advantage unless we had some public work on which convict labour

could be employed. Then we had to consider what were the works which could be carried on to the best advantage under these circumstances; and a Committee was appointed to consider the rival claims of Dover and Filey as suitable stations for a harbour of refuge. In this House there has always been, as any hon. Gentleman who has taken an interest in the question knows, a sort of rivalry in regard to the construction of a harbour of refuge between Filey and Dover. It must be remembered that we had to deal with the roughest kind of labour, and not with persons who could be employed to do work here, there, and everywhere. Convict labour can only be employed under very strict and limited conditions. The work provided should be such as to employ a large number of men in the same place for a long time, as otherwise we could not afford to build a prison for them, and to make arrangements that would be necessary for them. Therefore, on completing the large works at Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Chatham, where you have been in the habit of employing convict labour, it became essential that, in continuing to employ that labour, you should provide works of a similar character, upon which you would be able to employ labour of the roughest kind, and which works themselves would last for a considerable period. All these circumstances were carefully considered by a Committee of the Cabinet, who had in their deliberations the assistance of eminent naval and military men. The question was fully considered by all parties interested in the matter; and we came to the conclusion, which was announced to the House, that, on the whole, it was desirable to continue and complete the extension of Dover Harbour by constructing another breakwater which should go out at right angles from the Admiralty Pier. The Committee were of opinion that that was the best work which could be undertaken. It was a matter which was under consideration for several years; and there have been plans made—some larger and some smaller—by the Dover Harbour Commissioners and so forth in connection with the proposed works. But we determined that, on the whole, before entering upon the works themselves, it was necessary to build a prison for the convicts; and the way in which

a prison is built for convicts is this. In the first instance, the custom is to erect a small prison by contract, capable of holding a few men, and when that has been done the convicts themselves are employed in building a larger prison. It is proposed that we should employ something like 1,000 men at Dover; but, in the first instance, there will be built by contract a prison—I speak from memory—capable of accommodating 200 men. When that is completed and the convicts are sent there, they will be employed in building the larger prison; and I believe that that work is now going on—I mean the building of this larger prison. That is my recollection of the facts of the case. The larger question of the character of the works in connection with the harbour itself has been left unsettled; but it is to be settled within the very few years which it is estimated the building of the prison will occupy. The Prison Vote, according to my recollection of the matter, is not in any way concerned with the construction of the harbour itself. I believe that the Admiralty have not yet settled that question.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (MR. HIBBERT): No.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): My hon. Friend says that that has not been settled; and, therefore, the character of the harbour works itself is still undecided, and all questions as to the actual dimensions. The position and the cost of the harbour works must be brought under the consideration of the House at a future time. According to my recollection, the Estimate formed of the expenditure involved in building the prison itself amounts to the sum of between £50,000 and £60,000. That expenditure is not yet completed. Indeed, I think that it is not half completed. The work is still going on, and all other matters are still in abeyance and under the control of the Treasury.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I think the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in conjunction with that which has been made by the Prime Minister and the Secretary to the Treasury, requires some further explanation from the Government. The late Home Secretary says that an arrangement has been made for the establishment of a harbour at Dover; and in the position he now

occupies as Chancellor of the Exchequer he informs the Committee that we are about to establish a convict prison at Dover, at an expense of from £50,000 to £60,000, for the purpose of undertaking works which every successive Government has condemned up to the present hour. That is a fact within my own knowledge. I recollect, years ago, expenditure of a similar character being incurred in connection with Alderney Harbour. Thousands and tens of thousands of pounds, amounting, in the whole, to more than £1,000,000, were thrown away upon those worthless works, which were supposed, at the time, to be of some advantage to us in protecting us from an invasion from France, but which have since been proved to be utterly valueless. The harbour of Dover is acknowledged to be valueless as a harbour of refuge; and yet it is stated that convict labour is to be employed there for the purpose of constructing a harbour of refuge. I think it is most important that the new Parliament, now assembled here, should have these subjects thoroughly threshed out, in order that they may understand what it is, in these days of economical professions, they are pledging the country to. I see before me my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), who has always taken great interest in these Estimates; and, although I am sorry to see that he is not a Member of the Government, I hope that he will still observe some of that independence of character which has always characterized him. I would ask him now to get up in his place and make a statement in confirmation of what I have stated. In the few remarks addressed to the Committee by the Prime Minister, the right hon. Gentleman alluded to the necessity of finding employment for convicts; but what I wish to know is, whether the Government have, in anyway, sanctioned the expenditure of £50,000 or £60,000 on a convict establishment at Dover, with the view of constructing harbour works, which are to cost at least £700,000, and probably £1,400,000 before they are finished? Is this the object for which a convict prison is being provided at Dover for the employment of the convicts who have been released from the construction of public works at Portsmouth and Plymouth?

Sir William Harcourt

In my opinion, that is not the way in which the expenditure of the public money should be carried on. If you want to employ convicts, do it in some other way, and not in the construction of works which everyone knows will be of no value at all as a harbour of refuge. In my humble judgment we, in this House, should set our faces at once against a Vote of this kind, unless we have a distinct understanding that we shall not find ourselves pledged, in the course of a few years, to a much larger expenditure.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): The House has already expressed an opinion on this subject.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I think the right hon. Gentleman is mistaken.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): The House expressed a deliberate opinion upon it two years ago at my invitation. The proposition was that there should be a harbour of refuge established at Dover. I do not know whether the right hon. Baronet was present when the subject was brought forward. [SIR ROBERT PEEL: I was.] Then the right hon. Baronet must know that the whole matter was considered, and that the House came to a deliberate opinion that the works should be done, and authorized the commencement of the convict prison. That was distinctly the case; and if the right hon. Baronet will refer back to the report of the debate, he will see that the whole matter was fairly placed before the House, and that all that was left unsettled then was the exact plans of the breakwater, which were to be subject to a revision and consideration afterwards. The House was distinctly asked to pledge itself to the proposition that a breakwater should be constructed at Dover, and that a convict prison should be built for the purpose of making provision for the convicts who were to be employed in making the breakwater. That proposition was deliberately affirmed by the House; and what is now left for the House of Commons to do is, to say what sum they propose to spend upon that breakwater. That is the only question now left; but that subject cannot be raised on the Vote now before the Committee. It can only be raised when the Committee are asked for a Vote to defray the cost of the harbour, and the present

Vote is only for the purpose of having plans prepared.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: The adoption of the Vote would pledge the House to more than that.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): Not as I understand it; but I did not prepare the Estimate. As I understand the matter, it has been proposed simply for the purpose of making provision for plans in reference to the construction of harbour works. I am sure that the plans have not yet been prepared; of that I feel perfectly convinced; and there must be a further application to the House before anything can be done in the matter. When the House is asked to vote a sum of money for the harbour works the whole question of the construction of a harbour of refuge will arise, and it will then be open for the House to say what should be done. No far the details of the harbour works have not yet been laid before Parliament; but the House, in a former Session, on the distinct statement that a harbour was to be made, was committed by its action to the construction of the convict prison.

MR. RYLANDS: I am quite prepared to confirm the general statement which has been made by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I recollect perfectly well that there was a proposition made by the Government that money should be voted for the purpose of building a prison, with the ultimate view of proceeding with those harbour works. To that extent the House went. I am bound to tell my right hon. Friend opposite the Member for Blackburn (Sir Robert Peel) that I look back upon the House of Commons in the last Parliament as being a House as little disposed to regard questions of economy as any House which ever existed. I am quite sure of this—and in this respect I confirm the right hon. Baronet's opinion—that the House has never yet been placed in possession of any Estimate of the probable expenditure on these works in such a manner as would justify the House in voting a large sum of money for carrying on works the expediency of which is more or less doubtful. Of course, we are committed to the construction of this prison; but, as I understand the present Vote, it is a Vote of £300 on account of Dover

Harbour; and what I am afraid is that we shall be told, if we pass this Vote of £300, that we have committed ourselves to a much greater expenditure for future works. I understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give a pledge, which I imagine the Government will not wish to depart from, that before the House is absolutely committed to any enormous expenditure for works which have been shown in other cases to be useless, the House will be put in possession of all the information that is necessary to confirm their judgment. I must, however, remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government that a custom has grown up in Committee of Supply, which may, perhaps, not be known to new Members of the House, by which a Member of the Government comes down here with a first Vote, and having obtained that Vote has subsequently contended that the House had been committed to an expenditure for a special object. I, therefore, think that when the Government ask for a preliminary Vote they are bound to place on the Estimates the total sum which they expect to expend hereafter. I recollect, some years ago, a proposal being made in connection with a scheme for the erection of buildings on a plot of land in close contiguity with the Houses of Parliament. Upon that occasion the First Commissioner of Works came down to the House and proposed that we should vote a small sum of money—some £5,000—for preliminary expenses. That Vote was not accompanied with any statement of the entire expenditure contemplated, and on that ground I was successful in opposing it; and in consequence a very large expenditure for an unnecessary object was prevented. In this case, if we pass this Vote without a distinct understanding from the Government we may find ourselves committed to a very large expenditure indeed for a useless purpose. I know it is a thankless duty to oppose the expenditure of public money. I know that men who oppose the expenditure of public money get far more abuse than credit. I am glad that the hon. Member for the Frome Division of Somersetshire (Mr. Baker) has raised his voice on this occasion in favour of economy, seeing that he is one of the new Members on this side of the House who have been returned to this Parliament. I am confident that they,

Mr. Rylands

as a body, will not allow the fact that we have in Office a Government which belongs to their own Party to form any ground for supporting the Government in the extravagant expenditure of public money. During the last Parliament, when a Liberal Government was in power, I constantly endeavoured to check their extravagance; but I do not know that I did much good. I received so little support that I found it was hopeless to attempt to make any impression upon the Estimates, which have gone on increasing from year to year, until they are now a perfect scandal. With regard to this Vote of £300, and seeing that we are bound to build a convict prison, it is only reasonable to ask that we should have some statement as to what is the contemplated amount of expenditure which will hereafter be incurred. We certainly ought to know the cost of the work contemplated within £10,000, £20,000, or £30,000, and I should be very glad to see in this Estimate some such statement. At all events, we have the pledge of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that in voting this sum of £300 for some purpose which I do not exactly understand we are not committing ourselves to an approval of any scheme of a large character, involving ultimately a very considerable amount of expenditure. If I am to understand that no Estimate will be taken which will in any way commit the House of Commons I do not know that I should object to this small Vote.

MR. RITCHIE: The Department with which I was connected in the last Government (the Admiralty), although it had really no control over the expenditure, was, nevertheless, the Department which was charged with carrying out the engineering works in connection with this scheme. I may say that nothing in the shape of harbour work has been executed by the late Government, and this expenditure of £300 is intended to be purely preliminary. As some questions have been asked in reference to what is thought to be the contemplated and probable cost of the works in connection with this harbour, I will tell the Committee what I understand to be the position of matters. The question of Dover Harbour, as most hon. Members are aware, has been considered by the House on more than one occasion, and on more than one occasion

has been referred both to Select and Departmental Committees. I believe that the conclusion arrived at by the various Committees was that a harbour at Dover would be an extremely useful and a very desirable thing. Various schemes for that purpose have been under consideration, and on various occasions schemes have been adopted; and I think that the contemplated expenditure upon them has varied from a minimum of about £750,000 to a maximum of £2,500,000.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: The last scheme was estimated to cost about £1,000,000.

MR. RITCHIE: Perhaps the hon. and gallant Gentleman may possess information which I do not; but my information is that the scheme involving the minimum of expenditure would cost about £750,000, while the scheme occasioning the maximum outlay would involve an expenditure of £2,500,000. Ultimately the question came to be one between two different schemes—one costing something like £1,000,000, and another costing something like £750,000; and I may say that the more expensive scheme gave deep-water accommodation in the harbour to an extent considerably greater than would be provided by the less costly plan involving an expenditure of £750,000. It was ultimately resolved by Her Majesty's Government in 1883, as I understand, to adopt the larger of these two schemes; and they, therefore, assented to a proposal which was made to them to construct a harbour at Dover, with a very large amount of deep-water accommodation, the cost of which was to be something like £1,100,000. It is, as far as I understand, upon the basis of that assent in 1883 that the works have since been proceeded with; and the works have consisted up to the present, as the right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt) has stated, of a convict prison, which was necessary for the purpose of housing the convicts to be employed. Committees have reported, on several occasions, that a harbour at Dover would be of great benefit both to the Navy and the Mercantile Marine; and when the harbour was decided upon it was thought desirable that convicts should be employed upon the works. Up to the present time the only expenditure incurred upon the works has been the expenditure incurred for the convict prison. It follows,

of course, that having gone to a large expense in building a convict prison, and it having been so frequently decided that a harbour should be constructed, that the House will be asked, and will probably consent, to the construction of a harbour. I may point out that it is contemplated that when the harbour is completed, which I understand will not be for 16 or 20 years, it is to be handed over to a Dover Harbour Commission; and it is believed that the dues received by that Commission for the use of the harbour would pay a fair interest upon about one-half of the total expenditure.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I do not want to follow the hon. Gentleman who has just down into the statistics with which he has favoured the Committee; but I desire to draw the attention of the Committee to one aspect of the question which, up to the present moment, appears to have been lost sight of. It is proposed to enter into a large expenditure of public money; but in regard to this particular service it is proposed to expend the whole of that money in Great Britain. We have it upon the authority of one of the chief officials of the Board of Trade, within the last few weeks, that a very much larger sum is raised in Ireland by Imperial taxation than is spent in that country. We have for years been contending that the distribution of public money is most inequitable as regards Ireland, and this is an illustration of what we complained of. We have convicts in Ireland as well as in England, and coasts which require harbour accommodation in Ireland as well as in this country; and we contribute according to our resources quite as much, as taxpayers, as those of England to the Public Expenditure. I would therefore ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what he proposes to do in regard to the distribution of the public money? What is Ireland to get for the purpose of constructing harbours?

THE CHAIRMAN: I must call the attention of the hon. Gentleman to the fact that the Question now before the Committee is the Question of Dover Harbour, and that it is not competent for him, upon that limited Question, to enter into the question of the distribution of public money as between the Three Kingdoms.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Quite so. I completely apprehend that point. But we are asked to vote, out of the common funds of the Empire, money which is to go exclusively for services in connection with England, whereas nothing whatever is to be done for Ireland. I object to the inequality. We have a number of convicts in Ireland who used to be employed in the Cove of Cork. They might be employed in the performance of precisely similar services at Galway and in other parts of Ireland; and I think it was in the contemplation of the late Government to institute some such services. Perhaps I may be allowed to call the attention of the Committee, for a moment, to the fact that on the coast of the county of which I am one of the Representatives—the county of Donegal—not long ago one of Her Majesty's gun-boats was lost, because there was no accommodation along that coast such as that which it is now proposed to provide on the Southern Coast of England. I would ask that hon. Members, before the assent of the Irish Representatives is given or even asked for to this particular Vote, may be informed of the intentions of the Government, not only in regard to the employment of convicts in England, but in regard to the public works of this description which are to be undertaken in Ireland as well, and also what proportion of the Public Expenditure is to be devoted to Ireland for this kind of service?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): I admit the reasonableness of the request of the hon. Member. It is only a reasonable request that the employment of convicts in useful public works should not be confined to England, but that employment should also be found for them in other parts of the Kingdom. I cannot, of course, say, off-hand, to what extent, or in what manner, employment on useful public works can at the present time be found for convicts in Ireland. A demand was made some time ago in reference to Scotland, and it was carefully considered. The Government were asked that convict labour should be employed in connection with certain public works in Scotland. I do not know in what state the matter is now; but we did consider that the application, so far as the harbour of Peterhead was concerned, might be assented to, and I

believe that works there are actually going on now. I shall be quite prepared to consider the reasonableness of employing convict labour in useful works of a similar character in Ireland.

CAPTAIN FIELD: I would like to offer one word to the Committee on this question before it is disposed of. I trust that no further opposition will be offered by the Committee to this Vote. I speak as a naval man, and I can say that all naval men warmly support the Vote. The hon. Member who has just sat down complained that similar convict labour is not employed in Ireland. Now, I know the whole of the coast all round Ireland, and I must congratulate the Irish people on possessing already magnificent harbours on their coast. [Colonel NOLAN: Where?] I decline to answer questions that may be put to me while I am addressing the Chairman of Committees. The case is entirely different with regard to the coast of England. At the present time there is no harbour suitable for men-of-war to call at between Portsmouth and Hull; and it is of the utmost importance not only that this harbour at Dover should be completed, but that other harbours of refuge should be constructed. Naval men have been anxious to see the harbour at Dover completed; and so long as you delay its completion you can have very little regard for your first line of defence. I am sorry to see hon. Members quibbling and carping in this House at expenses of this kind. I should have thought that the first maritime country in the world would have been most anxious to spend money and do all that is necessary in providing harbours and coaling stations for its Navy and for its extensive Commercial Marine. Foreigners have been astounded at the apathy of this country in regard to the safety of the lives of those who carry on their commerce upon the high seas. We are a wealthy country, and it is ridiculous for us to carp about the expenditure of a few thousand pounds upon a harbour which would be of the greatest service both to ships of the Royal Navy and of the Mercantile Marine. I am afraid that if a great naval war were to break out this country would be in a state of great alarm in regard to its naval stations; and I submit that it is of the utmost importance to provide useful coaling stations in the event of war. Some day the

country will wake up to a true sense of its position; and I am sorry to see the opposition which has been raised to the Vote. I sincerely hope that it will not be pursued further.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM: There have been two or three points raised in the course of the discussion upon which I should like to say a word. I have noticed how difficult it seems to be in this House to check Expenditure; and I would ask hon. Members who have made their first appearance in the House to assist by every means in their power in checking the Public Expenditure. I think there is no duty we owe to the country which is more incumbent upon us than that of securing economy in the Expenditure of the country; and that duty falls upon us with greater force on the present occasion on account of the commercial depression from which the country is suffering. This is not a time for naval Gentlemen to press upon Parliament the necessity of increasing its Expenditure. Naval men are only influenced by the fact that they receive a great deal more money than they pay; but those who represent the commerce and industry of the country pay much more than they receive. I, therefore, hope that the new Members of this House will back up the Government, or any other Party which tries to check the Expenditure; and I am glad to welcome assistance from the other side of the House in keeping down Expenditure for purposes of doubtful utility. Assistance from that side was not expected or looked for; and although the conversion of hon. Members opposite has been brought about late I am sure it will be hailed with satisfaction, and I trust that in future they will continue their assistance in the same direction in lessening the Expenditure of the country, and in making it more in accordance with the position in which we stand in regard to agriculture and commerce. I would seriously urge upon the House the duty of exercising great care in future in regard to the Expenditure of the country.

MR. GREGORY: I may be very obtuse, but I must confess that I do not understand the purpose for which this Vote is asked. We were originally told that the Vote was only for a preliminary survey before we were asked to enter into a large expenditure for the purpose

of carrying out plans in connection with the construction of harbour works, which plans were to be laid before the House before the expenditure was entered into. As I gather from the speeches which have been made by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) and others, Parliament has already sanctioned a considerable amount of expenditure in connection with these works. According to the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets there have been two schemes, one of which is to cost £750,000, and the other £1,000,000; but I am certainly at a loss to understand whether or not either of those schemes has yet received the sanction of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us that some £50,000 or £60,000 have already been voted for the purpose of constructing a convict prison at Dover for the accommodation of 1,000 convicts, who are to be employed in the erection of these works. We are told that we have already, to a considerable extent, by assenting to that expenditure, committed ourselves to the works which are to be ultimately undertaken in connection with the construction of a harbour. Under these circumstances, I think it is as well that we should understand clearly what it is we are asked to do. It is true that this is a small sum; but it may form part of a much larger sum, and what I want to know is, whether it does form part of a larger sum or not? I do not think that the Government have as yet given us full information upon that point. No doubt right hon. Gentlemen opposite have only been for a short time in Office, and they may have had very little opportunity for examining the Estimate and the services for which it is required; but I think it would have been well if it had been explained that the sum asked for is part of a larger sum, and if it had been indicated what that larger sum is to be. It ought certainly to be explained whether, by passing this Vote, we are sanctioning a larger expenditure or not. Until this is done, and we have some assurance from the Government as to how this Estimate is formed, and to what account the money is to be placed, I do not think we ought to assent to it.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): I have already explained how the matter

stands. I have stated that the erection of the prison was sanctioned in a previous Session, with a view to the ultimate construction of a breakwater in Dover Harbour. The prison itself will probably take three or four years to build, and after it is completed and occupied the harbour works would be commenced by the convicts.

MR. GREGORY: What is to be the cost of the harbour works?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): At the express wish of the Treasury, the engineering works in connection with the harbour have been, as the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) has stated, intrusted to the Admiralty; but, of course, what the House ought to have, before it sanctions the final amount of expenditure, is accurate plans of the breakwater, and an estimate of what it will cost. As the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Ritchie) has stated, there have been two schemes submitted, one of which will cost £750,000 to carry out, and the other £1,000,000, which will give much better deep-water accommodation. Between those two schemes the House will, practically, have to decide; but in order to make the plans it is necessary to take soundings, to make surveys, and to incur a certain amount of expenditure in making them. Certain preliminary inquiries have to be made by the Admiralty as to the physical difficulties to be overcome, the nature of the bottom, and so forth. Pending the acquisition of this necessary preliminary information, no plans or estimates of the harbour have been prepared or can be made, or, indeed, will be required for something like three years. That is my answer to the question of the hon. Member for Sussex (Mr. Gregory), what the money included in the Vote is asked for. The object is to enable the necessary plans and estimates to be framed.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: I must object to the statement which has been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman has quoted a Memorandum which has not been laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. JACKSON: The hon. Member for Sussex (Mr. Gregory) has asked what this Vote is for. I am, to a large extent, responsible for the estimated sum

of money which appears in the Vote; and I am bound to confirm what has been stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—that the money is necessary for the purpose of preparing plans and making estimates as to the cost of the works before undertaking the construction of the harbour. Whether the House is committed to the principle of constructing a breakwater or not I cannot say. My hon. Friend has said that the present Government have not been long in Office; but he has himself been for a long period a Member of this House, and he must be aware that the House has already sanctioned the expenditure required for the building of the convict prison at Dover, and he must also know what the purpose is for which it has been decided to remove the convicts there—namely, to find them employment in the construction of the proposed harbour works. It has certainly never been the intention of the House to sanction the large expenditure which has already been incurred in connection with the building of a convict prison, unless it was also intended to use the labour which it is proposed to transfer. I can assure my hon. Friend that this expenditure is necessary in order to comply with the requirements of the Treasury that there should be an estimate of the total cost of the harbour.

MR. LABOUCHERE: This is one of the Estimates which I think the Committee ought to regard with a certain amount of suspicion. Whenever the two Front Benches agree upon an Estimate I think it becomes the duty of every independent Member to oppose it. But when with that union between the two Front Benches we have the Naval Members of the House getting up and pressing us to spend a little more money there is additional reason for opposing the Vote. I have listened attentively to the discussion which has taken place, and I think that it explains, to some extent, the manner in which the public money is wasted and squandered in this country. It appears to have occurred to someone that it would be a good thing, in a general sort of way, to construct a harbour at Dover, or to extend the existing harbour by building a breakwater. A practical man might be supposed to consider, in the first instance, what the cost would be; but I now

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gather from the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Jackson) that this is a Conservative Vote, and that we are asked, in the first instance, to pass the Vote, and then ascertain what the expense of the works will be. [Mr. JACKSON: No.] Well, I do not know that there is much to choose, in these matters, between one side of the House and another. Each is just as bad as the other. At any rate, some Gentlemen sitting on the Front Benches have come to the conclusion that there ought to be an extension of Dover Harbour. In such a case, what course would business men have taken? They would have ascertained, in the first instance, what the harbour would cost.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT): We had a Committee.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: They had a Committee. We know very well what that means. The Committee said—"Let us first build a prison in which to lodge the convicts who are to build the harbour." They spend a good deal of money—I do not know how many thousands of pounds—in building this prison, and then the Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us the Admiralty and the Treasury indulge in a little correspondence. Two plans were submitted, one of which is to cost £750,000, and the other £1,000,000. How were these plans made? The Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us we must expend a certain amount of money in order to make a plan; but it appears that there was a plan made which was considered both by the Treasury and the Admiralty.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT): A year ago.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: A year ago, and yet it is necessary now to make surveys and soundings and borings, in order to decide how to make this harbour. I suppose the Committee, before they arrived at a decision, had some sort of evidence before them, and there must have been plans before the Admiralty and Treasury without these borings which the Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us must now be made. I suppose that these plans have been put away in some pigeon-hole and forgotten; and now we are to begin all over again in order to prepare soundings and plans. We are told that some labourers have been hired, some offices obtained, and

we are asked to pass the salary of a foreman of works. But, at present, we do not know what the plans are to cost. Let us have something clearly before us in order to show us what we are pledged to before we pass this Vote. Let us have some sufficient data as to the soundings and borings in order that we may ascertain approximately what the harbour will cost. As this is almost the first Vote proposed in the new Parliament, I think that we ought to inaugurate our opinion of officialdom by at once voting against it.

COLONEL NOLAN: I want to point out one thing in regard to which the late Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Ritchie) and the Chancellor of the Exchequer appear to be agreed. What I complain of is the way in which the Estimates are presented to Parliament. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) and the Chancellor of the Exchequer have told us that this Estimate is not for the harbour; and yet we are asked to vote an Estimate "of the amount required in the year 1886 towards the expense of constructing a new harbour at Dover." A Vote of £300 is hardly worth discussing if it were not for the fact that it may be taken to have pledged the country to the construction of a harbour. I was one of the Committee which sat to inquire into the question of constructing harbours of refuge; and it was clearly pointed out that several harbours of refuge are required, not only at Dover, useful as a harbour may be there, not only as a naval station, but as a harbour of refuge, and also in other situations along the coasts of the Three Kingdoms. I am not going to propose that Parliament should spend the money of the country in constructing the harbours of refuge recommended by the Committee; but the point I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to is that point which was raised by my hon. Friend the Member for the Eastern Division of Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor) that the Committee proposed several harbours for Ireland as well as for England. But what happened? I suppose that the late Government are responsible for it; but the late Government last year proposed an Estimate for a harbour at Peterhead, in Scotland, and the late Government adopted it, and passed it. The new Government have now intro-

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duced another Estimate, and the late Government are going to support it. Both Parties adopt the same course. One Party submits an Estimate, and the other passes it. Already a sum of £600,000 or £700,000 has, I believe, been voted for the harbour works at Peterhead. I do not at all object to that, because I believe that it will be a very useful work. These harbour works at Dover are to cost £1,000,000. But the harbours of Ireland have had no attention paid to them at all; and when we put a Question upon the subject to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer he told us that he had not yet made up his mind about it. I allude to the proposal which has been made for employing convicts at Galway, in regard to which a Question was put to the Government by my hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor). I maintain that the Government ought to make up their minds upon the matter. The position of Galway Harbour is, I apprehend, very similar to that of Peterhead; but Her Majesty's Government have already gone to a large expenditure in Scotland, while they have entirely neglected the interests of Ireland. I am not against the principle of providing Scotland with harbours of refuge; but I think that the Government, having put down £750,000 for Peterhead, should put down £1,000,000 or £1,500,000 for Dover, instead of this miserable sum of £300, and should then make provision for the construction of similar works at Galway. The hon. and gallant Member for South Sussex (Captain Field) told the Committee that there are plenty of harbours on the West Coast of Ireland; but when I challenged him he was unable to point out one really good harbour. If he will study the Report of the Committee on Harbours of Refuge, he will see that although there may be plenty of good roads and bays there is not one really adequate harbour.

MR. C. H. WILSON: This question of harbour accommodation upon the Coast of England has been discussed repeatedly in this House, not only in connection with Dover, but with other parts of the Kingdom. It has been contended that the establishment of new harbours, instead of being of advantage to the commercial interests of the country, would simply be a source of ex-

pense, involving the outlay of a sum of money variously estimated from £750,000 to £1,000,000, and also lead the Railway Companies in connection with such harbours to damage existing interests by endeavouring to divert existing trades to a harbour made by public money. It is proposed to expend this money upon harbour works, which are considered to be altogether unnecessary, instead of giving relief to the taxes upon shipping. One demand has continually been made upon the Government by those who are engaged in carrying on the commerce of the country, and that is to relieve them from the payment of light dues. I would throw out that as a suggestion, and I shall certainly vote against any expenditure in extending the harbour at Dover. It appears to me to be a work that is uncalled for, and not required by the commerce of the country.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I have listened attentively to the different explanations which have been made in regard to this Vote; and I want now to understand distinctly what I am voting for. According to the explanation which has been given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the late Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Ritchie), the Vote is required for preliminary expenses—or for a portion only of the preliminary expenses. I think the Committee ought to know, before they vote this money, what is the total preliminary expense to be voted.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I think that, at any rate, this discussion will prove to be serviceable in one respect. If it is said that we are to vote this sum of £300 without an Estimate of the total cost of the works, and simply as a preliminary step towards an inquiry which may enable the country to determine whether the enormous expenditure of money which is contemplated in connection with Dover Harbour shall take place, I think there is great force in what was said by the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that the whole proceeding in regard to this Vote is of a most unbusinesslike character. The main question, what expenditure is to be incurred at Dover, is not before us; and certainly that is a point which ought to be considered, as well as this preliminary outlay involving soundings, borings, and the preparation

Colonel Nolan

of plans. We are told that when these plans have been prepared and are submitted to Parliament, with an Estimate based on them, that then the question will arise whether a harbour at Dover shall be constructed or not, and that the erection of the convict prison is a secondary matter. Now, it seems to me that the House and the Committee have already been committed to this scheme by the course which has been taken with regard to it, and that they are self-condemned for an act of folly in having expended more than £50,000 in the shape of preliminary expenditure in connection with a harbour at Dover by the building of the convict prison. At any rate, the country is committed to the expenditure of this £50,000; but let it be clearly understood, from the Front Bench, that it is committed to nothing beyond that sum, and that we shall hereafter be able to go into the whole of this question, without reference to this paltry Vote, as to whether the harbour is to be built or not. I do not think it would be wise to object to a Vote of this character, which I take to be absolutely necessary before an Estimate of the total expense, worthy of the consideration of the House, can be prepared. There must be a preliminary investigation by taking the necessary soundings and borings; and I would remind the Committee that only in too many cases the country has been involved in double the outlay suggested when the original Estimates were given.

MR. JOHNSTON: I am sorry to find myself obliged to differ from several of the hon. Members who have spoken on this—the Liberal—side of the House. It seems to me that, as the two Front Benches have agreed, that fact has rendered it more necessary that the work should be proceeded with. It appears also to have been agreed many years ago that this harbour ought to be constructed.

"No!" Pardon me for saying so; but if that were not the fact the erection of a convict prison in this position would have been an absurdity. I maintain that no Government would ever have thought of placing a convict prison at Dover, unless it was for the purpose which has been described from the two Front Benches—namely, the employment of the convicts upon the construction of these great works. Although we may appear to be very economical

in the face of the country, I am afraid that we are certainly very wasteful of the time of the House, and that hon. Members have been occupying the valuable time of the House in an unreasonable manner this evening. As a practical man I have had much to do with the expenditure of money upon public works; and I say that it is impossible for anybody to know even what the preliminary expenses of a work of this description will amount to. You must go on piece by piece, and it is only as you discover what the soundings and what the borings and the physical difficulties are that you can, for a moment, arrive at anything like what your permanent Estimate is to be. And I may tell the Committee, further, that after a permanent Estimate has been arrived at it is certain that it will be exceeded in the natural course of events. No engineer, however eminent he may be, has ever executed a large work of this character within his estimates. He cannot do it. He can only do the best possible; and as the two Front Benches have agreed that this work ought to be done, it follows that the money required for the preparation of plans should be voted without any more discussion. I do not agree with the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that as the two Front Benches are agreed upon this matter we ought to disagree and reject the Vote. If that is to be the case, we had better do away with the two Front Benches altogether, and leave the independent Members of the House to conduct the whole of the Business of the country. I trust that the Vote will be agreed to at once, as it affords the only possible and practical mode of dealing with the question.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (MR. HIBBERT): I should like to say a word or two before this discussion closes. As to the question whether the House of Commons have agreed to the policy of constructing a harbour of refuge at Dover, I believe that that question was settled by the last Parliament, and that that decision was only come to after very careful consideration had been given to the subject by a Committee of this House. After that consideration it was decided, not only by the Home Office, but by the Admiralty and Treasury, that a commencement might

be made at Dover in the arrangements that were necessary for carrying out this great work. With respect to that portion of the expenditure which relates to making provision for the accommodation of the convicts, that has already, I believe, been passed by the House of Commons; and the policy involved in the erection of the convict prison has been agreed to by the House. I myself remember a discussion upon this question when it was decided that, owing to the fact that the works carried on by the convicts at Chatham and Portsmouth being likely to come to an end in the course of two or three years, it was desirable to find other work for the convicts in some other place. Upon that occasion it was decided that the convict establishments ought to be transferred from Chatham and Portsmouth to Dover, for the purpose of being employed upon the proposed harbour works. The expenditure of the £300 now before the Committee—and probably a further sum may be asked for in the Estimates of next year—is really an economical proceeding. It is meant to obtain information before you decide upon spending your money; and I think, upon this ground, that it is a very proper thing to vote this £300, and also any further expenditure that may be asked for in order to obtain proper and full information. If the Government were to begin with any proposal for expenditure upon a work of this kind without taking borings and soundings, and deciding what the nature of the works for the harbour of refuge was to be, they might be open to blame for making such a proposal. But what is proposed to be done is simply to obtain information in order to enable the Admiralty to prepare plans, and to have an Estimate made as to what the cost of the works will be. When those plans shall have been prepared, and the Estimate laid upon the Table of the House, the time will have come when the House will have to decide whether they will carry out such plans or not. I believe that the proceeding involved in the present Vote is really an economical one, and one which the House ought to assent to.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(4.) £450, House of Commons Offices.

Mr. Hibbert

(5.) £3,730, Foreign Office.

MR. RYLANDS: I wish to call the attention of the Committee to an item in this Vote, which, I think, is one that requires careful explanation and elucidation. For several years past the expenditure of the Foreign Office for telegrams has been very large indeed; and when complaints have been made in Committee of Supply, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has, on several occasions, given a distinct undertaking that the Foreign Office would make a careful examination into this expenditure with a view of ascertaining whether there was any possibility of reducing it. Now, the expenditure under this head in the present Vote includes an additional sum of nearly £3,000, the original Estimate of the Foreign Office telegraphic expenses having been £10,000—thus making £13,000 altogether. I do not know whether hon. Members, who have only recently had an opportunity of reading the Blue Books laid on the Table of the House since the new Parliament assembled, have read the Blue Book upon Foreign Affairs. It is important that they should do so; and they will find that a number of despatches are stated to have been received by telegram. Of course, it is necessary that the House of Commons should vote the money required to pay for the telegraphic charges of the Foreign Office. But our complaint, year after year, against the Foreign Office is that they have encouraged our Ministers abroad, and that they themselves at the Foreign Office have adopted the same plan, in sending despatches by telegraph when there is no absolute necessity for telegraphing. I have no wish to occupy the attention of the Committee by giving special instances; but I certainly wish to press upon hon. Members that a perusal of some of the telegrams which appear in the Blue Book recently laid on the Table of the House justify my assertion that they are such as no business man would ever have dreamt of incurring the cost of sending by telegraph wire. Nearly the whole of them might just as easily have been sent by the Foreign Office through the post, and the expense of sending them by telegraph wire saved to the country. My hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) will, I am

quite sure, bring his mind to bear upon this point when he has had more experience of the duties of the Office to which he has recently been appointed. His Predecessors—the right hon. Member for Chelsea and Lord E. Fitzmaurice—promised me that they would do so. My hon. Friend is fresh to the Office; and I hope he will bring new zeal and energy to the discharge of its duties. I ask him to look at the number of telegraphic despatches which have been sent to the Foreign Office from Constantinople, and which are contained in the Blue Book laid upon the Table in connection with the Mission to the East of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff. I am ready to stake my character, as a business man, when I say that a great number of the despatches to which I refer are of a nature which renders it utterly absurd that the country should be called upon to pay heavy charges for telegraphing from Constantinople and elsewhere. If they had been sent by post it would equally have answered every good purpose. Of course, in commenting upon the matter, I do not include messages of such importance as to render it necessary that with the quickness of a flash of lightning they should be made known to the Marquess of Salisbury. What I complain of, as an evidence of want of care on the part of the Foreign Office, is that no attempt appears to have been made by the Representatives of that Department to bring sufficient pressure to bear upon our Ministers abroad to send their despatches by post in writing instead of sending them by telegraphic wire. Hon. Members will see that the total sum charged for the Foreign Office telegraphic despatches has been increasing from year to year; and I think it is high time that some attention should be directed to the subject with a view to the correction of the evil. It is plain that we carry on the business of the Foreign Office in a most extravagant manner. We have not only, in this Vote, charges for additional messengers, but also an enormous increase in the payments for telegrams. I would press strongly upon the Committee that this additional sum of £2,910 for telegrams ought not to be granted without some explanation from Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: This Vote is one which appears to require serious explanation from those in charge of it;

and I think it must be read in connection with the Vote for the Diplomatic Service, which appears on page 26 of the present Supplementary Estimates. I think the Committee ought to know, before they are called upon to agree to this Vote, how much of this charge of £2,910 for additional telegraphic charges is connected with the item of £12,500 for telegraphic expenditure on page 26. It appears to me that, although the total sum taken in the Estimates for the year for these telegraphic expenses was £10,000, the Foreign Office have managed, in the course of six months, to add to that sum a total increase of £15,410, being £2,910 which appears in the present Vote on page 9, and £12,500 which appears on page 26 in connection with the Diplomatic Service. The wording of the two items gives no information to the House or to the Committee, because the entry is simply "telegraph expenses consequent on the state of affairs abroad." Both items are similarly worded, and I think that before we vote these sums we ought to be told how much of each Vote is for telegrams in connection with the Mission of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff. We certainly ought to have some information to show the Committee how this enormous increase has arisen, and how it has been found necessary to exceed the charge of £10,000 already provided for by the tremendous sum of £12,500 in one Vote, and £2,910 in another, in the course of six months. Unless some explanation is given, I shall feel it my duty to move the rejection of the Vote.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BAYCE): I entirely concur in the remarks made by my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), as to the necessity of carefully watching the expenditure of the Public Departments of the country. No doubt it is most important that, as far as possible, economy should be observed in all these matters; and I believe it is the desire of those who represent Her Majesty abroad to observe due economy in all their transactions. This is a Supplementary Vote for the Foreign Office, and relates only to telegrams which have been sent abroad. If hon. Members will examine it, they will see that the charges which appear in the Vote are entirely for telegrams sent by the

Foreign Office abroad; and I can assure them, from my own experience, short as it is, that in the Foreign Office itself very great pains are taken to keep down the expenditure on telegraphing. Of course, it is impossible for the Department at home altogether to control the discretion of our Ministers abroad; and it must be recollected that circumstances have recently occurred in the South and South-East of Europe which have, to a certain extent, led to increased expenditure in this respect—I mean the war between Servia and Bulgaria, and the delicate position which this country has been placed in with regard to Servia and Bulgaria and Greece. In addition, there has been frequent necessity for telegrams to and from other parts of the world—as, for instance, to China. But most of the increase, no doubt, has been due to the Servo-Bulgarian and Greek Questions. In regard to the charge for messengers, I may inform the Committee that the service of messengers to Constantinople was reduced from a weekly to a fortnightly service in 1883; but it was deemed necessary, in the time of the late Government, to increase the service to a weekly one. It has now, however, been again reduced to a fortnightly despatch. I hope the Committee will see that whatever criticisms are necessary upon this question, and especially upon the Mission of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, to which I understand the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) desires to call attention, had better be reserved until we reach the Vote for the Diplomatic Service on page 26. I am afraid that it is impossible for me, at this moment, to tell him how much of these telegraphic charges is due to the Mission of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff. I cannot say, without further inquiry, what data exist at the Foreign Office upon which we could distinguish these charges from those for other telegrams. The hon. Member will also bear in mind that there have been many telegrams sent to Constantinople and Egypt, some of which come under the head of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Mission, while others do not.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Would it not be better that in future the telegrams to and from the Foreign Office should be given separately? Why should we

Mr. Bryce

not specify what the Mission of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff has cost us for telegrams? It appears to me that to have two items, one for the Foreign Office and the other for the Diplomatic Service; to tell us that we are to look to the Foreign Office Vote for the cost of telegrams from Ministers and to another Vote for the cost of telegrams to Ministers is only confusing. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) will, no doubt, find many reforms to make in the Office; and I venture to suggest that this is one of those to which he should direct his attention. Another reform I would suggest is with regard to messengers' travelling expenses, the total amount of which for the year is £9,320. The greater number of letters sent to Constantinople might just as well be sent by post as by messengers; and I say you ought not to have a messenger sent there every fortnight; you ought to have a messenger sent only when you have matter to communicate which it is absolutely necessary should be kept secret. I say this from practical experience at Constantinople, because I have served there, and I know that Ministers abroad often write something in order that it should be sent by Queen's Messenger. I remember that when I was in Constantinople Sir Henry Bulwer thought he wanted some pills—he was always taking medicine—and he sent home a despatch for the purpose of getting them; we counted up exactly what was the cost of sending the messenger to England and back; and we found that the cost to the country for this box of pills amounted to a little above £300. If the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will establish a rule that instead of having messengers going out at fixed times they should only go when there is something to send by them which cannot be entrusted to the post, I am certain that this charge, which amounts to £9,000 a-year, would be reduced to £3,000 or £4,000.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I am afraid the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs does not do justice to his Department. The hon. Gentleman asks me to reserve my criticism until we come to the Vote for the Diplomatic Service on page 26; but I shall be unable to do that unless he is

prepared to tell me, with some degree of precision when that Vote is reached, what is the cost of the telegrams from Constantinople and London in connection with Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Mission. Unless the hon. Gentleman gives me that pledge I shall feel it my duty to oppose the Vote.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

MR. BRYCE: I must inform the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) that I am not at this moment able to state what proportion of the charge for telegrams is due to the Mission of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff. I can, of course, make inquiries, and will do so if the hon. Gentleman wishes it, although it may possibly turn out that there would be some difficulty in ascertaining, because many telegrams may have been sent to Egypt respecting which it would be hard to say whether they ought to be deemed to belong to Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Mission or not.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I wish to make one remark on what fell a short time ago from the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who for three or four years has constantly brought up his service under Sir Henry Bulwer and the story of his pills. Now, I served under Sir Henry Bulwer, and I say it is a libel upon him to refer to him in this way. Poor fellow! he has gone now; and, speaking from personal knowledge, I say that no public servant ever served his country better than Sir Henry Bulwer. I protest against the hon. Member's constantly bringing up this subject of the pills because he was in the Diplomatic Service at Constantinople. I was there at the same time, and I entirely dissent from the remarks of the hon. Member. But, with regard to this Vote, I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs one question. There are two distinct Votes for telegrams in these Estimates—one for the Foreign Office and the other for the Diplomatic Service—and I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman if he can tell us whether out of this Vote a considerable sum of money has been expended in connection with the special Mission of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff to Constantinople or Egypt? It will clear the ground if he will tell us that; and I would point out to the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler), as

well as to the hon. Gentleman, that it would be far better, instead of having two Votes as there are here, that the Votes for the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service should be amalgamated; because then the House would know exactly the vast sum of money expended on the telegraphic service of the country, which amounts to more than £100,000 a-year. I think if the hon. Gentleman can give an assurance that this will be done, it will go a long way to remove the confusion which exists.

MR. BRADLAUGH: The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs misunderstands me. I assume that every telegram sent to Sir Henry Drummond Wolff is recorded, and that the cost of every telegram to and from Constantinople and Egypt is also recorded for the purpose of making up the total we are asked to vote. It seems to me, therefore, that there can be no difficulty in furnishing the information desired, and, consequently, that there is no reason why the Government should not give it. I beg to move that the debate on this Vote be adjourned.

MR. BOURKE: I wish to state to the Committee what I know about this Vote, and to say, with respect to the inquiry of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), that I think it a very reasonable one in view of the form in which the Vote is given to the Committee. I have no doubt that if the hon. Member will give Notice to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs he will be able to obtain the detailed information which he desires. It is a fact, which, of course, everyone connected with the Foreign Office knows, that every telegram is noted at the Foreign Office; and it is, therefore, perfectly easy to make out a list of the different telegrams sent to Sir Henry Drummond Wolff. There may possibly, however, be a little confusion, owing to the fact that while Sir Henry Drummond Wolff has been in Egypt he has performed functions connected not only with his particular Mission, but with his general business in Egypt. Nevertheless, as I have said, the desired information can easily be obtained at the Foreign Office. I hope, therefore, that the hon. Member will not persevere in his opposition to the Vote. I am certain that if he asks the Question of my hon. Friend on another day he will get the

information which he desires. With reference to the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Blackburn (Sir Robert Peel) that it would conduce to the clearer understanding of the Vote if the two Estimates were put together, I am afraid that it would not have that effect. The object of keeping the Votes separate is simply to show the expense incurred for telegrams in England and the expense incurred abroad; and of course if they were mixed it would lead to great difficulty.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Mr. Courtney, I move the adjournment of the debate on this Vote, and shall persist in that course unless I get an undertaking from the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that the details of these items will be furnished.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is not competent to the hon. Member to move the adjournment of the debate in Committee. The course of the hon. Gentleman is to move that Progress be reported.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I ask pardon for proceeding in ignorance of the Forms of the House. I repeat that unless the promise is given I shall have to move that Progress be reported.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BRYCE): If the hon. Member will put a Question on the Paper asking for the information he desires I will do my best to get that information.

Vote agreed to.

(6.) £500, Colonial Office.

(7.) £31, Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade.

MR. RYLANDS: There is one point in connection with this Estimate to which I should like to draw the attention of the Committee and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. C. T. D. Acland). I see that by this Supplementary Estimate there is a charge under B for Chief Official Receiver's Office to meet possible necessity for increased staff, amounting to £2,101, and under O for Country Receivers paid by Fees and Commission, to meet possible increase of remuneration amounting to £5,780, making a total additional sum required of £7,881 over the Estimate of 1885-6. Now, I presume that although this is put down as possible increased expenditure, there is reason to suppose that it is an expenditure which has been actually incurred, and that it

comes within the present financial year. It is quite clear that it would not be correct to include here the possible expenditure of next year, which should, of course, come forward in the Estimates of 1886-7. I understand, however, that the fees will meet the expenditure in question. The hon. Gentleman will probably be able to give some information on this subject.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. O. T. D. ACLAND): The reason for bringing this Vote before Parliament in this form is that it shows the total expenditure for 1885. The sum of £1,164 originally voted by Parliament, it was believed, would have been sufficient for the expenses of the year. With regard to the additional sum required, there is no doubt that the whole of the amount will be received and handed over to the Exchequer in the ordinary course. The Treasury is authorized, under the Bankruptcy Act of 1883, Section 77, to pay over to the Board of Trade, in aid of the Vote of Parliament, out of receipts from fees and dividends on investments, any sum which may be necessary to meet the charges incurred by the Board of Trade for salaries and expenses; and, as I have said, there is no reason whatever to doubt that the whole of this sum will be received and paid into the Exchequer during the year. The present Supplementary Estimate of £31 has been presented for the purpose of bringing the facts clearly before Parliament.

Vote agreed to.

(8.) £2,371, Charity Commission.

(9.) £2,100, Civil Service Commission.

(10.) £7,490, Local Government Board.

(11.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,430, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Secretary for Scotland."

MR. RYLANDS: I should like to say one or two words on this Estimate. The Vote before the Committee is a new one. It is the first time that we have been called upon to pay for the expenses of the Office of the Secretary for Scotland. I believe the amount asked for is only a very small part of the expenditure, and

Mr. Bourke

that when we come to have the full amount to be expended next year it will very considerably exceed the moderate sum now upon the Estimates. I suppose hon. Gentlemen from Scotland consider it necessary to have a Central Department for Scottish Business; but, for myself, I am bound to say that I greatly doubt whether it is desirable to take that Business from the Home Office, and in a way that must lead to a very large expenditure. But what I wish to draw attention to is the fact that we are constantly putting new officials in every Department of the State; we create new Departments or we enlarge existing Departments; and we bring new men into the Service, but we never seem to take any steps to utilize supernumeraries—that is to say, we are constantly pensioning the officials of various Departments, and we never consider whether these persons can be made available for the Public Service. The item of pensions is increasing so largely that I hope Her Majesty's Government will see that steps are taken, in connection with the retirement of public officials, to secure their services when they are required. I do not speak of the retirement of men past the age of service, but of those who are retired at an age when they have work in them. There are many who, having been retired, cannot get back into the Service, because all the vacancies are filled up with new men, who originate a new charge for salaries, and, in course of time, have to be pensioned in their turn. I dare say the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) can, with regard to this Vote for the Office of Secretary for Scotland, give us some little information as to what the expenditure is likely to be for carrying on this Department.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I quite agree with my hon. Friend Mr. Rylands in his remarks with reference to the unsatisfactory working of the pension system. I entertained the view when I sat below the Gangway, and I say now, that when a man is employed by the State, and is paid by the State, the State has the right to fix the work he shall do; and if the State has the right to discharge him, it has the right to appoint him to such other duties as he can perform. I say that it is not right that a man should be pensioned off at once

simply on account of the abolition of his office. That is my view, and I can assure my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley that I shall endeavour to uphold it to the best of my power. The principle which my hon. Friend advances has been carried out in connection with this Office. That was exactly what the late Government did when they appointed Sir Francis Sandford to be Under Secretary for Scotland. His pension amounted to £1,333 6s. 8d., and he is now only drawing £500 on account of that pension, so that there is a saving of £833 6s. 8d. of salary by that appointment. With reference to the staff of the Department, that was settled before the present Government came into Office; but we shall do our best rightly to estimate what the cost will be. The Vote may have a tendency to increase; and, no doubt, it will become a question for the House to consider ultimately what is the entire amount necessary to carry on the Scottish Business. There is one item which does not appear on the Vote, and to which I think the attention of my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley ought to be called, and that is the rent of the office. I believe that a very valuable building, which would earn a large amount of rent, has been devoted already for the Secretary of Scotland Office. When the Estimates come forward later in the Session with reference to Public Buildings my hon. Friend will have an opportunity of raising and discussing that question; but the Vote now before the Committee is simply to provide for the working of the Office since October last.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has referred to the question of rent as an expense which should be put against the Office of the Secretary for Scotland. The house referred to is known as Dover House, and it is one which I took a great deal of trouble to obtain as an office for the Secretary for Scotland, and also as an office for myself and my Successor in the position of Lord Advocate. I carefully examined that house for the purpose of seeing whether it was fit for use as an office; and I came decidedly to the opinion that no sane man would take it for what it was then intended—namely, a residence—without an expenditure vastly in excess of what the rent of the house would be

in the next 10 or 14 years. The sanitary condition of the house was such as to make it quite unfit for a person who would use such a house as a residence, although it might be quite fit for a Government Office.

MR. J. WILSON (*Edinburgh, Central*): I trust the Committee will not, in any degree, be influenced by the remarks of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) in regard to Scottish Business. Considering how large a Revenue Scotland yields, how loyal and peaceful are its inhabitants, and how little Government money is spent across the Border, I think this money should be voted without one dissentient voice. As to the building in which Scottish Business is now conducted, I visited the place the other day, and I congratulate the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) in having secured such an excellent office. I remember when the Scottish Business was relegated to the third or fourth storey of one of the Home Office buildings—to a very small and dingy room, little else than a slum, and in which it was a perfect disgrace for any important official of the British Empire to transact business. But it was still more disgraceful for Scottish Business to be centralized in such an insignificant place. The hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) has questioned whether Scottish Business would be done more efficiently under the new régime than under the old. My experience of only a few days is that it is very much more efficiently done than before; and I have not the slightest doubt that my Friends from Scotland, when they see the fine building in which the Scottish Secretary's and Lord Advocate's Departments are now located, will be well pleased in the way in which the Business is now being done there. Although I always raise my voice for economy, I think this is a very proper expenditure; and I hope, therefore, that the Vote will be passed unanimously.

MR. RYLANDS: I should be the last Member of this House to oppose the wishes of Scotch Members. I have the greatest regard for them and their Business in the House of Commons, and I can assure the hon. Member that I could not for one moment desire that Scotchmen should not have the best oppor-

tunity for carrying on their Business. I am not an authority competent to form a confident opinion as to whether the Scottish Business will be more efficiently performed under the new system; but it is by no means necessary to show one's attention to Scotland by spending money which is not required to be spent. The point is, whether or not it is necessary to do so; and the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) has not shown any very great regard for the Scottish officials, because he has told the Committee that they had been placed in a house under such sanitary arrangements that no private individual would live there, because he would probably be carried off by typhoid fever or diphtheria. The right hon. and learned Gentleman did not give the exact facts with regard to the sanitary condition of the house; but I can tell hon. Members that our experience in the House of Commons is that when we begin to spend money on the sanitary improvement of Public Offices, we often go on to a very much larger expenditure than we at first imagine, or is justifiable. However, that will come on when we reach the Vote for Dover House. My hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury has touched on what I wished to call attention to—namely, that a large establishment is growing up. It is all very well to say that this money should be voted unanimously; but it is not necessary to show our affection for Scotland by spending £20,000 or £30,000, when probably £5,000 would be sufficient.

DR. CAMERON: I was very much moved by the logical and patriotic appeal of my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. J. Wilson); but the matter to which he referred was not one which touched on the economy of the house in question. It touched upon the conduct of Scottish Business; and I much regret that the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) is not in his place to give the Committee some information on the subject. The Secretary to the Treasury has referred to the experience of Sir Francis Sandford in another Department—that is to say, the Education Department. The Scottish Secretary is now the President of the Education Department for Scotland. In the Education Department, as formerly constituted, Sir Francis Sandford was for a

Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald

long time chief; and that Office was organized in accordance with certain rules, amongst which there was one against the functionaries of the Department interfering with public affairs. I believe there was a Circular signed by Sir Francis Sandford to the effect that no person connected with the Office should mix up in any political matters, or interfere in any public meeting; and so rigidly was that rule enforced that on one occasion an official who was present at a public meeting, having ventured to second a vote of thanks to a Member of a former Liberal Administration, was hauled over the coals for infringement of that Circular. During the last Election the question of free education was before the whole Empire, and prominently before the people of Scotland; and in the heat of that Election Sir Francis Sandford came down to Glasgow, and in connection with the opening of some schools he made a startling speech upon free education—not only upon the subject generally, but he took up a speech in which the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella), then the Vice President of the Council, had expressed his adhesion to free education. Sir Francis Sandford criticized the speech of the right hon. Gentleman most minutely, and went very strongly in the opposite direction. Of course, I am not going to discuss free education upon this Vote; but I think I may be permitted to point out that if it was wrong in an official in the Education Department, as administered by Sir Francis Sandford, to mix himself up in public affairs, it was doubly wrong for the most important official in the new Ministry to transgress the rule he had laid down elsewhere. I think the Committee are entitled to some expression of opinion upon the subject from the Government. There are various matters of interest to servants in Public Departments which those servants very naturally desire to bring to the notice of candidates for seats in this House. For example, there is a very vital question affecting the police—namely, that of superannuation; but the police had been laid under such stringent orders that none of them ventured to put a question to any candidate at any public meeting; and anything they did ask regarding the views of candidates on that subject was asked privately, or in accordance with the stringent rule

laid down for their guidance that they should not interfere in public matters. The same thing occurred in connection with the Postal Department. The Post Office servants had their grievances, and they desired to obtain the opinion of candidates regarding their grievances; but they, also, had been laid under such stringent orders that they were afraid to put questions in public. What I maintain is, that a Democratic House of Commons should insist upon one law being applied to public servants in whatever capacity they serve the Crown. If to do a given thing is not proper for a policeman, it is not proper for an Assistant Secretary; and if it is not proper for a telegraph clerk, it is not proper for Sir Francis Sandford; if it is not proper for an official of the Education Department to take part in political discussion or in public meetings, it is doubly improper for the man who laid down the rule to transgress it himself. I think we are entitled to an expression of opinion on the part of the Government on this point. A rather important question is involved, and I see no better opportunity of raising it than that afforded by this Vote.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I should like to make an explanation, as I was rather misunderstood by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). I do not wish it for a moment to be supposed by Members of this House that those who are now in office in Dover House are being subjected to any danger from unsanitary arrangements. It was not likely I should have spent a few months in the Office if I had the least suspicion it was in any such condition; but what I wished to lay before the Committee with regard to that establishment was this—that it was in such a state when I first saw it that while it could be very easily turned into a Government house by removing the bad sanitary appliances in different parts of the house, it was quite unfit for a residence for any person, nobleman or noble lady, as it was formerly, who might have wished to take the house at a rent from the Government. I believe that one reason why it stood tenantless until we got into it was that people were very suspicious as to the state in which it was; and I am not the least surprised, judging from what I saw, that that was so. In reference to what has been said

by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), I think I am justified in saying a word for my right hon. Friend Sir Francis Sandford. I am sorry that this Vote should have been made a peg on which to hang an attack on that right hon. Gentleman. I understand that what the hon. Gentleman (Dr. Cameron) wishes to impute to my right hon. Friend is that while he was an official in a Public Department he took part in what was really a political discussion, and expressed views contrary to those which had been expressed when he was Secretary to the Education Department. Well, Sir, if that were true, it would be a serious charge; but I think the hon. Member will see in a moment that his observation is hardly a correct one to make in regard to my right hon. Friend. The question which was under discussion by Sir Francis Sandford, at the meeting at which he spoke, was that of free education. I understood the hon. Gentleman to say that—

DR. CAMERON: I said that Sir Francis Sandford went down to Glasgow, made a long speech on free education, criticizing and attacking the speech made a few days ago by his former Chief.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: That is exactly what I understood the hon. Gentleman to say. No doubt, there are some questions which become, to a certain extent, political, because they can only be worked out by the finances required being obtained by Votes in this House; but it would be a lamentable thing if questions in regard to education were not to be discussed by everybody merely because something had occurred to bring education into the political field. I think the question of free education is one which all men ought to be able to discuss quite freely everywhere. The only reason assigned for maintaining that the question was in any sense a political one was that if the result which some people desired was to be attained it could only be by Act of Parliament. I have yet to learn that that makes any question connected with education a political one, in the sense that it is not to be freely discussed by public servants. Certainly, I should regard it as a very great misfortune if upon educational subjects the voice of such a man as Sir Francis Sandford was to be silenced.

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MR. E. R. RUSSELL: The right hon. and learned Gentleman's (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald's) observations appear to me to be singularly unfortunate, when all our recollections of the character of the recent political contest are quite fresh. There was no more dangerous question than education in most of the constituencies of the country; and I can corroborate what has been said by my hon. Friend and Colleague (Dr. Cameron) in respect to Sir Francis Sandford's speech in Glasgow. That speech did produce an unfortunate effect; it was very generally regarded as an intrusion of which a gentleman in his position should not have been guilty; and I think, also, it was an inconvenience to which Gentlemen who were standing for seats in Parliament ought not to have been subjected from anyone in the position of a permanent official. As the conduct of Sir Francis Sandford has been referred to, I will venture to say now what I should have said some time ago had not my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) risen before me—namely, that it does appear to me not desirable that the arrangement of offices in a new Department such as this of the Secretary for Scotland should be prompted solely by considerations of economy. The Under Secretary for Scotland has had, as we all know, a very brilliant career in the Civil Service. He holds a very distinguished position; but I imagine that he received his pension because his services had reached a point at which they might be suspended. If it was desirable that Sir Francis Sandford should be brought into the service of the country again, I should have thought he might have been employed with much greater advantage in an Office of less novelty, in an Office of less importance, in an Office in which it was of less consequence that good and firm traditions should be established by some permanent official likely to occupy his position for a long series of years. These seem to me to be considerations of much greater importance than the saving of £500 which is derived from the pension which Sir Francis Sandford enjoys. At any rate, I rejoice very much that my hon. Friend (Dr. Cameron) has entered this protest against an incident which, I repeat, was regarded with just reprobation when it occurred, and which, I venture to say,

was not merely a deviation from the ordinary punctilio, but an act liable to produce the greatest inconvenience, because candidates for seats in Parliament ought to be free to discuss political questions and educational questions at an election time without intrusion from those whose position may give them exceptional advantages in the discussion of such matters.

MR. ESSLEMONT: I differ from my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. J. Wilson) in any such notion as that of giving effect to Liberal views when they affect any part of a constituency or of the country. I think we ought to practise economy all round, and unless we do that we shall have no success whatever. I shall not go into the question—the rather heated question—which has been raised in regard to an important official connected with this Department; but I do maintain that it is very much to be desired that there should be some uniformity in respect to the action allowed to public officials. There is no doubt that a certain portion of our public officials are put under the most severe restrictions with regard to any expression of public opinion; while others, enjoying positions which from their very nature ought to cause them all the more to observe neutrality upon public questions, seem to take advantage of those very positions to ventilate their political views. The attention of the Government should be directed to this matter, so that there should be no difference in respect to the expression of public opinion between those who receive £1 a week and those who receive £1,000 a-year; it is strictly unfair that the one should have his mouth closed, while the other should be allowed to speak as much as he liked. In this respect an impartiality should be shown which is not now shown. Nothing was more conspicuous during the recent Election than that certain State-paid persons acted as prominent agents for their own political Parties; while others were not allowed to give a vote, or even to speak upon public questions. My chief intention in rising, however, was to express the opinion that the Treasury's attention should be directed to economizing, by means of centralizing the Office of Secretary for Scotland as much as possible, the expenditure of money on the transaction of Scottish Business. I hope

that by means of centralization we may have a more efficient system of business introduced in Scotland without, necessarily, the expenditure of any more money. The discussion we have had will do good; but, in the circumstances, I think we ought now to allow the Vote to pass.

DR. CAMERON: It appears to me that the advancement of Scottish Business would be much better promoted by the appearance on the Front Bench, during the discussion of Scottish Business, of some official connected with the Scottish Department than the establishment of offices. I asked for some expression of opinion on the part of the Government on this very point—whether what is law for a policeman or a telegraph clerk shall be regarded as law for a permanent official in a higher capacity? I maintain that all classes of public servants should, in the eyes of this House, be treated in one and the same manner. If Sir Francis Sandford is well qualified to give an opinion upon an educational question, I do not see how the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) can deny that policemen and telegraph clerks and Post Office *employés* are equally well qualified to give intelligent opinions on questions affecting themselves. I contend that the same rule applies to public servants in all capacities. When Sir Francis Sandford laid down this rule for his subordinates he was bound to attend to it himself; and unless I get some explanation I shall regard it as my duty to divide the Committee. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £500.

Motion made, and Question put,

"That a sum, not exceeding £2,930, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Secretary for Scotland."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 52; Noes 110: Majority 58.—(*Div. List, No. 7.*)

(Original Question put, and *agreed to.*)

(12.) £100, Lord Lieutenant's Household, Ireland.

(13.) £159, Valuation and Boundary Survey, Ireland.

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(14.) £6,383, County Courts.

MR. TOMLINSON: Mr. Courtney, there is one remark I desire to make, and it arises from the note at the foot of this Vote. The sum asked for additional salaries of the officers of the County Courts is £6,383; and the note at the bottom of the Vote is as follows:—

"The salaries of the officers of the Courts vary with the business. The number of actions brought in the Courts has exceeded anticipations. The extra receipts will, from the same cause, exceed the Estimate by about £23,000."

Now, this seems to raise the question to which I have alluded on former occasions—namely, the question that certain portions of the fees received in Courts of Justice require some revision. I believe it would be found, if we had any means of estimating the relative amounts received from the business of the Courts, and the cost of carrying on the business, that there is a very large surplus in some branches of the Legislature, while other branches do not pay. Some County Courts, as appears from this Vote, pay a large surplus to the State. I think the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) concurs in the view which I have previously expressed—that the fees of a Court ought to be so re arranged that they will not produce more than the sum necessary to carry on the business of the Court. If the fees received in any particular Court largely exceed the cost of carrying on the business of that Court it is quite evident that in that Court we are really selling justice. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, who is so well acquainted with matters of this kind, is prepared to throw any light upon the very extraordinary discrepancy between the £6,383 asked for in the form of salaries and £23,000 which it is estimated will come in by way of extra receipts. I think this is a subject which is worthy of some attention. If it is not possible to obtain a satisfactory explanation at the present moment, I shall be glad to refer to the matter again on a future occasion.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson)

that the additional charge of £6,383 for County Court justice is a somewhat remarkable one. In Ireland we have not one-third or one-fourth the County Court business which you have in England, and yet there is an amount of increase in the Irish Courts far greater than that in the English Courts. I hope we shall have some explanation of the difference between the two countries.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I quite agree with the view of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) that Courts of Justice should pay their own way as far as possible. Whatever may be the case in regard to the Superior Courts, the County Courts of the country have, to a great extent, been self-supporting institutions. The reason why it is necessary to ask for this additional sum of £6,383 is this. The Estimate made at the commencement of the financial year contemplated the County Court business being very much at the same ratio as it was in the preceding year, and the business had been decreasing rather than increasing. The amount of litigation or the amount of money spent in the recovering of debts it is impossible to estimate with anything like accuracy. During the present financial year there has been a large increase in County Court litigation in this country, and the result of that litigation is that the extra fees—ordinary fees—which will accrue to the Treasury will amount to something like £23,000; while, as stated at the foot of the Vote, the extra expenses, in the shape of the salaries of the officers of the Court, will only be about £6,000. I can assure my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Tomlinson) that there has not been much profit on the year. I find that the entire amount paid into the Treasury in 1883-4—I have not got the Return for 1884-5—was only £404,000, while this year it is £440,000. There will be an amount added to the £404,000 which may bring it to the other amount. I may suggest to my hon. and learned Friend that this question might be raised with greater advantage when we shall have all the facts more correctly before us, when, for instance, the whole of the County Court expenditure is brought under the notice of the House. This sum has been paid;

but, practically, it imposes no burden on the taxpayers. There can be no loss to the public Exchequer, because fees will come in which will more than cover the amount. Of course, it will be for my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. J. Morley) to answer the question of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Derry (Mr. Healy) in reference to the County Courts of Ireland, in regard to which Courts I am in entire ignorance. The English County Courts pay their own way, and I wish the Superior Courts did the same. I am sorry to say they do not.

Mr. MOLLOY: What is the meaning of the words at the foot of the Vote—"The salaries of the officers of the Courts vary with the business?" The complaint which has been frequently made in the House is, that this payment of the officers by way of a kind of commission upon the business done in the Courts has been the cause of a large increase of litigation, amongst the poorer litigants, in cases which might be settled under very easy circumstances. When officers of a Court receive commission upon the business done in their Court there is a distinct inducement held out to them to cause a prolongation of litigation either by the advice they gave or by the action they took, say in adjourning a case, or arranging that there should be something in the way of an appeal. We have had several discussions during preceding Sessions upon this question; and the opinion generally expressed has been that the officers of these Courts should not be paid by way of commission upon the business done, but that they should be paid fixed salaries like the officers of other Courts. I must confess that I am not very well instructed in this subject; but, as far as I remember, nearly all the officers of the Superior Courts are paid fixed salaries, while in the County Courts the system of which I and others complain still obtains. It is easy to see, not to use too polite language, that these officers do induce business, not for the benefit of the litigants, but for the benefit of their own pockets. I cannot expect the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) to say that he will introduce a Bill on the subject; but I would like to get from him some expression of opinion which would strengthen

the hands of those who, like myself, have Session after Session drawn attention to the point, and asked that some reform take place in this very unsatisfactory County Court system.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I quite admit that the principle of payment by fees is radically unsound, and ought to be altered. It has been in process of discontinuance in County Courts now for a great many years. When County Courts were originally established—in 1846—most of the principal officers were paid entirely by fees levied on the suitors; but that system was abolished in 1855, when a Royal Commission, which sat on the question, recommended in substitution of that mode of payment the system of payment by salaries. But the salaries were fixed according to the amount of business done; and my hon. Friend (Mr. Molloy) will see exactly how the amount of salary may vary even if an officer is not paid by fees, but by the amount of business. The scale fixed in a large number of Courts is that a Registrar is paid £120 for the first 200 plaintiffs entered in the year; £5 for every 25 plaintiffs beyond that number, and up to 1,000; £4 for every 25 plaintiffs from 1,000 to 6,000; and then, if the plaintiffs exceed 6,000, a net salary is paid to him of £650. If the plaintiffs exceed 8,000 a net salary of £700 is paid, and so on. So there is a graduated scale, although officers are paid by salary. Of course, it would be impossible to have a uniform scale of payment, because there are some Courts in which there are not more than 2,000 plaintiffs entered in the course of a year, while there are other Courts in which there are as many as 12,000 plaintiffs entered annually. And so there is a sliding scale, regulating the salaries according to the business done.

Mr. TOMLINSON: I am not sure that I put my point as distinctly as I ought to have done. My point is that the excess of stamps in one Court is made to pay the deficiency in another Court. For instance, I believe it was almost demonstrated two years ago that the Chancery Division pays a large proportion of the costs of the criminal business of the country; and I would ask my hon. Friend that attention may be given to this point.

Vote agreed to.

(15.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,327, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Courts of Law and Justice in Scotland, and other Legal Charges."

Dr. CAMERON: I should like to ask for some information in regard to the larger item in this Estimate. I regret the absence from the House of the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) and the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour); but in their absence perhaps one of the Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench will be able to give us some information. There is a suspicion that legal expenses in connection with Crown business in Scotland are very often heaped up; and it appears to me that it would be more satisfactory to know something of the cause of our having to vote this rather large sum in connection with a matter which, perhaps, may not be deemed of great importance in a Democratic House of Commons.

Mr. JACKSON: As there is no Scotch official Representative here, perhaps I may be allowed to say that, with reference to this Supplementary Vote, the increase in the expenses under Sub-head B is entirely due to the accounts of the agents for services in connection with the Lauderdale and Lovat Peerage cases. I know that this account was most carefully criticized by the Treasury; and I believe that every item has been most carefully taxed by those whose experience justifies them in expressing an opinion as to what amount ought to be paid. The account has received the most careful attention, and each item has been vouched for. The expenses incurred are expenses which ought to have been incurred, and they were not in excess of the services rendered.

Mr. JACKS: I have no doubt that the items were carefully taxed; but it seems to me that there is a higher question than that, which is this—What possible interest could it be to the people of Scotland how this process was carried on? I may say that unless I have some proper explanation as to how the money of the community is being paid, in a cause in which the people of Scotland

have no interest whatever, I shall most certainly oppose the Vote; and if it is not against the Rules and custom of the House I will ask to report Progress.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): There were Crown interests raised in regard to these two Peerages, and these items are the expenses of the agents attending to the interests of the Crown. What the Treasury have to do, and what they have done, is to see that this expenditure is reduced to the lowest possible amount, and that has been carried out. The account has been passed by the Treasury.

Dr. CAMERON: After the extremely lucid explanation which has been given to the Committee, and the evident sincerity with which hon. Gentlemen on both Benches had avowed their personal conviction that not a halfpenny has been uselessly spent in this case, I have only to say that, of course, there is "a divinity that doth hedge a King;" and it would, perhaps, not do for a private Member to inquire too minutely into what really are the rights of the Crown and what are the interests of the people in this particular case. But it does seem to me to be rather hard that if two or more claimants to any particular Peerage crop up and tell us that so many hundred years ago, in consequence of their ancestors having committed some murder or other, they were obliged to fly and work as colliers, or some cock-and-bull story of that kind, the community should find themselves taxed to the extent of £1,000 or so for defending the interests of the Crown, and not get some less unintelligible, though possibly not less satisfactory, explanation of the account than we have now.

Mr. ESSLEMONT: I quite agree with the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) that the taxpayers of the country should not be asked to vote £1,200 in the interest of the Crown, in a case of this sort, without a single word of explanation as to what the interest of the Crown or the interest of the people is. Without wishing to divide the Committee, I do hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) will give some explanation as to what the interest of the Crown is in these Peerages.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN): I regret exceedingly

that I was not here when this matter was first brought up; but I do not know whether my presence on that occasion would have been of any benefit to the Committee or not. The entire Business of Scotland—the administrative Business—has been handed over to the Scottish Office; but the only Department which has been retained in the hands of the Home Office is that of law and justice. The Vote that is now before us undoubtedly concerns law, and possibly concerns justice; and I am unable, therefore, to contribute anything to the deliberations of the Committee on this matter. I am bound to say that I think these Votes should be examined extremely carefully. We have been in Office only a fortnight, and I take it that the Home Office, which is concerned with law and justice, is responsible in a very small degree for the Vote now before us. This is one of those occasions on which every hon. Member must make up his own mind, and I cannot contribute to the mode in which he will make it up. If hon. Gentlemen think that by voting for this Estimate they are voting public money for an object upon which public money should be expended, I should strongly advise them to vote for it. The money has undoubtedly been paid, and therefore that is a very strong reason for voting it. I am bound to say, however, that from my knowledge of what took place on a previous occasion I do not blame hon. Members who make a protest of this kind.

MR. McCULLOCH: I can scarcely allow this Vote to pass without entering my most earnest protest against any such expenditure of public money. It is of no interest to the people of Scotland which particular member of a family comes into a Peerage, and I cannot see what are the interests of the Crown. I think we should have some assurance from the Front Bench that such an expenditure shall not be entered into again. If that assurance is not given I shall certainly vote against the item in question.

MR. JACKS: I certainly fail to see any justice in saddling the people of Scotland with £1,300 in order to decide which of the aristocracy is to enter into the possession of a certain portion of land; and, therefore, I beg to move that the Vote be refused.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Vote be omitted."—(Mr. Jacks.)

MR. JOHNS: I should like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what would be the result of our carrying the Vote against him on this occasion? What would be the result to the country, and what would be the result to the Secretary for Scotland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): I do not know whether the money would be paid by the Secretary for Scotland; but I think the Committee ought to know really what the Vote is. I think there seems to be some idea that it is for the purpose of promoting the claims of people for Peerages in Scotland; but that is not so. On the contrary, it is the reverse. There were certain Peerages which were in abeyance or in doubt, and people put forth claims to these Peerages. Of course, if they had it all their own way, the public would very likely believe that they had a good claim. The view of the Constitution, however, has been that when a man claims a seat in the House of Lords there ought to be a judicial investigation as to whether or not he is entitled to it; and for that purpose it is necessary that there should be a Queen's Proctor to examine whether or not it is a well-founded claim, and it is necessary that counsel should be instructed and agents employed by the Crown to examine such claims. That really is the character of the Vote now before the Committee. Of course, the Committee may decide that they will have no such charge; but, in that case, some claimants to Peerages will not be opposed at all.

MR. RYLANDS: If this was a question on which our Scotch Friends were exclusively interested I would have apologized for interfering. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has put the case as well as it can be put; but it is none the less very lame. I wish to relieve the mind of the hon. Member from Scotland—

MR. JOHNS: North-East Warwickshire.

MR. RYLANDS: The hon. Member for Warwickshire. I beg his pardon; I thought he came from Scotland. I wish to relieve the mind of the hon. Member

who had some doubts as to what would happen if this Vote was not passed. It would make these proceedings in Committee a perfect farce if it were to be said that because the money had been spent the Committee was bound to vote it. The explanations which we have received have been very lame indeed. Clearly the public may very naturally say that these gentlemen, who apply to be admitted into the ranks of the Peerage, should defray the expenses, or that the costs of litigation should be charged to the parties in the case. Because my Lord Lovat, or some other worthy, excellent gentleman, thinks that he is entitled to a particular Peerage and goes to law about it, then we, who have no interest in the matter at all, have to pay the costs. We have nothing to do with it; and I can tell the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Johns) that if we refuse this money my impression is that we shall never have such a Supplementary Estimate again. Do not be alarmed as to where the money has to come from. I can promise the Committee that neither my right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) nor the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have to pay. I will guarantee the Secretary for Scotland that he shall not have to pay it, and I will guarantee the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he will not be called upon to pay it; and I think we might put a stop to what is a most objectionable Vote by rejecting it. If we do refuse to vote this money I really think we shall have made a step in the right direction.

MR. JOHNS: What has been said by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) hardly satisfies me. What I want to know from the Chancellor of the Exchequer is this—What will happen if we refuse this Vote? It appears to me to be a debt incurred while hon. Members opposite were in power. ["No, no!"] Then it must have been paid very recently—within the last fortnight in fact. If it was not paid within the last fortnight, then it is quite clear that it must fall upon the shoulders of the Front Bench opposite. What I want to know is, what will be the result? If the hon. Member who spoke last is right, the result of our refusing to pass the Vote will be a very happy one.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): After

the statement of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), who appears to have guaranteed everybody, the hon. Member need not have any fears of the result, for the hon. Member for Burnley had clearly backed the bill. I am sorry, however, that I cannot say when the money was paid, or what would happen if the Vote were not passed; but I should recommend hon. Members to be satisfied with what might be called the moral lesson read to-night, and which I venture to say the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and everybody else connected with finance on this Bench, will bear in mind. I regard the hon. Member for Burnley as a very valuable ally of the Treasury Bench in the matter of economy; and no amount of invective which he may hurl at the Treasury Bench on that score will be taken ill by me. The more these Votes are criticized the better I shall be pleased. However, it is no use crying over spilt milk, and I think we might pass the Vote.

MR. CONYBEARE: I do not think that the statements we have received on this subject have been at all satisfactory, considering that this is a matter in which we are taking money out of the pockets of the poor people. I would ask whether the claimants to these two Peerages were successful in their suits? [MR. JOHNS: One was.] If one was, it is clear that he would have money enough to pay the costs of the case. If one was not successful, then, by the ordinary rule which renders unsuccessful litigants liable, he ought to be condemned in costs. Now, few of us on this side of the House wish to see additions made to the Peerage in an authorized manner, much less in an unauthorized manner; and, therefore, we are opposed to seeing anyone go into the Gilded Chamber at the expense of the taxpayers. The sum of £1,286 is a large sum; and when it is known that the greatest distress exists amongst the poor, who are already overburdened with taxes, we have a right to insist that those who like the amusement of trying to get Peerages should pay for it.

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: If the Committee is going to vote on this matter it is as well that I should state what are the facts of the case. These Estimates were certainly prepared by the late Administration; but the costs in question were not incurred during their tenure of

Mr. Rylands

Office. I would qualify that statement, however, by saying that the proceedings in one of the disputed Peerages did not conclude until after the Marquess of Salisbury came into power; but in each case the proceedings were initiated under the auspices of the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). I do not say that with any idea of throwing discredit upon the proceedings now under discussion and supported by the Government, but rather in order that the Committee may be informed as regards the fact. As to the ground upon which the Crown appeared, I would explain that the grant of Peerages flows from the Crown; and they confer not merely privileges, but a share in public duties. It has been the invariable and necessary practice of the Crown that whenever a Peerage is in dispute the Crown should interpose in an impartial character, in order to see that the Peerage does not get into the hands of some person unauthorized to assume it. The proceedings in which the Crown takes part are before the Committee of Privileges, and the part the Law Officer plays before that Committee is to watch the proceedings, and at the close to give such assistance to the Committee as may enable them to decide according to the rights of the case. These are not merely duties which relate to one of the important Prerogatives of the Crown, but they are absolutely necessary so long as the right to a Peerage confers not merely privileges, but public duties, which ought to be secured to those alone who ought to exercise them. Accordingly, I venture to think that the expenditure which has been incurred is a very necessary portion of the due administration of a by no means unimportant part of the right and duty of the Crown. I regret the absence of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Clackmannan

Mr. J. B. Balfour) and the Solicitor General for Scotland (Mr. Asher; and I have only risen, as one of the late Law Officers, to furnish the Committee with an explanation of the ground on which the Crown appears in such cases.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: We have heard from the Treasury Bench that this discussion will act as a moral lesson to the Government. Well, I do not believe in Platonic moral lessons, and I think the

proper way to teach the Government a lesson is by recording our votes for the Amendment.

Mr. MOLLOY: I will put it to the Committee what this Vote really amounts to. As a matter of fact, the sum is for fees for the two legal Gentlemen who represent Scotland in this House. ["No, no!"] If hon. Gentlemen deny it I will ask the Government, does not this sum represent the fees paid to the two legal Gentlemen in the Government who act as Attorney and Solicitor General in the Scotch Department?

Dr. R. McDONALD: There is one point of view from which this matter can be regarded that has been lost sight of up to this. I would ask where are the Gentlemen holding these Peerages at the present time? Are they not able to defend themselves against other claimants; and is it necessary to ask the people to pay the expense of such measures as are necessary to enable them to keep their titles? It seems to me it is the business of those who hold the titles to defend them.

Mr. BAKER: The Committee should not lose sight of the question of justice in this matter. I hold as strongly as any Gentleman sitting below the Gangway the feeling that we should not defend the hereditary right of Gentlemen to these hereditary Peerages; but so long as we have, as part of our Constitution, to uphold the hereditary principle, then I must admit that is the duty of the Government to see that litigation on the subject of a Peerage goes in the right direction. So long as we are to uphold hereditary Peerages, I hold that the Government have been right in the expenditure of this money. Though I hold a strong opinion on the subject of these Peerages, I shall feel bound to vote for the Government.

Mr. MOLLOY: I have asked a question of the Government, and I mean to get an answer to it, as it is a very reasonable one. There is a sum of £1,200 that has been paid for Government agents to attend the examinations into these Peerage questions. I have stated that the money has gone in fees to the Crown counsel or their representatives. We know that in English cases the Attorney General does not always attend the inquiries himself; but I think he ought to do so for his salary—and the Irish Law Officers in Irish cases as well.

I maintain that this money is paid to the Law Officers in fees. It has been denied in a general sort of way from this side; but before we go to a division I intend to get an answer to my question. I wish to know whether this money has or has not been paid in the nature of fees to Crown counsel?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I am not quite in a position to answer the question put by the hon. Member; but certainly, judging from my own experience, nothing like such a sum as is here put down as having been paid to the agents of the Crown for services in connection with the Lauderdale and Lovat Peerage cases has reached the hands of those who were at the time the Officers of the Crown in Scotland. When the Lauderdale Peerage case was before the House of Lords, it so happened that during its course there came a change of Government; and as my right hon. and learned Friend the present Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) was unable any longer to appear on behalf of the Crown, according to the usages of the State and Parliament it was necessary that the new Lord Advocate and other counsel should take his place. I am not here for one moment to defend the ordinary practice which takes place in these cases, the Lord Advocate or Solicitor General for Scotland being employed, as distinguished from other Crown officials. If the Lord Advocate is instructed to appear in such a case he has to do the work; and as long as it is the practice that the Lord Advocate should appear and attend these cases for the Crown I think everyone who knows what the salary of that functionary is for the duties he has to do—everyone who remembers that he is the Public Prosecutor, having to take charge of the public prosecutions in Scotland, and that he is expected, as part of his duties, to find a seat in this House, and to be in London for a considerable part of the year—will agree that he is not a highly-paid official. I think that even the most economical of my Friends the Scotch Members will not deny that. But as regards the fees that were paid to the Lord Advocate—or rather the Gentleman who was the late Lord Advocate until about three weeks ago—I am not in a position to speak. I can speak for myself, however; and I say this with perfect certainty from my recollection—that not more than one tithe of this sum

reached the Lord Advocate of the late Government.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It appears to me that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) and the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) have taken a very un-Radical view of this Vote, because, I understand, these Gentlemen object to a genuine House of Lords, and much more to a bogus one. As I understand it, they would be anxious to prevent any fraudulent person going to the House of Lords—any person who had no business there. For myself, I object to the House of Lords *in toto* as a real institution, and much more as a sham one. I would call attention to the fact that in the Corrupt Practices Act there was inserted a clause requiring the Attorney General or his representative to attend inquiries under that measure to see who are the individuals properly elected, and, if necessary, to prosecute anyone acting illegally. It appears to me that the same duty devolves upon the Law Officers of the Crown in regard to the House of Lords. It is necessary that they should see that that House is not filled by persons who have no claim to be there. At the same time, I think the amount of the charge on the Votes is extremely excessive. I would recall to the mind of the Committee the fact that this is a Scotch Peerage case; and that in an Irish case, when Mr. Villiers Stuart prosecuted a claim to the de Vesci Peerage, which was rejected on the ground of bastardy, there was no charge made for the attendance of the Irish Solicitor or Attorney General. I do not see why it should be costlier for Scotch gentlemen to appear in London in connection with legal matters than for Irish gentlemen to cross the Channel and come to London for the same purpose. I think it would be reasonable to object to the extreme charge proposed in the Vote, and to oppose the Vote if a reduction in the amount were proposed.

MR. TOMLINSON: I desire to call attention to a point which, I think, has escaped notice. It is now proposed that this Vote be rejected as a whole; but there is a portion of it to which no one has offered any objection, and that is the expenditure in regard to Election Petitions. By refusing this Vote we shall be rejecting not only the sum for the Peerage cases re-

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ferred to, but also that which has reference to Election Petitions. I do not think hon. Gentlemen opposite really intend to do that. It is hardly worth while to go to a division unless the point at issue is put properly before the Committee.

DA. CAMERON: I omitted in my observations the point the hon. Member who has just sat down referred to. As I read the matter, it would be sufficient to move the reduction of the Vote by the amount of £1,286. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan—[“No no.”]—I beg the hon. and learned Member's pardon—he has a choice of so many seats that one cannot always remember the place he represents—the hon. and learned Member for South Derry (Mr. Healy says he does not know why there should be a heavy charge in connection with a Scotch case, when there is none at all in regard to Irish cases. He evidently could not have listened to the arguments of the ex-Lord Advocate Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) just now, because he told the Committee most distinctly that it is expected that the Lord Advocate for Scotland shall find a seat in this House; and the hon. and learned Member knows perfectly well that no such thing is expected or necessary in the case of the Irish Attorney General. It is as well to disabuse the hon. and learned Gentleman's mind on this subject. If that had been put forward as a reason why we should vote this sum I should not have objected to it. The hon. Members who have argued the question have not obtained a satisfactory answer from either side of the House. The late Solicitor General for Scotland Mr. J. P. B. Robertson said the expense incurred was necessary for the due administration of the law in Peerage cases; then his Colleague gets up and says he does not know where nine-tenths of the money went, as it did not go into his pocket. The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) told us, in his most candid speech, that he had once been of opinion that such sums should not be voted; but since he has taken his present place in the Government it seems that his views on the matter have undergone a modification. He admitted that those who object to the Vote are justified in voting against it; and, that being so, I think the best way of marking our objection to

this extravagance is to vote for the reduction.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £11, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Courts of Law and Justice in Scotland, and other Legal Charges.”—(*Dr. Cameron*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT): I think what the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Healy) has said is very fair. He said that so long as you have a House of Lords it is proper to take pains that it should be kept for persons who are entitled to sit there; and that, therefore, we should not object to proper precautions being taken for that purpose. I understood him, however, to say that the charge in this Vote might be excessive. With regard to the employment of the Irish Attorney General in cases of this kind, I am not able to state any particular instance; but I should say that, as a matter of principle, a man claiming an Irish Peerage may be on a different footing to one claiming a Scotch Peerage. There may have been something peculiar in the cases under discussion. I do not know how that is; but, as a general principle, you ought to have someone to see that improper persons do not sit in the House of Lords. You ought to have a proper tribunal and Law Advisers to take care of that, just as you have to see that improper persons do not sit in this House. That must be provided for, and any charge it necessarily involves is, in my opinion, a proper one to throw on the public funds. No one will deny that proposition, I think. It would be improper, it seems to me, to argue the question of the desirability of having a second Chamber on the Vote for Courts of Law and Justice in Scotland. Whenever that question is raised it should be raised directly. If you are to have a House of Lords, you ought to have some properly constituted public tribunal fittingly furnished with advice to determine whether a claimant of it is legally a Member of it or not. That is a reasonable and a fair way of looking at the matter; and no prejudice against the House of Lords as an institution ought to be al-

lowed to influence our minds in arriving at a decision. If you want to abolish the House of Lords raise the question directly, and let it be discussed by people according to their opinions, and do not express your objection to it by throwing overboard charges for the services of persons who have been employed to see whether certain individuals legally are, or are not, Members of that House. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Healy) fairly admitted the force of this argument, and then said that the charges made in the Vote, though sound in principle, were excessive in amount. I cannot express an opinion on that matter. It has not been my practice to examine into these matters, though, no doubt, they have been inquired into by the late Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson). It was the duty of those who were at the Treasury at the time these Estimates were prepared to see that they were properly prepared. I do not think we can come to the conclusion, without more information on the point than we have yet received, that these charges are unreasonable and unfair; and to strike out a large part of them, according to the suggestion of the hon. Member (Dr. Cameron), would not, I think, for the reasons I have stated, be a business-like proceeding on the part of the House of Commons. Therefore I again would say that I think the Committee might very well remain satisfied with the appeal which has been made to allow this Vote to pass. I would, at any rate, make that suggestion. I trust hon. Members will remain satisfied with the strong expression of opinion they have given, and allow the Vote to pass.

MR. HALDANE: There is at least one reason, if there were no other, which would induce me to support the Vote. I am under the impression that if a Peerage is once vested it cannot be divested; and, therefore, if it were the practice of the Crown to allow claims like that to the Lovat Peerage to go uncontested the result would be that there would be two Lovat Peerages instead of the one there was before. ["No, no!"] Well, at any rate, that is my impression as to the state of the law. If I am right, I appeal to the collective sympathy and collective wisdom of those who sit on this side of the House, whose feeling has been so great on

this subject, and whose desire I do not doubt is to allow the matter to go, not as a question of principle, but as one of detail.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I took part in the debate rather hurriedly, having only just entered the House, and not having heard all that had been said. I gathered, however, that part of the objection to the Vote on the part of the hon. Member for Glasgow is with regard to the largeness of the amount. Is that so? ["No, no!"] I heard the word "extravagant," which implies an over-charge. It should be understood that in this case the charge was higher than it would have been under ordinary circumstances for the reason I explained before—namely, that owing to the change of Government it was necessary that new officials should be instructed. It was hardly to be expected that new officials would go through the work of getting up a case for which other gentlemen had been paid without receiving remuneration for their services. I understand the Motion of the hon. Member goes to the cutting down of the whole of this Vote. Well, I think we are bound, in justice to a public official like Sir Theodore Martin, to say that such a course would be in every sense extravagant and unjust. Unless Sir Theodore had refused to do the business he was entrusted with, the outlay must have been made by him. He could not possibly have performed his duty without a considerable expenditure of money. As he was bound to do it and incur some outlay, I say it would be an outrage upon justice if the whole of the amount of the charges he had to meet were struck out of the Estimates.

MR. JOHNS: I think that what has fallen from—[*Cries of "Divide!"*] I hope in time to be able to convince hon. Members that I shall not be put down by this means. I think that what has fallen from the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) is a special reason why we should not accept this Vote. If we are to have a double expenditure like this every time there is a change of Government it will be a most improper waste of public money. I most certainly shall always oppose such, and I shall go into the Lobby with the hon. Gentleman below the

Sir William Harcourt

Gangway (Dr. Cameron), and vote for the reduction he has proposed.

Mr. JACKSON: From an economical point of view this is a question of some importance. I certainly am surprised at my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) having taken the course he has to-night; because I would remind the Committee of the fact that it is the constant endeavour of the Treasury, as far as I am able to judge of its proceedings, to cut down the Estimates to the lowest possible point. If the Committee adopts the course of cutting down this Vote, it will certainly be doing something towards weakening the effect of the action of the Treasury—"No, no!" Yes; you will be doing something towards weakening the action of the Treasury in cutting down these items to the lowest possible amount. I would point out that in such cases as this it would be utterly impossible to make a correct Estimate from year to year. I would appeal to the hon. Member for Burnley, in the interests of economy, not to oppose the Vote.

Mr. O'KELLY: I think, if any reason were necessary to induce the Committee to refuse to vote this sum, the reason given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be conclusive. What are the statements we receive from both Front Benches? On the one hand, we are told that the Vote has been reduced to the very smallest possible amount. On the other hand, we are told by the late Lord Advocate for Scotland (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) that only about one-tenth of the amount has passed into his pocket; and we have had no explanation of the manner in which the other nine-tenths have been spent. Now, leaving aside the question whether the money ought ever to have been voted—and I am of opinion that it ought not—I would point out that the position of a Peer is a very important one. It is a position which a great number of people desire, and it is one which, if any person wants it, is worth paying for. If anyone, therefore, goes to law to defend his right to such a position—if it is to his interest to go to law either to secure or maintain a Peerage—he ought to be content to pay for it, and ought not to come to this House to put his hands into the pocket of the public for the purpose.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 117; Noes 136: Majority 19. — (Div. List, No. 8.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

(16.) £4,069, County Court Officers, &c. Ireland.

Mr. DILLON: There are two or three subjects in connection with this Vote with regard to which I wish to ask information from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. J. Morley). I desire, in the first place, to point out to the right hon. Gentleman the enormously costly character of the Irish County Courts. There is, first, the original Estimate of £96,316; next, the Supplementary Estimate of £3,000; and then the sum now asked for of £4,069, making a total for the year 1885-6 of £103,385. However, I will not go at length into that point at the present time. I merely draw the attention of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to the fact that although the business done in the English County Courts is no less than 20 times as great as that in the Irish Courts, the Estimate for the latter is greatly disproportionate. But, chiefly, I want to know from the right hon. Gentleman whether he will object to furnish a Return, and give information as to the amount of business done in the Irish County Courts?

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that the present Supplementary Estimate consists of three items—the salary of the Clerk of the Crown and Peace, Tipperary; the pension of the late Clerk of the Crown, County and City of Dublin; and the charge for additional Revising Barristers. The hon. Member must confine his remarks to these particular items, and refer to other subjects only so far as they illustrate his remarks upon those items.

Mr. DILLON: There is, under Sub-head A, a charge of £721 under the general description—salaries.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will see that in the foot-note this is restricted to one particular item.

Mr. DILLON: Then I ask the right hon. Gentleman what is the reason that the salary of the Clerk of the Crown and Peace is taken in a Supplementary

Estimate; and, also, what is the reason for the large pension which is entered here of £1,716 for the late Clerk of the Crown for the County and City of Dublin? Why was it granted, and why is it so large?

MR. T. M. HEALY: The amount charged for Revising Barristers is £4,632. Supposing that these gentlemen were paid 100 guineas a-piece, the amount for the 32 counties of Ireland would be £3,360, to which, perhaps, might be added their railway fares. But I complain that gentlemen were selected by the late Tory Government, some of whom were themselves candidates as Tories for seats in this House. I do not want to take up time unnecessarily; but, undoubtedly, in the case of North Tyrone, we had a Revising Barrister who afterwards stood as Tory candidate for South Tyrone; and I think it is a serious thing for a Government in Office only six months to appoint gentlemen to this office who were admittedly and avowedly political partizans. I see in his place the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Holmes), who will not dispute it when I say that Mr. Kisbey is President of the Tory Constitutional Club in Dublin, and that when that gentleman left the justice seat he started as Conservative candidate for North Tyrone. I will not say that his decisions were not, in many cases fair, and reasonable; but in many others the Nationalists considered, whether justly or not I will not say, that they were unreasonable. But I will say that gentlemen should have been appointed who were above suspicion. There are many men in Ireland who do not attach themselves to either political Party; and I think the action of the Government should have been not to give lucrative appointments of a judicial character to their friends. With regard to the point raised by my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) in the item for the pension for the late Clerk of the Crown for the County and City of Dublin, I think that in that matter the late Government acted handsomely towards the Corporation in paying the salary out of the Consolidated Fund. This, I think, is the first instance in which the English Government have taken a reasonable view of a claim of the kind. With regard to the salary of the Clerk of the Crown

and Peace, Tipperary, I do not see why this should become a special item. Again, I observe further on in the Estimates in Vote 6 of Class VII., under the head of Registration of Voters, Ireland, is a total charge, in addition to the charge in the present Vote for additional Revising Barristers, of £17,000 for the remuneration of local officials. The Committee will remember that last year we had a debate as to what ought to be paid for the registration of voters in Ireland; and I am not at all sure that the Government have not been attempting to shunt the payment for additional Revising Barristers, and to divert some portion of the £17,000 which was intended by this House to go in defrayment of local charges in favour of the Revising Barristers. Therefore, I trust we shall have a statement by the Government that the £17,000 voted by this House last year in relief of local taxation will go purely and entirely in relief of poor rates, and that not a single 6d. will go for Revising Barristers, the cost of whose remuneration the House declared should be borne by the Consolidated Fund.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. JOHN MORLEY): With regard to the inquiry of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), if the hon. Member will give Notice of the Question I will endeavour to satisfy him. With regard to the point raised by the hon. and learned Member for South Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy), I will leave that to be replied to by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler). But one item in the Estimate—namely, that which relates to the Revising Barristers, is explained by the fact that they were paid by the day, and that an under-Estimate was made of the amount of work which they would have to do. The original Estimate was exceeded because the sittings were unexpectedly prolonged. That, at least, is what I understand to be the case.

MR. HOLMES: The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy) has referred to the gentlemen appointed by the late Government as Revising Barristers; and he made, in the course of his statement, one remark which I cannot agree with. The hon. and learned Member asserted that there were gentlemen at the Irish Bar who were not attached to any political

Mr. Dillon

Party. I have a pretty full acquaintance with the Irish Bar, and I think that any gentleman belonging to it of sufficient eminence to be appointed as Revising Barrister is generally found to be of one Party or the other; and it would be very difficult to get 20 or 30 gentlemen to perform this duty without going to those whom I may call political partizans. Of one thing I am sure—that the gentlemen whom the late Government appointed, equally as between both political Parties, endeavoured to carry out their duties in a spirit of fairness. It will be found that they selected, numerically speaking at any rate, no gentlemen who were Conservatives in preference to Liberals. The remark has been made that gentlemen appointed to the office of Revising Barrister were themselves candidates. There was only one such case, and that case has been referred to by the hon. and learned Member for South Derry. At the time Mr. Kisebey was appointed, he had never been a candidate for any constituency; nor, as far as the late Government were aware, had he any intention of becoming one. I may say that he had no such intention, for, knowing him as I do, I am quite sure that if he had had any such intention he would never have accepted the office; while I believe that Mr. Kisebey's reputation at the Bar was such as to make him very well fitted to perform the duty of Revising Barrister. I recollect that a decision given by him was commented upon very favourably in a journal which is exceedingly ably conducted, and which belongs to the Nationalist Party—*The Freeman's Journal*. In that paper it was said that Mr. Kisebey had given a decision in support of the view frequently put forward by it, and which, I believe, had been disputed by some other Revising Barrister. The hon. and learned Member for South Derry has referred to Mr. Kisebey as being the President of a Conservative Society in Dublin. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: Vice President.] If that is so he must have become so within a few weeks of the present time, as he was not so when he was appointed Revising Barrister. With regard to the salary of the Clerk of the Peace coming upon the Estimates for this year, I presume that the reason is that this is the first time the charge has been voted, the salary previously having been paid by

the county out of the local rates. The hon. and learned Member has also referred to the excess of the present over the former Estimate. He has referred to the Act of Parliament; and it is admitted on all hands, I believe, that that Act was intended to relieve the City of Dublin of a charge which it was considered ought to be borne by Imperial funds.

MR. DILLON: I have a personal interest in the matter of Mr. Kisebey's appointment. It is perfectly notorious why he was sent to revise the lists in North Tyrone; the Tories of that county made a triumph of the fact; and I do not believe there is a man, woman, or child there who does not believe that I was defeated in North Tyrone mainly by Mr. Kisebey. If it be difficult to find men at the Bar in Ireland who are impartial in politics to revise the lists of voters, it is a singular thing that a man who has proved himself to be one of the bitterest partizans to appear before an Irish constituency, and who used language calculated to excite the bitterest feeling, should be selected to revise the list in one of the only three constituencies in Ireland where there was a close contest. It is a fact well known that Mr. Kisebey returned the present Member for North Tyrone. I may mention the circumstance that in Strabane alone 14 minors, some of them being not more than 14 years of age, voted against me.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to point out that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Holmes) has not touched at all upon the jerryandering of those constituencies in which there was a close contest. It will be remembered that 20 gentlemen were to be appointed to revise the lists in Ireland. It was quite right that they should be selected from both political Parties—that there should be some Whigs and some Tories; but the point I call attention to is that almost every gentleman supposed to be of Liberal leaning was sent down to revise the lists in the wilds of Cork and Mayo, where the Nationalists were known to be 999 to one of the voters, and that a Tory was sent down to revise the lists where the contest was known to be close. I do not know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University is himself responsible

for that. I do not think he is; but I know one gentleman who is responsible, and that is Sir William Kaye, a member of most of the Orange Lodges, a gentleman who stood for the City of Armagh against Mr. Beresford, the late Member. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University did not appoint Mr. Kisbey to the post of Revising Barrister in North Tyrone, it was Sir William Kaye—it was he who pricked the list, with the result that men who were supposed to be sympathetic in politics with us were sent to places where we were in an enormous majority, while to places where the Nationalists were in a small minority the men who were sent were Orangemen to the backbone.

MR. A. BLAINE: In respect to this additional charge of £1,632 for Revising Barristers, I deem it right to say that Mr. Craig, who was sent down to revise the list of voters in Mid Armagh, put a number of Tory youths under 21 years of age on the list, and they voted at the last election. When a Nationalist applied for his vote Mr. Craig suspected he was under 21 years of age, and required a certificate of age, from the Registrar, he being altogether oblivious of the fact that, until the year 1864, there was no register of births kept in Ireland. We have also to complain that Mr. Craig inserted men's names as the occupiers of properties, whereas the properties were occupied by women. Another trick resorted to by the landlords in Mid Armagh was to fill their tenants' receipts "Received from the representatives," so that the total rating divided by the representatives would not give the qualifying quotient required by law. Mr. Craig accepted the landlord's books properly cooked for revision that women and not men were tenants, though the men paid the rent. Mr. Craig winked at this fraud upon the law. I would only be participating in these illegal proceedings if I did not protest against an amount appearing in these Estimates for the payment of services rendered to one particular Party in Mid Armagh—namely, the Tory Party. There is another grievous matter in connection with the Mid Armagh revision of which we have to complain. While Mr. Craig was holding a Revision Court in one part of the division, Mr. Richard Wilson Gamble, Q.C., County Court Judge, was

holding a Revision Court in another part of the constituency. While Mr. Gamble was thus engaged, an officer of his Court—a civil bill officer—named Wilson, was giving evidence for the Tory Party of Armagh at Mr. Craig's Court—that is to say, Mr. Gamble allowed his officer to serve objections, and strike off Nationalists from the voters' lists for the Tory Party. I submit that Judges who act in such a manner are altogether unworthy of public confidence. That they have not the confidence of the public I am quite aware. They go about giving long lectures on the state of the country. Instead of sympathizing with the people in consequence of the distress which prevails, they are constantly telling us about the great frauds committed by people who are unable to pay exorbitant rents, and yet many of them connive at fraud themselves. I submit that Mr. Richard Wilson Gamble, Q.C., was privy to the attendance of his civil bill officer at the Revision Session held by Mr. Craig; and, that being so, I would not be doing my duty if I did not challenge this Estimate.

MR. HOLMES: I trust the Committee will allow me to say a few words in reference to the last observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Derry (Mr. Healy). The hon. and learned Gentleman referred to a circumstance for which I suppose he believed there was some foundation, that Sir William Kaye, the Assistant Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, was the gentleman who sent the Revising Barristers to the different counties. It would be entirely unworthy of me, as a Member of the Administration, to allow any blame such as that to rest upon a permanent official. It would not be the duty of a permanent official to undertake such a task, and it certainly was not undertaken by Sir William Kaye. The responsible Government of the time, the Chief Secretary, with such assistance as he could get from the Lord Chancellor, sent the various Revising Barristers to the counties. At the same time, it is right the Committee should understand that the Government, and no officer of the Government, no one belonging to the Government of the day, and no permanent official connected with the Government, had anything to do with sending Mr. Kisbey to North Tyrone. By reason of

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the extent of county Tyrone it was necessary to have in the county four Revising Barristers; and four were selected, two being Liberals and two Conservatives. It then rested with the Chairman of the county to allocate the various divisions amongst the gentlemen selected. So the Government of the day had nothing to do with it—beyond nominating the four gentlemen for the county, they had nothing whatever to do with the sending of Mr. Kisbey to North Tyrone. In reference to what the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Armagh (Mr. A. Blaine) said with respect to Mr. Craig, I think it right to say that Mr. Craig is a member of the Irish Bar, who has been a well-known Radical for many years. He was sent down to revise in Armagh, being a gentleman very competent to do so, as far as his legal knowledge was concerned, and he was engaged in revising the lists in Mid Armagh, it being supposed at that time that the contest there would be between a Conservative and Liberal—that it was one of the constituencies which would not be contested by a Nationalist. I cannot see how a Conservative Government can be responsible for the action taken—assuming that there was anything wrong—by a Radical barrister of position, sent down to revise the lists in a constituency in which it was supposed the contest would take place between a Radical and Conservative. I must add that, from what I know of Mr. Craig's character and legal knowledge, I am sure all the decisions he gave were given conscientiously, and in accordance with law.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Holmes) has certainly let the cat out of the bag. What is his confession? His confession is that the Government did take political considerations into account, because in the case of Mid Armagh they, in September and October, considered the political complexion of the constituency, believing that the contest there would lie between a Tory and a Liberal.

MR. HOLMES: The hon. and learned Gentleman is certainly, though unintentionally, misrepresenting what I said. The result was that the contest lay between a Conservative and a Nationalist; but unquestionably the Government did not take the matter into consideration. In the case of Armagh, as in the case of

Tyrone, the Government selected the necessary number of Revising Barristers, and the divisions were allocated amongst them by the Chairman of the county.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As I understood the right hon. and learned Gentleman, I did not see how his argument lay unless the Government gauged beforehand what the nature of the contest would be. Anyhow, as he has repudiated my interpretation of his words, I pass the matter by. He has attempted to relieve Sir William Kaye of responsibility. I do not accept his defence of Sir William Kaye; but I will deal with that gentleman in a moment. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says that the appointment of the Revising Barristers was settled by the late Lord Chancellor, Lord Ashbourne, a well-known political partizan, and by the late Chief Secretary (Sir William Hart Dyke), another well-known political partizan—in other words, that these Gentlemen had the power of thimble-rigging as to the gentlemen who should be sent down to revise the voters' lists. I entirely repudiate that view of the matter. Then the right hon. and learned Gentleman says that as between the county and the divisions of the county the Chairman of the county had the power of allocating the divisions in which a particular barrister should sit. That is not at all the provision of the Act of 1885; because that Act provides that the Revising Barristers are to settle the matter between them, each gentleman having just as much power as the other. And with regard to Sir William Kaye, I know of my own knowledge that Revising Barristers who had to go down to counties which it was expected would be closely contested were summoned to the Castle, were met by Sir William Kaye, and were bull-nosed by him as to the divisions of the county they should go to. Of course, if I were to mention the counties it would soon become known who my informant was, and that gentleman would have little chance of any future employment from Sir William Kaye. Upon a future occasion, when a number of gentlemen are picked out as suitable to act as Revising Barristers, they should be sent to the different counties by ballot, or by the casting of lots. If such a system were observed there could be no complaint whatever. I think that is the provision of the Act of 1868 with regard

to the Judges who have to try Election Petitions; and surely the revision of voters is a matter of as much importance as the trial of a Petition. I trust that for the future, when the Government select gentlemen who appear to be capable to conduct Revision Sessions, those gentlemen will be sent impartially; and the only way in which they can be so sent is by ballot.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: The distinguishing feature of the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Derry (Mr. Healy) has been the use of two extraordinary terms—thimble-rigging and bull-nosing. I confess I do not know what the latter term means. I never heard it before; but I know this—that the hon. and learned Gentleman has recently been admitted into the Profession—the grand Profession—of the Law. He is a barrister; but the whole of his speeches are calculated to leave an impression on the House that there is no such thing as an honourable barrister to be found in Ireland. I appeal to everybody whether this kind of parochial criticism, contemptible and miserable, this saturnalia of opportunity, this casting of imputations upon men as honourable as the hon. and learned Gentleman, is to be tolerated in the House of Commons. There has been introduced the name of Sir William Kaye, a man of the most distinguished eminence, a man whose character stands too high to be blackened by the jeers of hon. Gentlemen opposite. What is the issue which is presented to us? You would suppose that whoever is selected as a Revising Barrister in Ireland must necessarily be a blackguard. A Revising Barrister is called upon to perform a judicial duty; and if his decisions are erroneous—and it does not follow that a Revising Barrister is always correct—there is an appeal from his decision. Why did not hon. Gentlemen opposite appeal against the decisions of which they now complain? They prefer to come here to blacken the character of men who stand high in the estimation of all those who know what honour is; and they do not scruple to cast imputations, if only they can be unanswered, upon the Profession to which many of them belong, and to which others of them are aspiring to belong. I trust that the House of Commons, which now comprises a great

number of Members who are new to their duties, will understand that the criticisms of hon. Gentlemen who profess to represent a great nation—the Irish nation—are of the most contemptibly parochial character. I hope the new Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley), who is supposed to be peculiarly favourable to hon. Gentlemen opposite, will take note of the kind of criticisms which is resorted to by them. If there has been any wrong done by the Revising Barristers in Ireland, let them appeal to the law, as people in England and in Scotland do. That is the advice I always gave to them when I was the Representative of an Irish constituency. ["Oh!"] Certainly it is; and the reason why I could no longer represent an Irish constituency was this—that by violence and intimidation those who ought to have given their votes freely were not permitted to do so.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Mr. Courtney, I rise to a point of Order, and I ask you to require the hon. Gentleman to resume his seat while I state it. I wish to ask you whether the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow (Mr. Mitchell Henry) have any relevance to the Vote now before the Committee?

THE CHAIRMAN: The last remarks of the hon. Gentleman appeared to me to be divergent.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: I quite admit they did diverge; but I will say this—that when I was an Irish Representative I took exactly the same line I take now. I told hon. Members, who were then my Colleagues, that they were simply degrading their own country, and preventing the promotion of their ends, by showing they had no notion of fairness in their criticisms. It is perfectly well known that the Revising Barristers in Ireland were impartially selected. Surely the Nationalists, who have returned 86 Members to this House, might in decency be contented with their success. But they actually grudge the representation in this House of any who differ from them, and they do not care what imputations they cast upon honour, upon truth, upon justice, upon the Profession to which so many of them belong, and to which many others desire to belong in future if only they can pass the examination; they do not care what imputations they cast upon

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their own Profession if by any chance they can give pain to honourable men who have not an opportunity of reply in this House.

Vote agreed to.

(17.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,400, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Constabulary Force in Ireland."

Mr. DILLON: There are two items in this Supplementary Estimate which raise a question of the very utmost importance, and of pressing urgency to the Irish people. The items to which I allude are the additions of £2,400 for the travelling expenses of the Irish Constabulary, and of £1,800 for the Transport Service. In the first place, I wish to direct the attention of the Committee to the extraordinary—I may say the absurd—figures of this additional Estimate for the Transport Service of the Irish Constabulary, compared with the original Estimate. The original Estimate for the Transport Service was £1,500, and the Supplementary Estimate is £1,800. It is a very unusual and extraordinary circumstance that the additional Estimate largely exceeds the original Estimate. It is also noticeable that under the head of travelling expenses the additional Estimate bears a large proportion to the original Estimate. I think that no time should be lost in asking the Committee to consider most earnestly whether it is not high time to put a stop to the monstrous waste of public money in Ireland in transporting large bodies of Constabulary from place to place, sometimes to where they are not wanted at all, and still more frequently to where they are wanted to do infamous wrong. Now, what is going on at the present moment in Ireland? Why, Sir, there is an army of Constabulary moving about Western Ireland at enormous cost. I suppose that in a short time we shall be called upon to vote further sums for the expedition. In my opinion, a more monstrous parody of government was never undertaken in any country which pretends to be civilized. Let anyone take up *The Freeman's Journal*, or any other newspaper in which accounts of the expedi-

tion are given; and he will admit that, if it were not too tragic, a more ludicrous proceeding could hardly be imagined. The accounts read like quotations from *Don Quixote*. No one could believe that anything so preposterous could go on in real life. Many Members of the Committee may not have read the details of the expedition. What are the facts? A body of 200 Irish Constabulary, many of them transported from a great distance, and at considerable expense, as one sees from this Estimate, are concentrated at Gweedore, a place well known for its natural beauty and as a fishing resort, to assist in the collection of the seed rate, a rate levied with the object of enabling starving tenants to plant their land with potatoes. These men have been marching and counter-marching; and up to the present moment I do not believe they have succeeded in levying a couple of pounds, while, I venture to say, they have spent close upon £1,000. We shall be called upon, at a future Sitting of the Committee, to vote for that expedition £1,000 at least. I put it to the common sense of the Committee, is it wise, is it sensible, is it not downright madness, to add to the embarrassments by which this new Administration is beset by the continuance of such proceedings as this? The people are calling upon the charitable English public to contribute funds to relieve them. We are told by everybody who goes into the district, be he English or Irish, that the people are starving. Anything more pitiable or more absurd than the proceedings as detailed in the newspapers could not be imagined. There had been no opposition offered to the Constabulary; but the people, acting upon the advice of their priest, had abstained from congregating. In some instances this army of Constabulary seized broken chairs, tables, dressers, plates, iron pots, in which the people had cooked their food, and piled them in the cart following the army. And in one instance, amidst the screams of an unfortunate woman, a widow, and her children, the Constabulary dragged from a remote corner of the cabin and carried off some potatoes, all that the family had to subsist upon. And I am informed that, as soon as the great expedition comes to a close, another expedition is to be organized, and, perhaps, one of larger dimensions, because we

are told that they are to be supported by the military, and they are to evict these miserable people from their holdings. Now, I put it to the new Chief Secretary for Ireland—undoubtedly, he has undertaken a most difficult task; and I am bound to say this—that I do not think there ever came to Ireland a man who had a better chance of making a successful Government in Ireland than the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary. I returned, about a week or two ago, from a journey to a remote part of the county of Mayo, where I found the poor people are expecting something to be done for them, because, as they said to me, they had been told that Mr. John Morley was a good man. Undoubtedly, there is a feeling spread in Ireland that the Government are going to do something for the relief of the people, and, undoubtedly, that feeling will be a strong factor in helping to keep the country quiet; and believing, as I do, that the Government intends to turn over a new leaf, and to deal with the people in a kind spirit while they are maturing their plans, I think it my duty to bring under their notice the pressing danger that attends the employment of the Constabulary in those insane expeditions. Now, I have pointed out these two uses to which the Constabulary are put, and which are not only utterly fruitless and absurd, but swells the cost of the Constabulary to a state which is utterly monstrous and absolutely useless, and, at the same time, constitutes a serious public danger. Now, there is a third way in which the Constabulary transport is increased, and which, I am free to admit, is a subject on which arguments can be advanced on both sides. The two first matters I have spoken of are so plain that no argument can be advanced on one side. I do not think, for instance, that any man with a knowledge of the facts of the case could defend the expedition to Gweedore. The third way I have mentioned is the important question as to whether the armed Forces of the Crown are to be employed as well as the Constabulary in enforcing evictions in Ireland. Without inquiry as to the condition of the people, we have heard the statement made the other night that the Government will not use these armed forces to carry out evictions in the Western Highlands and the Islands of Scotland. We have been ap-

pealing in this House for five years—appealing to the Government of Ireland to use some discretion in the use that is made of this police force; and there are many who think that, if our appeal had been listened to, much bloodshed and disorder would have been prevented. Are we to be told, and are we to tell the Irish people, that in Ireland, on the contrary, there is to be no inquiry even, and no expression of opinion on the part of the Executive Government, as to whether the landlords are acting harshly and unjustly, and driving men to absolute desperation? Are the Irish landlords to have the whole force of the Crown at their backs? I make these remarks, as I said before, from a desire to enable the Government to take time to settle the Irish Question. We believe that this Government desire to come to a settlement of this question in a friendly and honest spirit, and it is our desire to do our best to smooth their path. But I am afraid that, whatever may be our desire to smooth the Government's path, it will do but little if these ruthless evictions are to be allowed to continue. In conclusion, on this point I will only say that I have travelled through the western part of Donegal lately, and I can say I have listened to the greatest exaggeration in this House as to the resistance which is given to the payment of rent in that district. There has been absolutely no resistance at all. I can say that, in East Mayo, rents have been better paid than they have in many parts of England; but, unfortunately, there was a large tail of tenants in all those places, who assured me they could not get the rent; and I am perfectly convinced that nothing will allow this armed force to evict them. I wish it were in my power to take the Chief Secretary to see these peasants; and, after having seen them, I believe that on no condition would the right hon. Gentleman sanction the use of the Forces of the Crown to recover rent. There is no combination amongst these people to resist the payment of rent; but, unfortunately, there are a large number of families, who are at this moment with a rent decree in their houses, utterly unable to pay the rent asked of them or to borrow money; and many of them, having paid their rent, are left in a starving condition, and will soon be living on the rates. I therefore feel that I

Mr. Dillon

ought not to lose this opportunity of making an earnest appeal to the Chief Secretary not to pursue this ridiculous and senseless course, nor to raise up obstacles which Heaven knows are sufficiently numerous for him already. I do not believe that any Englishman ever undertook a more difficult task than that of ruling the Irish people. I am bound to say that if I thought the right hon. Gentleman came here to rule us for long I should put every obstacle in his way. I believe, however, that the right hon. Gentleman honestly desires to do his best in this respect; and, holding this opinion, I honestly desire to remove every difficulty from his path, because I think the right hon. Gentleman wishes to get out of the country as soon as possible. That is the reason why I have a feeling of friendship for the present Chief Secretary. I would ask the Committee to remember that although hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House were loud in their insistence on the maintenance of law and order, and would back its maintenance by the use of public money for employing the armed Forces of the Crown, they sent a Gentleman to Ireland a few months ago, the Earl of Carnarvon, who gave great offence to the landlords, because he recommended them not to press the Irish people too far. I would ask the present Chief Secretary to improve on the example set him by the Tory Government, to go as far further, and from words proceed to deeds. A Predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman in the government of Ireland in his day won, to a great extent, the affections of the Irish people by an act which brought down upon him the opprobrium of the Tory classes in Ireland; but his name has been handed down with feelings of respect and admiration by the people of Ireland. I refer to Thomas Drummond, who in a time of agitation compared to which the wildest days of the Land League was only child's play, when the people rebelled at the injustice of tithes, refused to use the Irish Constabulary to collect the tithes. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to begin his government of Ireland by sending a message of peace to the Irish people, by showing that he will do all in his power to check the hand of the exterminator in Ireland, and to prevent the people from being driven away from their homes

when their refusal to pay rent is on account of their poverty. If he will do so, I, for my part, will do my best, by the exercise of what influence I possess, to smooth the path of the right hon. Gentleman's government in Ireland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I can very cheerfully respond to the appeal of the hon. Member (Mr. Dillon), and I do not know that I am concerned to repudiate the motive with which he promises me his sympathy and support. The question how long I or any English Minister shall rule the Irish people is a question to which we are, no doubt, approaching tolerably near to a solution one way or the other. Upon the narrower point of the evictions, the hon. Member is well aware that I have as much sympathy as he has with the unfortunate victims of the social circumstances in which Ireland is placed. The question as to whether or not the Military Forces of the Crown are to be used in carrying out every eviction for which the shadow of legal title or justification can be made out is a question which Executive Ministers must decide for themselves on their own responsibility upon each case as it arises. I, for one, am not prepared to admit that we are justified, in every case in which a shadow of legal title is made out, to bring out the Military Forces to execute decrees which on the ground of public policy seem inadvisable and unnecessary. So far as I have been able to gather information in the very short time that I have been at the Irish Office, I think the hon. Member is justified in saying that at this moment—I do not know whether hon. Gentlemen opposite will differ—rents are being, at this time, very fairly paid indeed. In cases where rents are not being paid they seem to me, as far as I can understand, to be mostly cases where it is as absolutely impossible for the tenants to pay them, as it is for many tenants in England to pay their rents. The hon. Member will not expect me to offer any remarks on the circumstances of the Gweedore evictions, for, in truth, I am not acquainted with them, nor am I responsible for them, and it does not fall within my province to criticize them, nor to offer any defence or justification of them. As for the future, I can only repeat, in another way, what I have al-

ready said—that while we shall be very careful to exact respect for law, and very careful to see that every subject of the Queen has all those rights to which he is legally entitled, it will be our duty to look into the cases as they arise; and in no case where it can possibly be avoided shall we be inclined to resort to military force. The particular item for increased military transport, which the hon. Member challenges, I am sorry to say is due to the circumstance, as I am informed, that the Constabulary are unable to procure cars in consequence of pressure; and, therefore, they have been obliged to provide themselves with horses, cars, and harness. The hon. Member spoke, however, rather with a view, as I gather, to express his opinion of the necessity of a policy of conciliation with regard to evictions. I believe that the more the circumstances of Ireland are considered the more urgent will it appear to all those who have a sense of responsibility to use and exercise the power of the Crown with judgment and humanity.

MR. FLYNN: Mr. Courtney, the hon. Gentleman who has brought before your notice his criticisms as to why the House should not pass this Vote has stated, in clear and emphatic terms, the reasons why he objects, and why, on behalf of his constituents and the people of Ireland, he offers his protest against the passing of such a Vote as this. I also represent a constituency which has instructed me on every occasion to offer my protest against the system of organized eviction in Ireland; and in speaking of this Vote I wish to be understood as representing my constituency in the protest I make. I feel that the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Morley) will be received in Ireland to-morrow with a thrill of gratification. They will be received, at all events, with this feeling—that, for the first time in the history of the country, a Gentleman occupying a responsible position has spoken of the toiling masses of Ireland in terms of commiseration and sympathy. We regret that large Supplementary Estimates of this sort have to be brought before the House; but we say that they have been necessitated by this system of organized eviction, which has been entered upon by the landlords of the country. I am in a position to say that the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon) has stated nothing

Mr. John Morley

but the clearest and most palpable truth when he has told this Committee that there is no indisposition in Ireland to pay a fair rent. We think it a very cruel thing that the Executive powers of the Government should be exercised in support of an organized system of evictions; and we are glad to observe the considerate and sympathetic tone in which the Chief Secretary has approached the subject, and we hope sincerely that the Government will see their way to deal with this question in a kind and equitable spirit. I should like to point out to the Committee that it involves a confiscation of the property of the Irish people when large forces of Constabulary are sent on these eviction campaigns: because it is within the knowledge of all that these evictions are the result of circumstances over which these poor people have no more control than a man has over the elements around him. If carried out by the Constabulary, who are placed at the disposal of the landlords by the Executive, the poor people are thrown out on the roadside frequently for the non-payment of one year's rent. I feel convinced that the people of Ireland, as I have said a minute ago, will read to-morrow with feelings of sincere gratification the wise and generous words that have fallen from the lips of the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and I believe that the Government will recognize the protest which has fallen from these Benches, and that we have so protested on behalf of those people who are desirous of meeting their engagements, but who cannot be expected to do so in times such as the present.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: What we miss in this discussion is the presence of facts to enable the Committee to judge what foundation there is for the eloquent speeches on the subject of Irish distress which we hear from the other side of the House. I will not yield to any man in my abhorrence of evictions. I have ever raised my voice against them in this House; but there are evictions and evictions. The hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon), who introduced this discussion, spoke of evictions, or threatened evictions, for the purpose of recovering seed rate.

MR. DILLON: Nothing of the sort. They cannot do so. The hon. Member does not understand what he is talking about. They cannot be evicted for the recovery of seed rate.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY: The hon. Member mixed up evictions with his statements, and said that the Irish Constabulary has been used for the collection of seed rate. Well, it would be more candid of the hon. Member if he told the Committee what the seed rate was. It was the creation of hon. Members opposite. That is the fact, and I can prove it. In 1879, when there was a period of great distress in Ireland, the Conservative Government, at the instigation of an hon. and gallant Member opposite—the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan)—introduced a measure by which they advanced money to a very large amount for seed potatoes, which was to be repaid in a certain number of years by the levying of a rate on every barony which had borrowed the money. Well, I contended at that time, and I now know, that if the hon. and gallant Member had not been in such a hurry to bring forward his measure, the Government of that day would have granted the most reasonable assistance of seed to crop the ground after the famine free, gratis, for nothing. We did so in the case of the French people after the famine. We sent immense quantities of seed of all kinds abroad. '*Cries of "Question!"*' I know hon. Gentlemen opposite do not want the truth to be known, and they always take up this attitude when disagreeable facts are being put forward. As I was saying, in the case of the French War we granted—that is to say, the English and Scotch people, and I dare say the Irish people joined with them—to the French peasantry seed potatoes, grain, and other things, for the purpose of cropping the ground for another year; and we did it as a gift. If there is one form of charity more than another which can be defended on economic and philanthropic grounds, it is that form. But the hon. and gallant Member for Galway introduced his Bill, and proposed that the Irish people should repay the amount which was lent to them. The Government, of course, jumped at the proposal at once and the result has been that a considerable portion of the rate has not been paid; but over and over again application has been made for the postponement of the collection of the tax. Applications of that kind have been acceded to over and over again by the Government; and if I were to tell the Com-

mittee of the cheating and fraud that went on in regard to that seed rate—how the common potatoes grown in the district were taken out of a town and brought back as what they called "champion potatoes" from a distance, and re-sold at 10 guineas a ton—

Mr. FLYNN: I rise to Order. I want to know what connection there is between the long detailed history of the various incidents connected with the seed rate and the Estimate before the House?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is perfectly in Order in his explanation of the circumstances of the seed rate.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY: I am never sorry for these interruptions. I am only sorry for those who make them, because the House knows the incurable aversion which hon. Members who represent, or claim to represent, the Irish people have to the elucidation of facts and truth. Well, the seed rate was a great farce. I do not remember how much is outstanding; but I know that, after great difficulty in collecting the rate, a great many years have elapsed without the amount advanced having been repaid—for we are now in 1886, and the Bill was passed in 1879 or 1880. After so many years a large portion of the seed rate still remains uncollected. I believe, with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon), that his constituents and the people of Donegal, and also the people in that part of Ireland who are almost always at the door of starvation, are unable to pay their contribution.

Mr. DILLON: My clients paid it long ago.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY: That is the county of Mayo. They may have paid it—many were anxious to—and in these years the money may have been paid; but the people of Donegal, who are exceedingly poor, and the people of Connemara and of some parts of Kerry, are quite unable to pay the rate. I have always said so; and why, I ask, did not hon. Gentlemen opposite take up the same position? Why did not those hon. Gentlemen opposite, who were in the House at the time, protest against the Bill of their hon. and gallant Colleague? Why did they not save the Irish people from this impost? I always protested that these people were utterly unable to repay this

money that was granted to them so many years ago for the purpose of enabling them to crop their ground; and I hope the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant will obtain the sanction of the Treasury for the sweeping away of the rate. I certainly should not, however, let off those Unions in the South of Ireland who are still as able to pay as any other people in the country, but who will not pay if they can possibly help it. The hon. Member has spoken of coercive measures for the recovery of the rate; but everyone who knows Ireland must be aware that it is to be divided into at least two parts. The people in the South—the people about Dublin and the people of Cork and Limerick—are well able to pay their rents. ["Oh, oh!" and cries of "No!"] I say that confidently, and can prove it. [An hon. MEMBER: It is not true.] It is perfectly true. They are as well able to pay their rents as any people in Great Britain. [An hon. MEMBER: Prove it.] The tenants in Connemara, in Kerry, and the tenants in Donegal, who chiefly derive the money with which they pay their rents from labour in England, and who have no employment when trade is bad, are not able to pay their rents; but I am bound to say that, so far as my experience goes, the people of Connemara have made the most honourable efforts to pay their rents.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. JOHN MORLEY): Hear, hear!

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: The Chief Secretary cheers that observation. Why have these people been so anxious to pay? Because they know that the encouragement they received from the Land League to resist the just payment of their rents has resulted in a failure. Many of them allowed themselves to be evicted at the instigation of the Land League, and found that when they were turned out on the roadside they got no assistance from the large funds which have been subscribed, and which are within the control of hon. Gentlemen opposite. They have learnt a lesson. The people in Connemara, in Kerry, and Donegal have striven to pay their rents, and all honour to them for it. They have done so because they have lost faith in those who before recommended them not to pay, and then deserted them in their needs.

Mr. Mitchell Henry

An hon. MEMBER: You say that because they hunted you.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: The people who have not paid their rents have refused at the instigation of the National League. There is a complete combination not to pay rents, and the tenantry could not, if they would, hold out against them. You have only to read that very journal which the hon. Member for Mayo referred to—*The Freeman's Journal*—or to read *United Ireland*, and watch the advice which is given to these people in the prosperous parts of Ireland, and often actually given by hon. Gentlemen who are now sitting opposite to us in the House of Commons to see that I am right. They say—"If you have got any money take care to clothe and feed your children, expend your money for all those purposes which you think are beneficial to yourself, and then, if you have anything left over, give it to the landlord." Well, what is the result? Why, notwithstanding the 25 per cent reduction which has been made in the gross rental of Ireland under the Land Act of 1880, the tenants have actually asked for a reduction of 50 and 60 per cent. They have very properly been refused.

[An hon. MEMBER: Not by the Judges.] Take the case of the Duke of Devonshire. Did they not attempt to intimidate him? Did they not ask an enormous reduction which he refused? [An hon. MEMBER: How much?] I believe 50 per cent. ["No, no!"] I believe it was that amount. [An hon. MEMBER: No; about 20 per cent.] However, I will undertake to say that, although the Duke of Devonshire granted a reduction, it was not more than about half the amount that was asked for. The tenantry held numerous meetings and assumed a threatening aspect; but eventually they thought it better to pay. And that is a fair example of what is continually going on in Ireland. The House is not to be hoodwinked on this subject. I have said this when I was an Irish Member, and I will repeat it now when I am not. What is the amount of the deposits in the banks of Ireland? Upwards of £30,000,000. And to whom does it belong? Why, to the prosperous tenants of the South and East of Ireland. There is no dearth of money amongst the large farmers in Ireland. Out of 16 years they have

had 12 good years of exceptional prices; and though at this moment prices have fallen very low, I say positively that they are not as low as they were 20 years ago, when rents were much higher than they are now. It is exactly the same thing in the dairy counties of Ireland. The price of butter is low at this moment; but what is the reason? Why, it is perfectly evident and well known. [*Cries of "Question!"*] This is the question. The managers of the Cork Butter Market have told the people why it is—namely, because, through the wretched manner in which the Cork butter is made, the Dutch and other foreign butter can beat it out of the market. Let the people of the South and East of Ireland pay their rents in an honourable manner; let them devote themselves to the improvement of their agriculture, and there would be no difficulty in their maintaining a prosperous position. The Chief Secretary ought to know that the undoubted misery of the West of Ireland is made the fulcrum by means of which the agitation against landlords and the outcry against rent are kept up. Hon. Gentlemen opposite know this as well as I; and at their *symposia* and pleasant dinners in the Irish parts of London they tip one another the wink and say how they are humbugging the Britisher. They are humbugging the Britisher, and they know it, by pretending that the condition of the tenantry in the East and South of Ireland is like that of the tenantry in the West and in Donegal. I have spoken plainly on these points, and I hope the Chief Secretary will investigate the facts, and find out whether what I have said is true or not. I repeat that the tenantry in the prosperous farming portions of Ireland, though they are now, at this moment, receiving a much lower price for their produce than they did before, are excellently well able to pay their rents; but other people in Connemara, Donegal, and parts of Kerry are not able to pay them, and ought to be saved by every means. Certainly the Forces of the Crown ought not to be employed against them in these evictions. But there was one curious circumstance in the statement made by the Chief Secretary. He said that every case of eviction and of the employment of the Forces of the Crown would be considered individually by the Executive

authority. Now, that is not the law; and if the Chief Secretary is to make himself the appeal for the decision of the Courts of Law which are duly constituted, he will have a task which not only will overwhelm him, but will overwhelm the law itself. The Forces of the Crown are to be employed to make the law obeyed. If the law is a bad one let it be repealed or altered; and Heaven knows that I have in this House for the last 17 years, over and over again, asked for the repeal of those harsh measures which apply to one part of Ireland a law of eviction which ought not to be applied to a starving and miserable population. But in regard to the rest of Ireland, if the tenant farmers who are rich enough will not pay, threaten them and they will do so; or if they do not, support those who have a right to the land just as much as the tenants have, in attempting to obtain their due by the sale of the tenants' stock.

MR. HOLMES: The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. Morley) has reminded us that it can hardly be expected that he can know much of this subject, considering that he has been such a short time in Office. All, I think, will agree in that; and it would be most unreasonable to assume that the right hon. Gentleman, upon every Irish question, can, at the present time, have formed a definite opinion. I am quite sure that in any statement he has made to-night he has expressed an opinion of first impression, and is prepared, on further consideration, to modify or entirely alter that opinion. It would not, I think, be amiss if I were to bring back the Committee to the point from which this discussion started. We are discussing the Supplementary Constabulary Estimate. One might suppose, from the course the discussion has taken, and even from a large portion of the Chief Secretary's own address, that the reason the Estimate has been increased beyond what was originally expected is this—because the Constabulary have been largely employed in carrying out evictions—and that in consequence of their having been so largely employed the estimated amount was not sufficient for the purposes of travelling and other incidental expenses. Now, we have it from the Chief Secretary himself, mentioned in an incidental and vague way, at the

end of his observations, that that is not the reason for the increase of the Estimate at all. The cause of the increase, so far as I could gather from the Chief Secretary—and he appealed to myself as to my own knowledge on the matter, which corresponds entirely with his—is that, in consequence of the Constabulary, during a considerable portion of last year, not being able to obtain cars and to hire horses, and, in some cases, to procure even the bare necessities of life, they were obliged to spend capital in the purchase of cars and horses. They were compelled to make these purchases not merely for the purpose of carrying on their ordinary Constabulary duties, but actually for the purpose of bringing from neighbouring towns the bread and other food necessary for the support of the men in the barracks. I might ask why was this? Was it because the persons who earned their livelihood in the country by keeping cars for hire were indisposed to add a little to their incomes by letting their cars to the Constabulary? I think it is hardly so. It was because there was a power in the country which so intimidated the men who had the cars for hire that they dare not give them to the Constabulary, though, again and again—and the Constabulary will bear me out—they would have been perfectly willing to do so if the National League had permitted them. Therefore, when the Chief Secretary appeals to this side of the House and asks, Does not our experience correspond with his information that it was circumstances of this kind which involved this additional expenditure, I at once reply in the affirmative. But there were other portions of the right hon. Gentleman's observations a little more questionable. Reference has been made in the course of this debate to what are called "organized evictions;" and hopes have been expressed that the Government will not give any support to any sweeping plan for clearing away the inhabitants from large districts—from the land they have been holding and the houses they have been occupying for a long period. I am afraid that some observations fell from the right hon. Gentleman—though probably he did not use them in that light—rather suggesting the idea of something of the kind being done. I am not aware that in the last

12 months there have been any evictions that could be said to be of that character. He spoke of the Gweedore evictions; but there were no evictions in Gweedore connected with the seed rate, and the only matters referred to in the debate have been in connection with that rate. As the hon. Gentleman on the other side (Mr. Mitchell Henry) knows, but as the right hon. Gentleman can scarcely be expected to know, people cannot be evicted from their holdings for non-payment of seed rate; and if the Constabulary have been used at all, it has only been for protecting whoever might be the warrant bearer in the collection of the rate. If there were a Return of *nulla bona* no penalty can be attached to those liable to payment of the rate. A Return has been furnished as to the evictions in the last 12 months. I think I am correct in the statement—if I am not the right hon. Gentleman will be able to correct me, though I believe he will bear me out—that the evictions in Ireland during the year 1885 were much less in number than in 1884. I believe, in round numbers, the number of evictions in 1884 were about 4,000, and that in the year following they were 3,000. But, lest the Committee should carry away a misapprehension as regards the meaning of these figures, I ought to state that these were evictions that appeared in the hands of the Sheriff, and that in a large proportion of cases—as always happens—the persons evicted were restored either as tenants or caretakers. These numbers, therefore, do not represent the actual number of people put out of their holdings, but the number in which evictions came into the hands of the Sheriff; and, as I have said, there was a substantial decrease in 1885. I think I may say that in the past five or six months during which I had some experience in connection with the government of Ireland there were very few cases in which it was necessary to assist the Civil power by even the Constabulary, much less the Military, in the carrying out of evictions. I know that occasionally in Ireland the turbulence is so great that it is necessary to give that assistance; but probably the reason why it was so seldom necessary to employ the Constabulary was because there were so few evictions. Another subject on which the right hon. Gentle-

Mr. Holmes

man rather suggested that there might be a difference of opinion on this Bench from the information he himself has received was the question of the payment of rents in Ireland. I am able to say what the result of my own information on that subject is. I think in a great many parts of the country rents are very fairly paid; and as to what the right hon. Gentleman has said in that respect, provided he does not apply it to the whole country, I am not disposed to disagree with him. I also admit that there are parts of Ireland in which, at the present time, it is very difficult for the tenants to pay; but the same, I think, may be said with regard to the tenantry in some parts of England and Scotland. I think the right hon. Gentleman will bear me out that in this last class of cases to which I have referred tenants in Ireland are treated with precisely the same indulgence by their landlords as similar persons in like positions in Scotland and England have received. But I would refer to another class of cases that, unfortunately, I know have existed in Ireland to a considerable extent, and of which the Chief Secretary has heard, or, perhaps, has obtained information with regard to. I know certain parts of the country in which the rents are not being paid, not because the tenants are not able to pay them, but because they are not permitted to pay them. [*Cries of "Name!"*] It would be perfectly impossible for any person rising in debate, as I have done at the present time, to give such cases by name. But I say I know, from information I can thoroughly rely upon, that there are many cases throughout the country in which the tenants on a particular estate collect together, and pass resolutions declaring that no rents shall be paid unless some exorbitant reduction of 40 or 50 per cent is allowed. I can understand it to be the duty of a landlord to inquire into individual cases on his property; and if he finds there are some where men are unable to pay their rent to give them time, and treat them with leniency; but how is it possible for a landlord to deal with tenantry when he is told that he is compelled to give a reduction all round, irrespective of individual cases, of 40, 50, or 60 per cent? Has the right hon. Gentleman never heard of such cases—where some of the tenants have stated

that they would lodge the amount of the reduction so agreed upon in the bank, rather than allow it to go into the landlord's hands? [*"Oh!"*] One would suppose I am addressing a House that knows nothing of what occurs in Ireland. I will mention a very recent case which occurred in Ireland—a case of a property on which there were reported to be 100 tenants. The tenants were very badly off, it was said; and though some had had their rents judicially fixed, it was impossible for any of them to pay the full amount they were charged. Application was made to the Receiver Judge to give a reduction of 50 per cent where the rents had not been fixed by the Land Commission, and of 40 per cent where they had. The application was supported by a strong affidavit; and it was said that it was impossible for any of the people to pay their rents; but before the case had proceeded far it appeared from the Receiver himself that a fortnight before 60 men had paid the rents in full, and a number of others only required a short time to do so. So far as my information goes, rents are fairly paid in Ireland where there is no external force acting to the contrary; so far as my information goes, where rents cannot be paid there is a reasonable indulgence shown by the landlords. [*"No!"*] Certainly, up to the present time, there has not been any of those wholesale evictions we have had referred to in this House; and, so far as I can judge, the same policy of moderation which has been pursued in this respect by the landlords in the past will continue in the future. There was one remark of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland which produced at the time upon my mind a strong impression as to the way in which it would be received in Ireland, and which I am afraid may produce disastrous results. The hon. Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn) appeared to consider that the observations that were made by the right hon. Gentleman in the course of his speech to-night will be received throughout Ireland with the greatest pleasure; and he appeared to base that pleasure on the supposition that help would not be given by the Government to the Civil power in carrying out the law.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I said that

the help of the military force would not be granted.

MR. HOLMES: The military force! The occasions on which the military force is required to carry out the law in Ireland are very few indeed. The question is this. Suppose, for instance, the Sheriff receives the writ of a Superior Court, and he says—"My bailiffs are endangered if they carry out that writ;"—the question is, will the Constabulary protect the bailiffs? That is an important question; and I am afraid it will be assumed in Ireland, after the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, that no protection will be given by the Civil Force to those who have to carry out the law. I presume that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, although not a native of Ireland, and not a lawyer, is aware of the fact that the Sheriff would be bound to execute a writ as an officer of a Superior Court; and I cannot understand on what ground the Executive of the present day will decline to give the officials of the Court that protection which he will require in doing a duty which the law imposes upon him, and renders him liable to penalties for not carrying out. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that he will examine into the cases individually, and determine the particular cases in which assistance will be given, and in which it will be refused. Has the right hon. Gentleman taken into consideration the *modus operandi* of this proceeding? We know that the present Government is a Government of examination and inquiry; and probably it is one of those matters which will be the subject of their examination and inquiry, which are the proper cases in which to afford protection to the Sheriff in executing a writ. But how can the right hon. Gentleman tell whether the writ of the Court covers the shadow or the substance of a right? Will he set up in Dublin Castle an inquiry into cases in which the Court issued writs in order to ascertain whether the Sheriff was justified in executing them or not? After all, great allowance must be made for the inexperience of the right hon. Gentleman; and I believe that, whatever his experience may be in other matters, he has little experience in any branch of the Executive. But I think when he has tried to carry out this business, when his experience is a little

greater, and when he has pursued his inquiries in this direction a little further, he will find that he is surrounded in his task with the greatest difficulty. It seems to me that there is one way only for the Executive to deal with this question, and that is that they should carry out the law; and if the law be unjust, and if it be not such as the circumstances of the country require, let them alter the law. Up to the present time it has never been tolerated that Members of the Government, who are there to administer the law, should suspend that law, or alter it according to their own views; and I am sure that the right hon. Gentleman, when he begins to consider these matters a little more, and when he has brought a more mature experience to bear upon them, will perceive that the principle which must guide his conduct is that which has been the guide of those who have gone before them. If that be so, however much we may differ from him with reference to his views upon Irish subjects, we shall have no difference of opinion with him on the necessity of pressing on all the inhabitants of Ireland the observance of the law.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): I rise just to say a few words with reference to the rather passionate speech of the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes). It does not seem to me that the right hon. and learned Gentleman approached this matter at all in the judicial spirit in which my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) addressed himself to it. I do not think my right hon. Friend deserved or desired that compassion for his inexperience which has been expressed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman to-night. Now, it seems to me that my right hon. Friend's observations have been entirely, though, no doubt, unintentionally, misunderstood. After all, what did my right hon. Friend say with reference to the use of the military in respect of evictions and the collection of rents in Ireland, except that which another Colleague and hon. Friend of mine said yesterday evening with reference to evictions in Scotland? I understand that the doctrine laid down in each case was precisely the same. When I was at the Home Office I had some experience with regard to Scotland. When it

Mr. John Morley

became necessary to employ military force to vindicate the law, great care was taken that the military should not be employed for the purpose of eviction or the collection of rents. It was the condition laid down in allowing the military to be employed in the Western Highlands of Scotland that they should prevent breaches of the peace, and to punish those who resisted the officers of the law, and that they were not to act as rent collectors. That principle, I believe, is a sound one. It is the principle in England, and it was acted upon in Scotland two or three years ago. I did not understand my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to say anything more than that. My right hon. Friend did not say that if the law was violated, and if persons resisted the officers of the law, all the resources of the Government will not be employed to vindicate the law. My right hon. Friend has said nothing of that sort. He said it is not desirable—and in my opinion it is not desirable—to employ the Military Forces as collectors of rents. It is true that my right hon. Friend has said that there ought to be on the part of the Government, as well as on the part of proprietors of land, a sentiment of humanity and discrimination in reference to the operation of evictions. ["Hear, hear!" *from Home Rulers.*] That is all my right hon. Friend said. ["Oh, oh!" *from the Opposition.*] I am sure hon. Gentlemen opposite would not deny that the last pound of flesh ought to be exacted; and the Government may well act like a just judge, and bear in mind considerations of that kind in a spirit of humanity. The Committee has heard what my right hon. Friend said; there is nothing in what he said that appears to me to be otherwise than sound and justifiable, and I entirely agree with him.

MR. SEXTON: I do not feel concerned to champion the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but I must say that I agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir William Harcourt, that the Chief Secretary for Ireland is not in need of any apology or vindication from the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Holmes), who sits on this side of the House. The Chief Secretary for Ireland perceives, in his mind, the principle of civilized rule; and I be-

lieve, and am glad to believe, that he will act upon it. The right hon. Gentleman as a politician, and let me say as a statesman, has reached an eminence which the late Attorney General for Ireland can never hope to reach. His mind is at present clear; but I warn him that the position of Irish Secretary will make him acquainted with strange company; and I solemnly say that it would be better for him if he never learned a single fact about Ireland, trusting to his own abstract perception of principle, rather than that his mind should be debauched by the pettifoggery and cruel chicanery of Dublin Castle. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland labours under the disorder which appears to be chronic with some Four Courts lawyers—he is under the delusion that a contemptible and feeble case can be disguised by loudness of tone and feverishness of gesture. But, Sir, he has not convinced any hon. Member in this House that it is possible for any appreciable proportion of tenants in Ireland to pay their rents. I offer him no thanks for the small admission he has made. Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman deny that the prices of agricultural produce have fallen 40 per cent? Does he know that Judge Barrington has taken as much as 50 per cent off fixed rents? Does he deny that the Courts have, with the solemn sanction of the law, given reductions of 15, 20, and as high as 40 per cent off rents? The right hon. and learned Gentleman says there are places in Ireland where tenants can pay rent, but where they are not allowed to pay. I protest against this insinuation, Mr. Chairman, as being similar in politics to an infamous slander in private life. I protest against this system, which is a leaf taken from the book of the Loyal and Patriotic Union, who send their spouters over every platform in England in order to mislead honest English people who are disposed to do justice to Ireland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman imitates the rôle of Mr. Smith Barry, which gentleman turned out his labourers because they ventured to ask for the benefit of the Labourers' Act; this gentleman, a few days ago, said that he knew of certain cases of "Boycotting," and when asked where, said—"I dare not name the district."

We can understand his fears; but when the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland says he does not name the district in which "Boycotting" exists—why, it is absurd. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman says he knows districts in which rents can be paid, but are not allowed to be paid. I challenge the right hon. and learned Gentleman to give the name of those districts. There is no reason in the world why the names of those districts should not be given. Allusion has been made to the evictions at Gweedore; and it has been attempted to cast some doubt upon their existence. I say there is nothing more shameful in the history of the world than the evictions of women that have taken place in that unfortunate portion of the country during the last two or three years. In that place the landlord first threatened the tenants that if they went to the Land Court he would take them to a higher Court and so ruin them; he then ran up legal costs; and it is a fact that for rents of £1 as much as £3 or £4 legal costs have been added. It was for such claims as these that the poor people were evicted, and then, having turned them out, he used his power as outdoor Guardian to refuse them that cold charity—outdoor relief. I say there is no doubt, from the patent facts of the case, from the falling prices, and from the manner in which the means of the small tenants have been exhausted in order that they may obtain the benefit of the Arrears Act, that there prevails in Ireland a general incapacity to pay unreduced or even judicial rents; and I invite the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to apply to the case the strictest scrutiny that his ability or his experience may suggest, and the result of his investigations will be confidently awaited by us. Now, Sir, some controversy has been raised, and reference has been made, to the course pursued by Mr. Thomas Drummond, who lived to enjoy an unsoiled reputation as Chief Secretary, who refused to use the armed Forces of the Crown in the case of seizures that were made for tithes. Mr. Thomas Drummond's course was to despatch an armed force to a convenient spot; but he did not allow it to approach the place of seizure unless there was proof of violence and breach of the law.

Mr. Sexton

The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) has said that the Chief Secretary for Ireland only promised that the military should not be employed. Are we to understand by that the red coats? The police are the military of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman smiles. Was he ever in Ireland? I can assure him if he went there tomorrow he would not know the policemen there from members of a Rifle Brigade. I heard the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland with hope, because I understood him to mean that he would in future consider whether or not the armed Forces of the Crown should be employed on the merits of the case. To those who intervene and cry out for the execution of the law, I say that a statesman has more at the present crisis to consider in Ireland than the mere enforcement of the law; he has to consider the public peace, the prevention of crime, and the true harmony of society. [*Ironical cheers.*] Sir, I wish to have a clear understanding as to the engagements we have had. Are the Executive in Ireland to consider the merits of each case when a landlord proposes to evict a tenant? What are the merits? They are these. If there is reasonable ground for believing that the tenant can pay the rent and will not pay it, then the merits, from the Government point of view, are on the side of the landlord, and it would be the duty of the Executive to send the military there; but if it is clear that from causes beyond his control the tenant is not able to pay, then I say that the merits are upon the side of the tenant. I understand then, from the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, that in the latter case the armed force of the Crown shall not be placed at the disposal of the landlord for the perpetration of what would be an outrageous act of cruelty. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the promise given with regard to Scotland was that the military should not be used with reference to evictions. Well, that had relation only to the soldiers.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): I did not use the word at all; I did not think it the proper word to apply.

Mr. SEXTON: I am not speaking of the word, but of the force, and with regard to the use or non-use of it at evictions. But the Crown has no force in Scotland other than the military; and, therefore, if the Government in respect of Scotland holds out the hope that they will not use the military at evictions, they hold out the hope that they will not use the only force they have at their disposal. On the other hand, the police are the military force in Ireland; the soldiers have nothing to do with evictions. When did anyone see a soldier at an eviction? I say without fear of contradiction that if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in speaking of the military, alluded to the red coats, he made a promise which has no relation to the actual state of affairs in Ireland; and if, on the other hand, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is right, we have no hope that the only force which is used at evictions in Ireland will be withdrawn. Now, I hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or some other Member of Her Majesty's Government, will be able to tell us that the Government will act in the same manner and in the same spirit as did Mr. Thomas Drummond in his day; and that these landlords, who are endeavouring to deprive tenants of the interest in their holdings which has been given to them by Act of Parliament, shall not have the armed Forces of the Crown at their back. The equity of the case is clearly on the side of the tenant, and we claim that the interval which will elapse between the Act of 1881 and the final Act which will make the tenant owner of his farm should not be employed by the Crown to enable the landlords to do what we call both an inequitable and dangerous act. Sir, I hope that the spirit expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland this evening will be manifest in his future action. Irish Members will watch the action of the Executive; and I promise that if the right hon. Gentleman's spirit prevails in his dealing with Irish affairs, the Government may approach with confidence the matter which lies at the root of disaffection in Ireland.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (who rose amid cries of "Divide!") said: I

do not propose, Mr. Courtney, to occupy much of the time of the Committee; and if hon. Gentlemen who are so courteously crying "Divide!" will, for a short space of time, relapse into that silence which so much better becomes them than any effort of speech which they could possibly make under any circumstances, I shall all the sooner bring my remarks to a termination. I would not have risen at all to-night but that I felt called upon, in the interests of absolute truth, to refute the statement which has been made in the House by the present Member for Glasgow, but late Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry). The hon. Gentleman has said it is not the fact that there is any considerable number of tenant farmers in Ireland outside the district of Connemara, in which he himself lives, and outside the counties of Donegal and Kerry, unable to pay the rents required of them. I do not, for a moment, wish to say that the hon. Member wilfully makes a mis-statement to this House; but I am bound to say that if he knew as much of the rest of Ireland as he knows of Connemara—if he had travelled for any length of time lately through the different counties of Ireland—he must know that in every county in the country there is just as much inability to pay rent as there is in Connemara. I can assure the hon. Gentleman and the Committee that in the county that I represent (Fermanagh) dozens and dozens of honest, hard-working farming people told me, during the late election, that if they did not receive a large and ready reduction of rent—if the landlord demanded his pound of flesh—they did not know where they were to get the money from. I am aware that in speaking thus of the district that I know, and through which I have travelled a great deal, I am only speaking as other Members of the Party to which I belong could speak, with equal truth and certainty, of the particular districts with which they are acquainted. I must add that it is absolutely dishonest and mischievous for an hon. Member, who has some acquaintance with Ireland, to come down to the House and seriously tell Englishmen and Scotchmen who have come to the House for the first time—who have not heard the debates upon Irish matters in this House, and who know little or nothing of Ireland—that the farmers throughout the

whole of Ireland, with the exception of three districts, are able to pay rent without reduction. I believe, Sir, that such statements are more calculated to cause discontent and disturbance than the preaching of the most fierce opposition to the payment of rent that I or the Party to which I belong could indulge in.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: I rise to Order, Mr. Courtney. The hon. Gentleman has really no right to misrepresent what I said. What I said was that the tenants of Ireland are as well able to pay rent as the tenants of England and Scotland. I never said they were able to pay without reduction.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: If the hon. Gentleman had restrained the natural feeling of uneasiness which of course besets him at hearing his statement straightforwardly refuted by me, he would have found that in a minute or two I would have come to the very point which he made when he said that the tenants in Ireland were just as well able to pay as the tenants in England or in Scotland. Such a statement as that must lead anyone to believe that the hon. Member has a very poor idea of the general knowledge, if not the general intelligence, of Englishmen or Scotchmen; because Englishmen and Scotchmen who take the trouble to inquire, even in the slightest degree, as to the relative condition of the Land Question in Ireland and in England will find that the most elementary difference between the Land Question in Ireland and in England rests upon this fact—that the way in which tenants in Ireland are dealt with by landlords has always been—and, I believe, unless something is done, always will be—completely and absolutely different to the way in which English landlords have dealt with their tenants. There is no similarity whatever between the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland and the relation of landlord and tenant in England. The system is similar, and it is bad; but your English landlord has lived with his tenants. He has inquired into their particular case; he has spent the money which he has got from their earnings amongst them; and he is of the same race and religion; but in Ireland the landlords of whom we complain most, and the landlords who have done most to bring the Irish Land Question to its present critical condition, are men who

do not see their tenants, who are different in race and religion, who are merely and only connected with their tenants through the medium of the land agents, who care nothing about their tenants or their families so long as their land agents send them regularly the remittances of the rack rents, so that they may live pleasantly in parts of the world remote from the suffering which their unfortunate serfs in Ireland have to undergo. The hon. Member (Mr. Mitchell Henry) did not tell the Committee that, although, as he said, English and Scotch tenants are not better able to pay their rents than Irish tenants, in many parts of England and Scotland landlords, and large landlords, not too celebrated for their humanity or mercifulness of disposition, have given reductions of rent unsolicited—without waiting for agitation—while in similar cases, only more grievous, landlords in Ireland, even in the face of bitter agitation, have not given reductions of rent. The reductions which have been sparingly given by landlords in some parts of Ireland have only been a tardy following of the example which was set to them by their more generous and more respectable brothers, the English and Scotch landlords. And many and many an eviction there would have been in Ireland, and many and many a bitter time there would have been for farmers in that country, if a number of Irish landlords who spend their money in English society had not been, out of pure shame, compelled to give some reductions of rent to their tenantry, when they found that the English landlords, with whom they mixed in society, were making remissions. Sir, I would not have risen to address the Committee at all had I not thought that I should be failing in the fulfilment of my duty to an Irish agricultural constituency if I sat quietly by and heard Englishmen and Scotchmen told that the great bulk of the farmers of Ireland, in the face of the depression of trade which now exists, are able to pay their rents. Day after day I receive letters from men who are well accredited, whose names and addresses are in evidence, complaining of the present state of things; I have received dozens of letters in which the complaint is made that if something is not done to induce landlords to make remissions of rent, or if something is not

Mr. William Redmond

done by the Government to prevent eviction, the writers do not know how eviction is to be avoided, or what they are to do to continue in the country, or what they are to do to get the money with which to leave the country if they are evicted. We know that in Cork, and Limerick, and Wexford, and Carlow, and Queen's County, and in all the Southern counties which are supposed to be rich, the farmers cannot pay rent unless they get reductions; and knowing this it is most hurtful to us to hear an hon. Member who has had some connection with Ireland instilling it into the ears of Englishmen and Scotchmen that there are only a few corners in Ireland where the people are not able to pay their rents. Believe me, Sir, if there were only the few corners which the hon. Member names where the people are not able to pay their rents, rents would have been paid, and the agitation would not have attained its present dimensions. It is simply because the people throughout the whole of the country find it difficult to pay rent that the agitation has reached its present height; and it is simply because the people throughout the whole country, and not in three districts, are in distress, that Her Majesty's Government will find that if they want, as I believe they do, to restore peace and tranquillity in Ireland, they will have, sooner or later, either to put restrictions upon the action of the landlords in Ireland, or else to give to Ireland that government of itself, which will of its own accord, and as one of its first actions, take good care that the people of Ireland are not compelled to pay rack rents. All I have to say, in conclusion, is that I am surprised and grieved that a feeling of shame at having been thrust out of the representation of an Irish constituency should have induced the hon. Member (Mr. Mitchell Henry), who now represents a Scotch constituency, to misrepresent and slander and malign the Irish people, the great sin of some of whom was, no doubt, in the mind of the hon. Gentleman, that they refused to accept his services any longer.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I am not, Sir, so old a Parliamentary hand as some others; but I am a sufficiently old Parliamentary hand not to occupy the Committee very long at this hour of the night. I should not have ven-

tured to rise at all, but would have been content to leave matters as they have been left by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), who spoke the sentiments of us all, and spoke them well, if it had not been that the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Mitchell Henry) challenged us to stick to facts. He proceeded himself to give us a statement marked with such inaccuracy that I do not think it is necessary to follow him in detail. The few facts which I wish to lay before the Committee will show the real nature of the charge now placed on the Estimates, and the character of the district where the money is being spent. The district of Gweedore is 45,000 acres in extent, and there are eight landlords. On Captain Hill's estate, where there are 800 tenants, the Land Courts, in such cases as could be sustained, gave a reduction of 30 per cent. The number of ejectment notices served on that one estate in the last four years have ranged from 33 to 100 annually, and there are now a large number of evictions pending. Mr. Nixon, who has 100 tenants, also had his rents reduced in the Land Courts 30 per cent. He has served ejectment notices annually, and the number of evictions now pending is 20. On the Earl of Leitrim's estate there is at present no eviction pending. There are, however, 11 tenants, and every one of those men was evicted by the late Earl. On another estate, where there are 30 families, there are 21 evictions now pending. Such is the district in which the police have been sent to collect the seed rate—100 police sent to enforce 44 warrants for an amount not exceeding £25. They marched into the district, where there was no outrage, no disturbance, no gathering even of the population. They marched from house to house—many houses they visited two and three times—and with this result—that in one case the money was paid, because there was cash upon the premises, the unfortunate tenants having just sold a bullock for 30s.; and that in another case they seized a stone of oats and several other things to realize the sum of 6s. 9d.; and altogether there was obtained in the whole district, by the aid of a week's exertions of 100 policemen, something between £2 5s. and £2 9s.; and, I presume, the expedition will not cost much under £200. This is but the pecuniary

aspect of the case; but I wish to bring under the notice of the Committee the very serious effect which this state of things is producing in a direction which they would not at first suspect. I have received from one district a letter which tells me that the police had visited the house of a man named Peter Rogers, who was very severely dealt with, everything in his small holding, including potatoes, tubs, and dresser, and such things, being seized. Subsequently, word was sent to the man to come to the barracks and try to arrange to get his things back. Poor Rogers could not possibly raise any money, yet he went to the barracks; and the Constabulary, taking compassion on the poor fellow, at once raised amongst themselves the amount of the warrant—14s. Rogers thus got back his potatoes, about eight cwt., and his small household utensils, and went away happy. If the Committee cannot see the significance of this circumstance they have less intelligence than I imagine them to have. You send 200 policemen into this quiet and poor district to seize all the worldly goods of the most wretched of the population; when they have seized the goods they secretly send word to one of the very men against whom they were sent to come to the barracks, and themselves give him, out of their own pockets, sufficient money to redeem the poor chattels they were obliged to seize. No wonder there are hundreds and thousands of the men now in the Police Force who are revolting in their hearts against the detestable work you, in the name of law and order, do. I assure the Committee they are doing a work of which they have little suspicion when they send Constabulary on such business as that which has lately been done in the district of Gweedore.

MR. LANE: I do not intend to intrude myself very long upon the Committee; but I do not think the Irish Members can consent to this Vote being taken without the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) replying in some way to the point which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) made in the course of his remarks. The right hon. Gentleman said, in answer to the observations of the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon),

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that the Government would take care to discriminate between the cases in which they would employ a military force in connection with evictions and the cases in which they would not employ such a force. I am quite sure I express the opinion of all my hon. Friends and Colleagues on these Benches when I say I do not myself believe the right hon. Gentleman intended any deliberate reservation in using the word "military" in contradistinction to the word "Constabulary;" but the Committee are aware that we are not considering in this Vote any question in connection with the Military Establishment of Ireland. We are dealing solely with the Constabulary; and, therefore, I think that as it is usually the Constabulary who are employed by the Crown to assist in evictions, we may reasonably expect that the right hon. Gentleman will say whether he intended it to be understood that he will grant the use of the Constabulary on the occasion of every eviction, and the use of the military only upon certain occasions. The matter is so important that it is absolutely necessary there should be no room for doubt as to what forces of the Crown the right hon. Gentleman will permit to be used in carrying out evictions in Ireland. I am myself of opinion that if the right hon. Gentleman remains in Office he will honourably carry out the idea which prompted him to make his statement; but the occupant of the Office of Chief Secretary changes so very frequently that I think it would be very useful, as a guide to the future, that the words which the right hon. Gentleman used this evening in his official capacity should not be open to any doubt whatever. Without any intention whatever of opposing the Vote, I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he cannot see his way to make it more clear to the Members on these Benches and to the Irish people whether he had in his mind any reservation as to the use of the military and the Irish Constabulary in the work of eviction?

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next.

Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

THEATRES, &c. (METROPOLIS) BILL.

(Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Masfurlans.)

[BILL 69.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND: I beg to move the second reading of this Bill. I have, on more than one occasion, pointed out the danger that exists in the Metropolis from the state of the theatres at the present time. I have mentioned, also, the various conflicting jurisdictions that exist in regard to theatres. There are no less than six different authorities who have jurisdiction over places of amusement in the Metropolis. At the present moment there are no less than 472 places of amusement in London; and these are attended nightly by about 300,000, or an average of 1,500,000 during the week. A great number of these seekers after pleasure go there without the slightest idea of the danger to which they are exposed. The want of exits is a notorious fact in regard to these places. I appeal to anyone in this House to say whether they get out of any theatre in London under 10 or 12 minutes; and in the case of a panic the block would be so great that there would be great difficulty in getting out at all. The danger from panic in these places is very great also; and it is one that ought to be seen to. The Home Secretary opposed the Bill the last time it was brought forward because the Metropolitan Board of Works had sufficient jurisdiction; but the Metropolitan Board of Works have themselves brought forward a Bill now, showing that they have not sufficient authority. I contend that the control of the theatres should be placed under a Central Authority, and that that authority should be the Home Secretary. There was no doubt that the Metropolitan Board of Works was not the proper authority. I received a letter to-day from a manager of one of the large theatres in London, telling me of an application which had been made to him for a free admission to a box from a member of the Metropolitan Board of Works. On his refusing to comply with the request, the gentleman wrote back and asked the manager whether he knew that he was a member of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and that his theatre would be looked after if the order were not sent.

The Metropolitan Board is certainly not the proper authority. One of the curious anomalies of the conflict of jurisdiction, again, is that on Ash Wednesday, although the theatres are all closed on the Middlesex side of the water, they are all allowed to be open on the Surrey side. This Bill is based upon the recommendation of the Select Committee of 1866, and on the Reports of Captain Shaw. At this late hour I will not go further, but will ask for the second reading to-night, as Amendments can be introduced in Committee.

MR. T. H. BOLTON: I beg to second the Motion for the second reading of this Bill. There is a very strong opinion among the theatrical managers of the Metropolis in favour of the Home Secretary becoming the chief authority in dealing with the Metropolitan theatres rather than the Metropolitan Board of Works, if the control is to be taken from those who at present possess the authority. I could give some very conclusive reasons—some very strong and striking facts—to show the desirability of the adoption of this course; but I am anxious not to detain the House at this late hour. I support the Bill of the hon. Member, however, on the understanding that after going into Committee it will be put into a more practical shape as to its details than it is at the present time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(Mr. Dixon-Hartland.)

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): Practically the same Bill as the one now before the House was opposed last year by the Home Secretary, on the ground that the Metropolitan Board of Works have full authority in this matter, and that the responsibility ought to rest upon those who are responsible for the government of London. It was said that the Board has not such full authority; but, however that is, the hon. Member was right in saying that the Metropolitan Board has introduced a Bill this Session dealing with all the matters to which he has alluded. By placing the theatres under the control of the Home Secretary we should be saddling the Imperial funds with expenses which ought to be borne by the ratepayers of London. Why should the taxpayers of the country

—of Edinburgh and Glasgow, for instance—be called upon to provide for the inspection of the theatres in London? The Home Secretary and the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works are absent from the House; and in their absence I would suggest that the best course to take is to adjourn this discussion to the same day on which the Bill of the Metropolitan Board will come on, and then we can hear what the Home Secretary and the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board have to say on behalf of their respective Departments. I beg to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That the Debate be now adjourned."
 —(Mr. H. H. Fowler.)

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND: Can the hon. Gentleman say whether any facilities will be given by the Government for bringing on this Bill when the other measure comes up for second reading? I am told that the other Bill is so hopelessly placed on the list that it is impossible for it to come on on the day it is down for. In the meantime, disastrous fires at our theatres may take place.

Motion agreed to.

Debate adjourned till Wednesday 17th March.

MOTION.

MR. OCTAVIUS VAUGHAN MORGAN.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: I beg to move—

"That it be referred to a Select Committee of Seven Members to consider whether Mr. Octavius Vaughan Morgan is disqualified from sitting and voting as a Member of this House, under the Statute 22 George 3, c. 45, and to report their opinion thereon."

At the last General Election Mr. Morgan was returned for Battersea by a majority of 712 over the Conservative candidate (Mr. J. E. Cooke). Mr. Morgan is a member of the firm of Morgan Crucible Company—a private firm which holds contracts with various Government Departments. Having regard to the provisions of 22 Geo. III. c. 45, however, Mr. Morgan entered into a *bond fide* agreement, before his nomination, with his partners whereby he ceased to have any interest in such contracts. After Mr.

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Morgan had taken the Oaths, a Member of the House informed him of a contemplated movement to question the legality of his election, upon the ground of his being a Government contractor. He also received the following letter from the Battersea Central Conservative Registration Association:—

"Dear Sir,—I feel that I should thus acquaint you that we are in possession of the fact that, on the 27th November last, the day you were declared the elected Member for this borough, you were legally incapacitated from being elected a Member of Parliament, in consequence of your firm being Government contractors. In giving you this intimation, I am only actuated by a desire that the necessary steps should be taken, with as little delay as possible, to remedy this unfortunate state of affairs, both pleasantly and without resort to those legal remedies which are duly provided for by law, and which I have reason to believe will be resorted to if necessary.

"Yours faithfully,

"CHAS. WM. MUNLOW."

No Petition was lodged, however, within the time prescribed by the Statute, or at any other time, complaining of Mr. Morgan's return; but having regard to the very penal nature of the Statute 22 Geo. III., and the intimation that proceedings would be taken against him if he sat and voted in the House, he sought legal advice, and was advised that, as the threatened proceedings affected his privileges as a Member of the House, he should follow the precedent adopted in Sir Sydney Waterlow's case in 1869, and ask for an inquiry by a Select Committee as to whether he was or was not a Government contractor within the provisions of the Statute I have mentioned at the time of his election. The course pursued in Sir Sydney Waterlow's case will be found reported on page 190 of *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Third Series, vol. 194, 32 *Vist.* It may be mentioned, also, that in the case of Mr. Somes, the large shipowner, who was returned for Dartmouth in the year 1844, and who held Government contracts previous to his election, but who, previous to his nomination, transferred all his interest in his business to his nephews, a Petition was presented against his return, questioning the *bene fides* of the proceedings between himself and his nephews; and, although the transfer was not quite completed, the Committee held that he was duly elected, as he had ceased to have any interest in the contracts before his election. The

case of Baron Rothschild and other cases are referred to in the debate on the Waterlow case. This morning Mr. Morgan received another letter, as follows:—

"Battersea Central Conservative Registration Association.

"Dear Sir.—I am instructed by the Executive of this Association to forward you a copy of a resolution passed by them at their meeting last evening, and I trust you will give it your serious consideration.

"Yours faithfully,

"CHAS. W. MCNALLOW."

The resolution inclosed in this letter is as follows:—

"That Battersea being at this moment practically unrepresented in the House of Commons, this meeting respectfully asks Mr. Morgan to immediately get his position defined, and, in the interest of the constituency, either take his seat or get his seat vacated."

Mr. Morgan is himself anxious to adopt this suggestion, and I hope, therefore, that I shall have the support of hon. Members to the Resolution of which I have given Notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be referred to a Select Committee of Seven Members to consider whether Mr. Octavius Vaughan Morgan is disqualified from sitting and voting as a Member of this House, under the Statute 23 (George 3, c. 45, and to report their opinion thereon."—(Sir John Lubbock.)

Motion agreed to.

COAL MINES BILL.

On Motion of Sir Richard Cross, Bill to amend "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1872," ordered to be brought in by Sir Richard Cross, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, and Mr. Forwood.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 92.]

GLEBE LANDS BILL.

On Motion of Sir Richard Cross, Bill to facilitate the sale of Glebe Lands, ordered to be brought in by Sir Richard Cross, Sir Richard W. Bates, and Mr. Gregory.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 93.]

COPYHOLD AND CUSTOMARY TENURE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Banister Fletcher, Bill to provide for the general enfranchisement of lands of Copyhold and Customary Tenure, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Banister Fletcher, Mr. C. M. Warrington, and Mr. H. L. W. Lawson.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 94.]

COMMON JURIES REMUNERATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Crompton, Bill to provide for the remuneration and payment of expenses

of Common Juries at the Assizes and Quarter Sessions, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Crompton, Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Eugene Wason, Sir John Swinburne, and Mr. Johns.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 95.]

GROUND GAME ACT (1880) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Crompton, Bill to amend and extend the provisions of "The Ground Game Act, 1880," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Crompton, Mr. A. B. Winterbotham, Mr. Eugene Wason, and Mr. Channing.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 96.]

RAILWAY REGULATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Channing, Bill to make further provision for the safe working of Railways, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. Joseph Leicester, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. C. S. Parker, Mr. Jacoby, and Mr. Lawson.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 97.]

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (SCHOOL FEES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Sutherland, Bill to amend the provisions of the Education (Scotland) Acts relating to the payment of school fees for children of poor parents, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Sutherland, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Finlayson, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Buchanan, and Mr. Noel.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 98.]

COMMONS AND INCLOSURE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Walter James, Bill to amend the Commons and Inclosure Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Walter James, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Mr. Joicey, and Mr. Cobb.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 99.]

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS (REGISTRATION) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Julian Goldsmid, Bill to amend the Law with regard to the Registration of lodgers; to reduce the period of occupation necessary to qualify for access to the register from twelve months to one; to remove the disqualification under which the police labour; and to simplify the Registration of Parliamentary Voters, ordered to be brought in by Sir Julian Goldsmid, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Robson, and Mr. M'Iver.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 100.]

PRINTING.

O. J. J. That a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the Printing executed by Order of this House, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for Printing Returns and Papers presented in pursuance of Motions made by Members of this House:—The Committee was accordingly nominated of Sir JOSEPH PEASE, Mr. WILLIAM L. JACOBSON, Mr. STANFORD, Mr. BAINE, Mr.

WHITBREAD, Sir GEORGE RUSSELL, Mr. RAMSAY, Mr. PARNELL, Colonel TOTTENHAM, Mr. SEXTON, and Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(Mr. Henry H. Fowler.)

House adjourned at a quarter before
Two o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 22nd February, 1886.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Standing Orders, The Lord Kintore, *added.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Freshwater Fisheries (Eels) * (15).

Second Reading—Marriages Validity * (11).

METROPOLIS—THE RECENT RIOTS.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK asked the noble Lord who represented the Home Department, Whether the Report of the Committee which had been conducting an inquiry in regard to the conduct of the police in the recent riots was likely to be presented that day, and whether it was in print?

LORD THURLOW: I have to inform the noble Earl that the Home Secretary expects to be able to lay the Report of his Committee on the recent riots before the House of Commons this evening; but it will not be printed for a day or two. The Home Secretary, however, hopes that it will be in the hands of the Members of both Houses of Parliament not later than Wednesday morning next.

ALLOTMENTS.

MOTION FOR A RETURN.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW, in rising to move for—

“Return (1.) of all agricultural holdings in England and Wales, both of arable and pasture land, occupied as allotments or field gardens, of one-eighth of an acre and not exceeding four acres; (2.) of all garden allotments exceeding one-eighth of an acre attached to cottages; (3.) of all charitable trusts in England and Wales the trustees of which are trustees within the meaning of the first and fourth clauses of the Allotments Extension Act, 1882,”

said, that he had noticed that in a speech delivered at Hull during the heat of the

General Election by the President of the Local Government Board that right hon. Gentleman said that many of the great landlords of England had occupied themselves in driving the labourers off their estates. When he read that statement, he almost, like the Pharisee of old, thanked God that he was not as other men were, or even as those landlords; and he supposed that most of their Lordships must have shared that feeling. He had thereupon turned his attention to a search of those documents to which their Lordships looked for information on all subjects of a nature likely to be dealt with by Parliament, and he had hoped to find in the Agricultural Reports statistics showing what was the state of allotments in this country; but he was sorry to say that there were absolutely no Returns whatever dealing with that question for the last 13 years—since 1873. In 1870 a commencement was made in that direction, and in that year there were 102,342 holdings under five acres. There was no Return for 1871; but in 1872 the total number of holdings of from a quarter of an acre to one acre, and from one acre to five acres, was 160,570, of which 49,652 were held by labourers. In 1873 the information went further, giving a Return of the allotments detached from the houses and cottages of labourers; that was to say, all those which did not include the best form of allotments—namely, cottage gardens. They found that even then there were as many as 242,500 allotments in England. If they added to that the number of small holdings of five acres and under which might, when consisting of pasture land, be described as allotments, the grand total was no less than 353,000. In that year there were 765,000 agricultural labourers—that was to say, there was very nearly one allotment or small holding for every two labourers. Since the Commons Act of 1876 was passed, 22,430 acres had been inclosed, and a portion set out in allotments. Under Clause 28 of that Act managers were to report every three or five years; but the Commissioners said there was no power to enforce that being done. In 1873, in 24 counties there were 122,000 allotments, and they ranged on an average from one-eighth to a quarter of an acre, while, in 18 counties, 120,000 allotments averaged a quarter to half-

an-acre. It was, he thought, only right that they should ask the Government to give them information which was more recent than the year 1873. There was reason to suppose that the supply of allotments was every day coming nearer to the demand, because the agricultural population was anything but increasing in the rural districts. In the decade between 1871 and 1881 our agricultural population decreased by 15·9 per cent, having in the previous decade decreased 17·6 per cent, while the number of allotments was increasing. There was hardly any matter on which there existed less information and more exaggeration than the subject of the land of this country. The noble Earl opposite (Earl Derby) moved in that House for a Return of the owners of land, observing that it had been stated that the owners of land in England and Wales were only 30,000 in number. In order to ascertain whether that was the case, the noble Earl moved for a Return which, when produced, proved that instead of there being only 30,000 owners in this country, there were, after correction for the holdings of the same persons in several counties, no less than 967,000 owners, of whom 700,000 owned less than one acre. The inquiries of the Land and Glebe Owners' Association, for the voluntary extension of the allotments system, which were not exhaustive, showed that the owners of 2,300,000 acres had in force on their estates the system of allotments, and were prepared to extend it to all the labourers on their estates; besides that, the Association had the support of the owners of 25,000 acres of glebe land, and the system was also in operation on the estates of the owners of a further 300,000 acres. Thus, very widespread voluntary efforts were going on all over the country to provide labourers with allotments; and he trusted that no steps would be taken by Parliament which would throw any obstacle or check in the way of that most salutary system. He was willing to give the President and the Secretary of the Local Government Board credit for having drawn public attention to the question, although their startling proposals in reference to it had savoured somewhat of public plunder. He hoped, however, that their Lordships would not deal with the subject until they were possessed of all the facts connected with the case. If

they were to legislate in a compulsory manner it was possible that many of those who would otherwise speedily obtain allotments by voluntary agency might have to wait one or two years before the local authority in a district would put the machinery of that compulsory system in operation. An Act was passed in 1882 to provide allotments, the main principle of which was that every charity which owned land the profits of which were distributed in doles should be required to let allotments. But the great majority of the trustees of charity land were unaware of the existence of that Act; and he did not see how they could be expected to put it into operation unless their attention was called to it. He knew of no means by which that could be done except by calling upon the Charity Commissioners for such Returns as he moved for, giving the names of all those charities which came under the provisions of the Allotments Act of 1882. It was desirable that landowners should not only grant allotments, but in these days, when attacks were made upon them, that they should show their determination to do so by a public declaration on the point. Having shown what necessity there was for these Returns, he trusted their Lordships would see that it would be most unjust to landowners to propose any legislation dealing with their property when the *data* and the facts concerning allotments all over England were in no sense in possession of the public.

Moved, That there be laid before this House—

“Return (1.) of all agricultural holdings in England and Wales, both of arable and pasture land, occupied as allotments or field gardens, of one-eighth of an acre and not exceeding four acres; (2.) of all garden allotments exceeding one-eighth of an acre attached to cottages; (3.) of all charitable trusts in England and Wales the trustees of which are trustees within the meaning of the first and fourth clauses of the Allotments Extension Act, 1882.”—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Earl SPENCER) said, he did not propose to follow the noble Earl in the interesting remarks which he had made on the subject of allotments. He would confine himself to answering the Question which had been put to him. He should be very happy to obtain and

furnish the information which the noble Earl asked for; but he did not think that it would be possible to give it in a special Return at this moment. A special Return would entail a very large expense, and it would be impossible to compile it without impeding other work and throwing difficulties in the way of collecting the Agricultural Returns which were made every year. He would, however, engage that immediately after the Agricultural Returns for this year were made, supplementary Returns would be given, which would, he believed, contain all the information which the noble Lord required. He would also add a great deal more. In the information which he would give would be included "all agricultural holdings in England and Wales occupied as allotments or field gardens" of one-eighth of an acre and over. They did not propose, as the noble Earl suggested, to make the distinction between arable and pasture land below one acre, which would be exceedingly difficult to get; and he did not think it would be of very great importance, as he presumed in these small allotments there was, as a rule, very little pasture. Under the second head they proposed to give all garden allotments exceeding one-eighth of an acre attached to cottages, although there was some difficulty in defining what a cottage really was. They also proposed to give particulars as to rent, tenure, and distance from dwellings on certain allotments. At first it was thought that this would be a difficult question; but the Government saw their way now to give the information, and he thought that information would be of considerable value and importance. In regard to the third Question, he would ask the noble Earl to be kind enough to repeat it another day. He admitted the great value of obtaining this information from the Charity Commissioners, and he had been in communication with them on the subject. He did not foresee any very great difficulty in the matter; but there were certain objections which he should like to discuss with the Commissioners before he could finally begin the Return. For the Return to be useful, it was, of course, desirable to be authentic and reliable; and there was some doubt whether the Charity Commissioners could give a Return of this description.

Earl Spencer

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: How soon may we expect the Return? In the middle of the Session, or towards the end of it?

EARL SPENCER: It would be quite impossible to furnish it under three or four months. It will be begun immediately after the annual Agricultural Returns.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW begged to thank the noble Earl for the answer which he had given. He had another suggestion to offer for the consideration of the noble Earl. It would be very valuable to know from each farmer how many labourers he had on his farm to whom he gave ground or potatoes; how many he had to whom he gave cow ground; and how many holdings there were between five and ten acres?

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, there was another point to which he should like to call attention—namely, co-operative farming. It was desirable to have a Return of the number of labourers who shared in co-operative farming.

EARL SPENCER said, he thought that this was a totally different subject, and he was not prepared to give Returns as to co-operative farming, however important they might be. With regard to the suggestion of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Onslow), he would consider the point brought under notice as to the cases where farmers gave land or potatoes, or otherwise to their labourers.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH asked, whether there could not be included the manner in which the holdings were held; whether or not sub-let, or not used for the purpose originally granted?

EARL SPENCER said, all these particulars would add enormously to the expense of the Return, besides involving tremendous labour. If they were to adopt all these suggestions, it might be years before they could possibly get the Return out.

EARL FORTESCUE asked, whether the noble Earl could not add to the Return the number of places where allotments had been provided, and where for many years they had been given up as unlettable as allotments?

Motion (by leave of the House), withdrawn.

an-acre. It was, he thought, only right that they should ask the Government to give them information which was more recent than the year 1873. There was reason to suppose that the supply of allotments was every day coming nearer to the demand, because the agricultural population was anything but increasing in the rural districts. In the decade between 1871 and 1881 our agricultural population decreased by 15·9 per cent, having in the previous decade decreased 17·6 per cent, while the number of allotments was increasing. There was hardly any matter on which there existed less information and more exaggeration than the subject of the land of this country. The noble Earl opposite (Earl Derby) moved in that House for a Return of the owners of land, observing that it had been stated that the owners of land in England and Wales were only 30,000 in number. In order to ascertain whether that was the case, the noble Earl moved for a Return which, when produced, proved that instead of there being only 30,000 owners in this country, there were, after correction for the holdings of the same persons in several counties, no less than 967,000 owners, of whom 700,000 owned less than one acre. The inquiries of the Land and Glebe Owners' Association, for the voluntary extension of the allotments system, which were not exhaustive, showed that the owners of 2,300,000 acres had in force on their estates the system of allotments, and were prepared to extend it to all the labourers on their estates; besides that, the Association had the support of the owners of 25,000 acres of glebe land, and the system was also in operation on the estates of the owners of a further 500,000 acres. Thus, very widespread voluntary efforts were going on all over the country to provide labourers with allotments; and he trusted that no steps would be taken by Parliament which would throw any obstacle or check in the way of that most salutary system. He was willing to give the President and the Secretary of the Local Government Board credit for having drawn public attention to the question, although their startling proposals in reference to it had savoured somewhat of public plunder. He hoped, however, that their Lordships would not deal with the subject until they were possessed of all the facts connected with the case. If

they were to legislate in a compulsory manner it was possible that many of those who would otherwise speedily obtain allotments by voluntary agency might have to wait one or two years before the local authority in a district would put the machinery of that compulsory system in operation. An Act was passed in 1882 to provide allotments, the main principle of which was that every charity which owned land the profits of which were distributed in doles should be required to let allotments. But the great majority of the trustees of charity land were unaware of the existence of that Act; and he did not see how they could be expected to put it into operation unless their attention was called to it. He knew of no means by which that could be done except by calling upon the Charity Commissioners for such Returns as he moved for, giving the names of all those charities which came under the provisions of the Allotments Act of 1882. It was desirable that landowners should not only grant allotments, but in these days, when attacks were made upon them, that they should show their determination to do so by a public declaration on the point. Having shown what necessity there was for these Returns, he trusted their Lordships would see that it would be most unjust to landowners to propose any legislation dealing with their property when the *data* and the facts concerning allotments all over England were in no sense in possession of the public.

Moved, That there be laid before this House—

"Return (1.) of all agricultural holdings in England and Wales, both of arable and pasture land, occupied as allotments or field gardens, of one-eighth of an acre and not exceeding four acres; (2.) of all garden allotments exceeding one-eighth of an acre attached to cottages; (3.) of all charitable trusts in England and Wales the trustees of which are trustees within the meaning of the first and fourth clauses of the Allotments Extension Act, 1882."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

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Motion (by leave of the House), withdrawn.

KINGDOM OF AVA.—RESOLUTION.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of Kimberley), in rising to move—

—That Her Majesty having directed a military expedition of Her forces charged upon Indian revenues to be despatched against the King of Ava, this House consents that the revenues of India shall be applied to defray the expenses of the military operations which may be carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions."

said: My Lords, in moving the Resolution I will point out the clauses in the Act of Parliament which require that this Resolution should be moved. In the Government of India Act, 1858, there are two provisions on the subject of the employment of troops outside Indian territory. The 54th section provides that when any military operations are being carried on beyond Indian territory the fact shall be communicated to Parliament within three months if it be sitting, and within one month if Parliament be not sitting. The other, the 55th, has an immediate bearing on the Resolution which I have to propose. It provides that except for preventing or repelling actual invasion on our Indian Possessions, or for sudden and urgent necessity, the Revenues of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operations carried on beyond the external frontier of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions. The interpretation of this section has given rise to considerable controversy, the points of which will be found fully stated in the Papers relating to the Abyssinian War of 1867, and more especially in those connected with the war in Afghanistan in 1878-9. Some high authorities have contended that this section requires that the sanction of Parliament should be obtained before the commencement of operations. On the other hand, there is the fact that in several cases this Resolution has been moved after the actual operations have commenced. I do not propose to go into the arguments on either side, because, at all events, I feel certain that Her Majesty's present Government cannot be charged with having neglected their duty. It is perfectly clear that I am proposing the Resolution on the first occasion that it was practicable for me to do so. And I have another reason for not discussing

the matter, which is that it is the intention of the Government to propose an inquiry into the operation of the India Act in accordance with the intention of the late Government as announced in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech. As these ambiguities have arisen, it is, I think, desirable that the point should be considered by the Joint Committee of both Houses which it is my intention to move for. Therefore I will not pursue the argument further. The House will not expect from me at this time any narrative of the circumstances which led to the war with Burmah, or of the steps which followed it. All this has been placed fully before Parliament in the Blue Book which has been laid on the Table. It will be enough for me to say that there has been no doubt in the mind of any man who is acquainted with the course of our relations with the late King of Burmah that they were so unsatisfactory that it was impossible they should be allowed to continue. That unsatisfactory state of affairs had lasted for some considerable time. The causes of complaint were various. Efforts which had been made by the Indian Government to bring about a better state of things had failed; and it was merely a question of time when some step would become necessary to place our relations upon a more satisfactory footing. During the term of Office of Mr. Gladstone's former Government the question was never approached with any nearness, because the Government were occupied with difficulties relating to the North-West Frontier, and, except upon urgent necessity, it would have been clearly unwise to have entered upon any important operation on another frontier of India. The matter came to a head during the tenure of Office by our immediate Predecessors. The Viceroy of India and Her Majesty's late Government were of opinion that it was necessary that a strong step should be taken as regarded the conduct of the King of Burmah. I have been surprised to see that the defence of the late Government has sometimes been placed on this ground—that we were justified in undertaking a war for the purpose of extending British trade. I have no hesitation in saying that a war undertaken simply for that purpose would be an unjustifiable war; but I do not understand—although, no doubt, the advantage of increased trade

may result—that it was on that ground that the Viceroy acted. The ground on which he acted was the very unsatisfactory conduct of the King towards the Indian Government, and certain injuries which he had inflicted upon British subjects for which no redress could be obtained. Above all—and this is fully disclosed in the Papers—the King of Burmah had been endeavouring to establish such relations with Foreign Powers as could not fail to produce for us great embarrassment hereafter, and might have an injurious effect upon the peace and security of Her Majesty's Indian Dominions. It seems to me that, taking all the circumstances together, there certainly existed good causes for the war, and I can quite understand why the Viceroy should have advised that active steps should be taken against Burmah, and that Her Majesty's Government should have approved of them. These, however, are past affairs; and I mention them only in order that the House may not suppose that I wish to pass them over, or that I wish to pass any censure upon the late Government for the course they have taken. I now glance at the success of the operations themselves, because it would be very unjust to the Forces who were employed not to acknowledge the manner in which those operations were conducted. There has been already a gracious acknowledgment of the services of Her Majesty's Forces in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech; and on behalf of the Government, this being the first opportunity I have had of speaking on the subject, I have to state that much credit is due both to those who planned the Expedition, and to all the troops, naval and military, who were engaged in the operations. The extreme promptitude with which the operations were conducted prevented much effusion of blood that otherwise might have occurred; and this is a point that ought to be carefully borne in mind in estimating the services rendered. If the difficulties of the Expedition were not greater it is because they were anticipated by promptitude of action. On that point I wish to pay a tribute not only to the military, but also to the civil authorities, for the great activity they displayed in making the preparations. I think that the House will feel that our thanks are fully and completely due to all

those who were engaged in those operations, and who brought them to so successful an issue. Burmah having been thus rapidly conquered, the question, of course, arose as to the next step to be taken. The Papers presented show that a Proclamation was issued stating that Burmah had become a part of Her Majesty's Dominions; and in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech the following passage occurs:—

“I have decided that the most certain method of insuring peace and order in those regions is to be found in the permanent incorporation of the Kingdom of Ava with my Empire.”

At that time Lord Dufferin had not been at Mandalay, and had not had the opportunity which he has since had of examining into the state of affairs on the spot. Since we have acceded to Office, Lord Dufferin has sent home a Report stating fully the views he had formed after examining for himself the state of affairs in Upper Burmah. He informs Her Majesty's Government that having himself felt disposed at first rather towards the formation of Upper Burmah into a Native State under British protection, yet, after a careful examination of all the circumstances on the spot, he was convinced that such a course was inexpedient and impracticable. Having received that opinion in unmistakable terms from the Viceroy, in whom, in common with Her Majesty's late Government, we placed the highest confidence—having regard to the fact that Her Majesty's late Government have already announced in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech that the Kingdom of Ava would be permanently incorporated in the British Empire, and looking also to the Proclamation which by their instructions had been issued in Burmah—taking all those things into consideration, we have decided without hesitation that the proper course to be pursued—and that course the Viceroy has been instructed to pursue—is to maintain Burmah under the direct administration of the British Crown. As regards the further arrangements to be made, the House will not be surprised when I say that at so early a period, the Viceroy having just, after a few days' sojourn in Mandalay, left that capital, we have not been able to mature the details of administration, and they are at this moment being carefully considered by us in communication with the Viceroy.

The Earl of Kimberley

While we are entirely agreed in our decision, looking to all the circumstances of the case, I do not pretend to look with unmixed satisfaction upon an addition to our responsibilities in India; but I believe the necessity has been forced upon us. I doubt whether those who speak lightly of these accessions to our Empire duly weigh all that is involved. There may be advantages in our possession of Burmah; but, on the other hand, there are drawbacks. Forces will have to be employed there which might be usefully employed elsewhere. Of late years we have wisely made it our policy to avoid as much as possible the annexation of Native States, and not to give rise to the feeling that we were desirous of swallowing up those States. Do not, however, suppose that in making these remarks I am passing any censure upon those who have been engaged in the operations in Burmah, or that the Government are not desirous of making the best of the present position of affairs. The necessity is forced upon us, and the position is one in which the present and the late Government concur in accepting. My hope and belief is, that we shall so govern this addition to Her Majesty's Empire that it will conduce to the happiness and prosperity of the inhabitants of the country, and result in an increase of our trade with China, which may become ultimately very great. As I have mentioned China, it would not be inopportune to say—and I know in what I am about to state I shall have the concurrence of noble Lords opposite—that in considering the relations between Upper Burmah and China there is the utmost desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government to treat all matters that may arise in a most friendly spirit with regard to China. I believe also that China is most friendly disposed towards Her Majesty's Government; and where there exists a friendly disposition on both sides and strong common interests, I think we may anticipate that we shall bring any discussion which we may have with the Chinese Government with regard to the frontier to a satisfactory conclusion. We should be on the most cordial terms with China; and I think everyone will see that China, on her part, can have no jealousy of us in that quarter. It is for the interests of both Empires that they should act towards each other on the frontier in such a way

that a close and cordial friendship may be formed. Your Lordships may also desire that I should give some information as to the present condition of Burmah. With regard to that I will say, in the first place, that there has, no doubt, been a great deal of dacoity since our occupation of the country; but it must be remembered that dacoits have always been there. The Viceroy informs me that dacoity has been exceptionally rife owing to Theobaw's misgovernment, and that the proceedings of the dacoits have been very cruel and barbarous. These proceedings, however, have not, the Viceroy says, been directed against Her Majesty's Government, but against innocent villagers. It is the duty of the authority we have set up to protect the innocent villagers against these men, who have been guilty of murder and plundering of the very worst kind. My noble Friend the Viceroy assures me that in the execution of this duty there has been no unnecessary severity. He says that the general pacification of the country is proceeding as rapidly as can be reasonably expected. The country, however, is large and overspread with jungle, and it would be unreasonable to expect the immediate establishment of peace. Then, with regard to what is called indiscriminate punishment on the part of the military officers, the Viceroy says in one of his most recent telegrams—

"It is certainly not true that prisoners are indiscriminately shot by troops. Executions at Mandalay by military during past six weeks have been cases of convicted offenders sentenced by civil officers. Elsewhere, when troops take marauders red-handed, leaders are occasionally shot, in each case all act upon advice of civil officers who accompany columns. It is difficult to discriminate between insurgents and dacoits; both classes plunder and kill innocent villagers, and compel peaceable people to join them. It must be understood that these bands have not come into existence since our arrival, but that dacoity has been long rife in the country."

This is the latest information I have from the Viceroy as to the present condition of affairs in Burmah. I have no reason to think that any additional force will be required beyond that now employed. On the contrary, I have heard from the Viceroy that there is even a possibility already of some reduction being made in the force. As to the probable cost of the operations, the Viceroy informs me that it will not exceed 40 lakhs. At the old rate of ex-

change that would be £400,000; at the present rate it is about £300,000 sterling. The able Commissioner of Lower Burmah, Mr. Bernard, thinks it probable that the deficit for the first two, three, or four years will not exceed £20,000 or £30,000. It is very probable that after that period the Expenditure of the country will be balanced by the Revenue, and that eventually there will be a surplus. There is this to be said with regard to those estimates—that since Lower Burmah has been occupied by us its progress has been remarkable as to trade and all other elements of prosperity. No other portion of Her Majesty's Dominions has made greater progress than Lower Burmah. Whether or not Upper Burmah will make equally rapid progress, we may reasonably hope that the administration of the country which the Viceroy intends shall be conducted cheaply will result before long in the Revenue surpassing the Expenditure. The expenditure of the Expedition is calculated as not amounting to more than £300,000 up to 31st of March, which cannot be regarded as a large sum; and it can hardly be contended that this is not a case in which the Indian Revenues may fairly be charged with it. In conclusion, his Lordship moved the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Moved to resolve—

"That Her Majesty having directed a military expedition of Her forces charged upon Indian revenues to be despatched against the King of Ava, this House consents that the revenues of India shall be applied to defray the expenses of the military operations which may be carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions."—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

LORD HARRIS said, it was gratifying to the Members of the late Government to find that their undertaking in Burmah met with the approval of Her Majesty's present Advisers. He thought that the noble Earl would perhaps now admit that the paragraph in the Speech from the Throne referring to this matter was not too long, or inserted by way of excuse for the operations in Burmah. He was glad to hear that the Commission which the late Government had thought of moving for with regard to India was to be appointed; and he trusted that one result would be that those who differed on the clauses of the Act of Parliament would come to some satisfactory conclu-

The Earl of Kimberley

sion. He did not gather that it was necessary that the Resolution of the noble Earl should be brought forward within a month after the meeting of Parliament. But it had been out of the power of the present Government to bring it forward within the month. They were, however, to be credited with the desire to bring the Resolution forward as soon after the month as possible. It was not necessary for him to go into the reasons why the late Government thought it right that the country should be annexed; but he might say that the Expedition and annexation were not undertaken solely with the idea of extending our mercantile enterprize. They had responsibilities extending to the people of Lower Burmah. In judging of the matter, all the circumstances which led up to the Expedition must be taken into consideration. The various acts of interference with Her Majesty's subjects on the part of the Burmese Government; their indifference to the Treaties entered into in 1856, 1862, and 1867; their relations with other Powers as well as England—all these matters had to be considered. As the noble Earl had mentioned the civil officials at Madras, who were so active in forwarding the Expedition, he might add a word for the Madras troops, who had not had many opportunities of meeting an enemy in the field, but had on recent occasions shown themselves most conspicuous in actual warfare. He was glad that the course which Her Majesty's late Government thought it most advisable to pursue with regard to the annexation of Upper Burmah would be followed by Her Majesty's present Government. He was entirely unable to agree with the remarks which the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Ripon) made in a speech he delivered in the autumn, that from among the Royal Princes of Burmah could be found one capable of ascending the Throne. No doubt, the noble Marquess would have had ample choice, for King Theebaw's father left over 70 children; but he should not have had envied him the task of selection, for, from what he heard, he should doubt any one of them being fitted for so onerous a position. The noble Earl referred to the annexation of Native States. He entirely agreed with the remarks of the noble Earl on that point. Great stress had been laid on the fact that the Native Princes of India

might be under the impression that a policy of annexation would be pursued in India also. He could not understand the reasons for such an apprehension. It was not the policy of Her Majesty's Government nor of late Governments. Quite the contrary. Only the other day the fortress of Gwalior was restored to the Prince; not very long since the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Rajah of Mysore were restored to power; and the Maharajah Holkar had, on several occasions, received very considerable honours. On all those occasions the policy of Her Majesty's Government had been quite different from a policy of annexation of the Native States; and as long as the Native Princes governed their territories with justice and moderation so long might they be assured that they would be continued in the government. He believed that there was the greatest hope for the peace of the world in the proximity of China and Great Britain. The neighbourhood of two such trading nations argued well for the prospect of peace in that part of the world. When the late Government were in power frequent reports of acts of dacoity in Upper Burmah came to this country. He was afraid that dacoity was the normal state of things in Upper Burmah; and it was not wonderful that those who felt their occupation going should endeavour to strike one last blow for it. He was glad to hear from the noble Lord that there were great hopes of the country being brought into a peaceable condition without much delay; and he trusted that in a very short time the people might be able to settle down to their business, and that we should find, as in the Lower Province, that the Revenue, business, and trade of the country had increased at an enormous rate. He would not go into all the circumstances which led Her Majesty's late Government to think that annexation was the proper course, but would only say that they acted solely from a feeling of the responsibility attaching to them in governing British India, and recognized it to be their duty to the people of Lower Burmah as well as of India to insist that the Treaties to which Theebaw was a party should be recognized by him, that justice and honest treatment should be dealt out to those who were trading in that country, and that no exclusive influence should be allowed to any other nation.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE: On the part of the Army I desire to say that I entirely agree with what has been said on both sides of the House as to the manner in which the military operations have been conducted. I entirely endorse the statement of the Secretary of State for India that the fact that this has been a very bloodless and a very short Expedition adds to the credit of those engaged in it.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, he thought the military operations in Burmah were justified by all the circumstances of the case. He also thought, having read with attention the Blue Book which had been circulated among their Lordships, that the greatest moderation had been exercised by successive Administrations in dealing with the affairs of Burmah. It had been shown by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Cranbrook), by Lord Hartington, and by his noble Friend, now Secretary of State for India (the Earl of Kimberley), by his noble Friend below him (the Marquess of Ripon) and by the present Viceroy of India. The particular persons who might have to deal with questions of that kind as they arose formed an important element in the conclusion at which a Government might arrive. Two of the officers concerned, Sir Charles Aitchison and Mr. Bernard, were well known for their high character and great moderation of opinions. He quite agreed that in forming a judgment in this matter they must look to all the circumstances of the case, and also to circumstances extending over many years; for difficulties with Burmah arose before the year 1879. He would not like it to be supposed that the war had followed in consequence of any troubles connected with a British Company trading in Burmah, or of any matters of that kind. The causes which had produced this war were far more important, extending over many years, and involving circumstances of far greater moment than any trading difficulties. There was no doubt, whatever the cause of the war might be, that the operations had been admirably organized and successfully carried out; and he was glad to hear the noble Lord opposite (Lord Harris) pay a tribute to the conduct of the Madras Army, which came from him with peculiar grace in consequence of his hereditary connection with that Presidency. It was

a great advantage to that Army to have an opportunity of showing what they could do. As to the question of annexation, he looked upon it as one of the very highest importance; and he would certainly have preferred if it had been found possible to have avoided the annexation of Burmah. But he was, at the same time, fully aware of the great difficulties attending any other arrangement, and he was prepared to accept with confidence the deliberate opinion expressed by Lord Dufferin on the subject, that the only course that could be taken with a proper regard to the interests of Her Majesty's Dominions in India was to incorporate Burmah in Her Majesty's Empire. He must, however, express his regret that neither in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, nor in what had fallen from his noble Friend the Secretary of State, nor in the speech of the noble Lord opposite, had there been any mention whatever made of the most important announcement that was ever made by the English Government since the time of its first connection with India—he referred to the Proclamation of the year 1858, in which it was announced that Her Majesty did not desire any extension of Her Dominions in India. That was one of the most solemn steps ever taken by any Government; and he would have liked to see, at the same time that the necessity for annexation was announced, some words used at any rate to show that the great principle that except under imperative circumstances annexation should not be resorted to, would be adhered to. He did not, however, attribute the omission of any notice of that Proclamation to anything more than accident, and certainly not to any disposition on the other side of the House to depart from the great principle that it announced, for the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) had shown by his conduct, in respect to the Mysore State and upon other occasions, that he accepted and adopted the policy announced in the Proclamation. With regard to the question of the interpretation of the 55th section of the Government of India Act, this was an occasion, if ever there was one, on which it was necessary to refer to it. It was well known that the object and intention of that section was to place a check on the Prerogative of the Crown with respect to the declaration of war in India.

The Earl of Northbrook

That was the explanation which was given by the Earl of Derby and by Lord Beaconsfield (Mr. Disraeli) at the time. The latter, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, said, in the House of Commons, on July 6, 1858—

“The power of declaring peace and war might be left to the Sovereign under the Constitution of this country, and with a House of Commons that voted the Supplies and had a legitimate and constitutional mode of expressing its opinion. But if the power of declaring war and peace was left entirely in the hands of the Sovereign in India there were not the means of controlling its exercise that existed in this country, and a policy might be pursued extremely injurious to the national interests.”
—(3 *Hansard*, [151] 1014)

And he called it a “salutary and politic provision.” The present Prime Minister was the originator of that section; and he had expressed the opinion more than once, with the greatest deliberation, that it was the distinct intention of the section that the consent of both Houses of Parliament should precede warlike operations in India, except in the case of invasion or of urgent necessity. In the present case there was no dispute that the war was necessary, neither was there any dispute, he (the Earl of Northbrook) presumed, that there was no great urgency in the case. But, supposing in the opinion of both Houses of Parliament this war were an unjust one. What possible remedy would there be? The war was over and the country had been annexed. He thought their Lordships would see that the provision in the Act which was deliberately intended by both Houses of Parliament to place a check on the exercise of the Prerogative of the Crown had unfortunately become a dead letter, and that matters remained precisely in the condition they were before the Government of India Act was passed. Whatever opinion they might hold on the subject, there could be no doubt that that was the practical result; and he confessed that he was somewhat astonished to hear his noble Friend the Secretary of State say that this matter was to be referred to a Committee of both Houses of Parliament. If ever there was a case which did not require elucidation by a Committee this was it. Undoubtedly the highest authorities differed with respect to the interpretation of the clause; but there could be no doubt that the result of this dif-

ference of opinion was that the intentions of Parliament had become illusory. He ventured to submit to Her Majesty's Government that it was hardly a case for inquiry. It was a case involving important considerations as to what limitations ought to be placed on the Prerogative of the Crown; and he thought it was too much to ask for a Committee consisting of both Houses of Parliament to help Her Majesty's Government to come to a conclusion as to what really ought to be done to remedy this state of things. The Prime Minister had admitted more than once that the law had been broken. This matter was one of grave importance, and he trusted that the Government would not make the announcement of their conclusion as final, but that they would give a deliberate conclusion on this matter, and announce it to their Lordships. Not only had this war been undertaken, but a territory, he believed as large as France, had been annexed to the British Empire without the cognizance by Parliament of the fact, and without any possibility that Parliament could interfere, if it had wished to do so, by an Address to the Crown, to retrace the steps which the Government had taken. This annexation was announced within a fortnight of the meeting of Parliament. The Proclamation was issued on the 31st of December, and Parliament met on the 12th of January. The final step was even taken before the late Government had time to receive a deliberate expression of opinion from the Viceroy of India. That expression of opinion had only been received since the late Government left Office; so they had, notwithstanding the attempt to place a check on the Prerogative of the Crown, made in 1858, a war for which there was really no urgency, which was entered into without the consent of Parliament; in addition to which a large territory was annexed without any possibility of the opinion of Parliament being expressed as to whether that annexation was right or wrong. He did not entertain the opinion that this matter could be left alone and handed over to a Committee of both Houses to inquire into. It was a question which the Government ought to take into their serious consideration, more especially after the strong expression of opinion on the part of the Prime Minister, and decide on their own responsibility what should

or should not be the real power of the Houses of Parliament with respect to matters affecting in so serious a degree the interests—it might be, indeed, the safety—of the Indian Empire, and the best interests of this country.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: I do not propose to discuss the question raised by the noble Earl (the Earl of Northbrook) because Her Majesty's Government have adopted the course disputed by him. I wish, however, to say that the late Lord Derby in 1867 said, most distinctly, that it was never intended to control the Prerogative of the Sovereign, and the only thing intended was to put a check on the expenditure by Parliament. The present Prime Minister's statement was no doubt strong as to a particular case; but he admitted that, when there were special circumstances, it would be necessary to proceed without the consent of Parliament. I am one of those who think that one of the best courses connected with the proceedings in Burmah was that the blow followed the word, and that there was no time for getting up a contest which might have led to a large amount of bloodshed, disastrous to that country and injurious to this, and by acting promptly and decisively the affair was brought to an end. With respect to the Committee, it will not be charged with the interpretation of the clause, but whether the ambiguity of the clause is such as to need some legislation to put it right. I must warn my noble Friend that we must not interpret Statutes by those who may have brought them in, but by the Legal Authorities who have to construe them at the present day.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I am greatly obliged to my noble Friend for giving me this opportunity of saying that Her Majesty's Government attach the highest importance to the observance of the principles laid down in the famous Proclamation of 1858. Nothing has done more to form and strengthen Her Majesty's rule in India than the steady adherence to those principles; and the Native Princes of India will understand that, in the present case, the exception only proves the rule, and that there is no intention on the part of the present Government, and certainly no probability of any intention on the part of any Government which holds power in this country, to depart from the principles of that Pro-

clamation. With regard to the second point, I have to point out that it is not a very unusual course to refer to a Committee the examination of the manner in which an Act of Parliament is worked, especially when two clauses of that Act have been declared to be ambiguous. It is not that the Committee will have to determine the meaning of the Act; but they have to consider whether, by the light of experience which we have obtained since the Act came into force, that portion of the Act, or any other portion of it, requires amendment. I think that such a course is more likely to lead to a satisfactory result than that this isolated subject should be dealt with by Her Majesty's Government.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I cannot entirely admit, what the late First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) seems to assume, that the clause of the Act of Parliament is not carried out in its original interpretation. I do not venture to offer any interpretation myself as to what that clause may mean; but I have a very distinct recollection of the occasion when it was inserted, and I do not think that the intention of Parliament has been in the least degree frustrated. What was the circumstance which induced Parliament to insert that clause? It was the Persian War of 1857, a war that was undertaken by the Indian Government, paid for by the Indian Government, and concluded by them without the circumstance coming under the review of Parliament in any way whatever. It was held that that was unconstitutional; that it gave the Queen a power in India which she did not possess in England; but I never understood then, and I do not believe it ever was the intention of making the consent of Parliament a condition precedent before the Government went to war. That is not the law of England, and it was not intended to make it the law in India. What was intended was that in the case of wars waged by the Indian Government, like those waged by England, the whole matter should necessarily come under the control and judgment of Parliament, so that the action of the Executive might be condemned or approved. In that sense, when you remember the precedent of the Persian War, I believe the clause has done its work, because each successive war undertaken from

the Indian Revenues has been submitted to Parliament and approved. There is another matter which was referred to in the course of this debate of so much importance that I venture to add a word with respect to it—that is the bearing of this Burmese War upon the Proclamation of 1858. Of course, I entirely concur with the noble Lords when they say that nothing can be further from the minds of statesmen on either side of the House than to impair in the slightest degree the sacredness of the obligations undertaken by the Government in that Proclamation; but I do not believe that this Burmese War has even apparently effected them. That Proclamation was addressed to the Native Princes, who were the Queen's allies and feudatories in India at that time; and the King of Burmah never admitted that he stood in any such relation to the Queen. That Proclamation was no more addressed to the King of Burmah than to the Emperor of Russia, or the Ameer of Samarcand. It was addressed to those Native Princes who stood in a relation of allegiance to the paramount Power; and, therefore, what has occurred in Burmah is not an infraction of the Proclamation. I should be very sorry indeed if the slightest doubt were to be entertained as to the sanctity of that Proclamation. I would avoid even saying that the exception has proved the rule. There has been no exception, and the Proclamation remains in all its integrity. The course of this debate has been thoroughly satisfactory to the Members of the late Government, for it has been well established that this war was not undertaken through any greed of annexation, or through any desire to extend British trade. It has been recognized that it was actually forced upon us. The noble Earl has blamed us a little by implication because we did not wait for Parliament to assemble before giving orders for the commencement of hostile operations.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that what he had referred to was the annexation.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The noble Earl will remember that annexation is not a matter dealt with in the slightest degree in the Act of Parliament. It only deals with military operations. With respect to those operations, I do not wish to penetrate deeply

The Earl of Kimberley

into the question, which is a very delicate one. The subject came before me as Foreign Minister, and it was from the point of view of the Foreign Office that we determined that no delay should take place before action was taken. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for India repudiated, and very justly, in his speech the idea that we had undertaken this war for the purpose of extending our trade, and showed that the question whether there should not be more interference in the affairs of Burmah has been under the attention of the India Office for a good many years. I myself remember asking Lord Lawrence in consultation 20 years ago; whether some measures could not be taken for bringing the Government of Burmah to a more reasonable frame of mind and stopping the misgovernment of the country; and I believe that it was nothing but a desire to avoid annexation, or any such breach of our ordinary practice, that induced the Government to tolerate the state of affairs in Burmah for so many years. It was only the necessity of their position which forced the Indian Government to break that reserve at last. I believe that no war has been more thoroughly justified; and in a year or two the change that has been made will result in advantage not only to the people in our Indian Empire, but also to the people whom we have now subjected to the beneficent rule of the Queen.

LORD NAPIER OF MAGDALA said, that no one who had read the Blue Book relating to our affair with Burmah, or was acquainted with the history of our earliest relations with that country, could attribute for a moment the motive of commercial advantage or the extension of trade as the incentive to war. No other nation in the world would have been so long-suffering and patient under the injuries and insults of the Burmese Government as the British nation. The Burmese had been from the beginning aggressive neighbours. They invaded Assam and Chittagong, and, but for our presence, would have conquered Lower Bengal. The action of the Burmese in endeavouring to form close relations with other European nations whose only means of approaching them would have been through our territory was likely to create serious complications with those nations. Taking into consideration the

value of the mineral resources of Burmah and the routes which it supplied through Bhamo for trade with China, he believed the country would amply repay the expenses of its administration. The Punjab, which when first annexed was considered likely to be an unprofitable acquisition, afforded an apposite example. Sir John Lawrence had very anxious doubts regarding the Revenue of that country, which was also liable to the same disturbances as those now prevalent in Burmah. Bands of dacoits committed acts of violence and bloodshed, and the frontiers were disturbed. Sir John Lawrence, by very severe executions, put down acts of violence, and the frontiers were gradually reduced to order, as, no doubt, would be the case in Burmah in a short time. It was extremely gratifying to all who were connected with and interested in India to hear the thorough approval expressed on both sides of the House of the manner in which the Viceroy of India and the forces employed had conducted the conquest and annexation of that country.

Motion agreed to.

MARRIAGES VALIDITY BILL—(No. 11.)

(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that its object was to remove the doubts which surrounded certain marriages contracted between English and Scotch parties. It often occurred that two people, one of whom was Scotch, desired to be married in an English parish church by banns. The banns of the party residing in England were published in the ordinary way. The Scotch party to the contract produced on the wedding day a certificate stating that the marriage had been proclaimed in an Established Church in Scotland, and that no objection had been raised. The clergyman in England, acting upon this certificate, and considering it as equivalent to a proclamation of banns, married the parties. It was clear to anyone who looked at the Statute 4 Geo. IV., c. 76, that the Scotch certificate did not satisfy the conditions of the Act, which required that the banns

should be published in the express words of the rubric preceding the service for the solemnization of matrimony in the Book of Common Prayer. The result of this state of things was that doubt had been thrown upon the validity of such marriages as he had described. He had from time to time warned the clergy in his diocese that it was dangerous to marry parties on the strength of the Scotch certificate, which, however, appeared such a plausible document that it was difficult for clergymen to realize the danger to which the contracting parties were exposed. The purpose of the Bill was to remove all doubts as to the validity of marriages performed in the way which he had described. The measure consisted practically of a clause found in a Bill passed in 1885 by their Lordships with the object of validating certain marriages. The Bill failed to pass in the other House.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle.*)

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, that with very little encouragement he would be prepared to re-introduce the Bill to which the right rev. Prelate had referred. It was very desirable to put an end to the continual recurrence of special legislation to render valid marriages about which there were doubts. A very good case had been made out for the second reading of the Bill before the House. It was unfortunate that persons, for want of such legislation, should find themselves in a position of uncertainty about the validity of their marriage. The Bill which passed through this House last year was carefully guarded against any possibility of opening the door to loosely-contracted marriages; it was limited to solemn marriages in church, or other place of worship, or in a Registrar's office; and it was limited to informalities, not in the neglect of, but in the compliance with, those forms required by the existing Marriage Acts which exclude the notion of clandestine or hasty marriages. It was a disappointment to him that, on the change of Government, his Successor on the Woolsack did not accept the principle of the Bill, believing that it would open the door to dangerous laxity. He still believed it would be better to pass a general measure that would obviate the necessity of dealing with classes of

The Bishop of Carlisle

cases, and would remove doubts as to legal validity where the error was one of form, and not one of substance.

LORD HALSBURY said, that while he fully concurred in the principle of the Bill, he could not agree to the principle enunciated by the noble and learned Earl opposite (the Earl of Selborne) that a general Act should be passed to legalize *a priori* all marriages in which there had been a doubt. He was quite unable to conjecture the amount of confusion and uncertainty which would arise were any such Bill passed.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

PARLIAMENT—VENTILATION OF THE COMMITTEE ROOMS.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF BELMORE asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether any steps have been taken during the Recess to improve the ventilation of the Committee Rooms?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (The Earl of MORLEY), in reply, said, that changes had been made with the view of obviating the objections to the bad ventilation of the Committee Rooms. Larger provision had been made for the ingress of fresh air and the egress of foul air, and he hoped the results would be satisfactory.

THE CONDITION OF IRELAND (“BOYCOTTING,” &c.)

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK, in rising to ask the Lord President of the Council, Whether Her Majesty's Government will lay upon the Table such information as can be given without injury to the Public Service on the present condition of Ireland in respect to “Boycotting” and such outrages? said: My Lords, since I gave Notice of the Question things have happened which have made it even more important to ask it than it was before. The mode in which Questions as to the policy of the Government have been met in this House has relieved me from a difficulty; and I do not intend, after the failure of my noble Friends (Lord Salisbury and Lord Ashbourne), as respects the policy of the Government, to

endeavour to extort an answer. It seems to me that the Chief of the Government, the master of the pack, has adopted Sir Edmund Henderson's device of putting muzzles on all the pack in this House, probably from some fear that the rabies with which they are supposed to be infected might be prematurely manifested. The noble Earl (Earl Spencer), when he spoke at the beginning of the Session, addressed himself to the late Government as if they had been guilty of great *laches*, by which they had produced a state of things in Ireland which he ventured to say was "tenfold, and even a hundredfold," worse than that which existed when he was responsible for the government of Ireland. He said that we had interfered with the progress of law and order. I do not intend to go into a defence of the late Government. For the purpose of my Question I will assume that everything was as stated by the noble Earl, and that, in consequence of our policy, there was such an increase in the force of the National League, which no man can separate from "Boycotting," as to make it tenfold or a hundredfold worse than it was when he left Ireland. Well, my Lords, what follows from that? Why, that there is tenfold or a hundredfold more necessity for action on the part of the Government. I have taken the opportunity of refreshing my memory with a reference to the report of the noble Earl's speech; and I find that the noble Earl said it was absolutely necessary that some part of the Crimes Act should be re-enacted. The noble Earl, addressing himself to my noble and learned Friend Lord Ashbourne, said—

"I would ask the Lord Chancellor of Ireland whether he can now rely upon a jury in Ireland for convicting a man committed for agrarian crime, or crime connected with agrarian matters? I ask him, can he now rely?"

He afterwards said—

"I greatly fear that the condition of Ireland, with regard to intimidation and 'Boycotting,' is more serious than it has ever been before. . . . I maintain that it has increased tenfold or a hundredfold since I had the responsibility of the Irish Government."

I want to ask what is going to be done with this intimidation and "Boycotting?" Is it to be stopped, or is it to be left to simmer and get higher, perhaps to boiling point, before anything is done with respect to it? We

are told that we are not yet in possession of the policy of the Government even as to the maintenance of social order; but have they a policy? Mr. Chamberlain says—"We cannot give it, because we have not one." But the question of a general policy for Ireland is one thing, and the duty of the Executive is quite another thing. The want of a policy on the part of the Government of Ireland may be a serious matter. This is also a point which has been much altered by what has passed in "another place." Mr. Morley says that the question whether he or any other English Minister shall rule Ireland is approaching solution one way or the other. I should like to ask whether, if the rule of Englishmen is to cease in Ireland, Irishmen will be allowed to take part in the ruling of England? It seems to me that that question must arise. But this becomes a very serious matter, indeed, when you are dealing with the question of what an English Minister will do. First of all, he disparages English rule, and takes upon himself a duty which certainly is quite inconsistent with the duty of the Executive Government, because he says he is going to take the place of the Court of Appeal practically, and revise the decisions of the Courts; he will not execute the decrees of the Courts unless he is satisfied that they are just. I know Mr. Morley has qualified that. He says the question—

"Whether or not the Forces of the Crown should be used in carrying out every eviction for which the shadow of a legal title or justification can be made out is a question which Executive Ministers must decide upon for themselves on their own responsibility upon each case as it arises."

I know he said afterwards that he meant that the Military Forces—

"Were not to execute decrees—that is, judicial decrees—which, on the ground of public policy as well as that of equity, may seem inadvisable or unnecessary."

The Military Forces, however, in Ireland are those who are military armed, and they include the Constabulary. The Constabulary Force are by no means like the police of this country. Does the right hon. Gentleman think that it is a tolerable thing for a partizan Minister to judge as to what decrees he shall execute, or as to what period the ordinary Civil Authorities will fail to execute the

law? The first duty of a Government is to maintain law and order; and no one knows that better than the noble Earl opposite, who recently occupied the position of Lord Lieutenant. Let me do the noble Earl justice. I have never said a word about his tenure of Office except as to the courage and ability with which he carried out his duties, and as to the way he grappled with crime and outrage in Ireland. I now call upon him, in conformity with what he has said, to take the steps which he called upon us to take. The noble Earl has stated that the condition of the country was a hundredfold worse than when he had charge of the Government. "Boycotting" and the National League are inextricably involved with one another in Ireland. It is said that rents in some parts of Ireland are collected; but that is not where the National League exists. The two things are connected in a manner which shows the importance of dealing with one and the other. I do not want to say more at this hour of the evening; but I call upon the noble Earl to see that law and order are enforced without delay, and without waiting for the policy which some time or other is to come forth from Her Majesty's Government.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Earl SPENCER): My Lords, I think I have some right to complain that the noble Viscount opposite has unnecessarily raised a question of considerable importance without having given any Notice to me or the House on the subject. No doubt the question is one of great importance; but I only came down here prepared to answer the Question placed upon the Paper by the noble Viscount. I am quite prepared to tell your Lordships what Returns the Government are ready to give with respect to intimidation and outrages and the like in Ireland; but I am not prepared to follow the noble Viscount in a matter which really involves the whole question of the policy of the Government in Ireland, and I am certainly not bound to do so on a casual Question. If I followed the noble Viscount it would carry me through the whole policy of the Government, and I am certainly not prepared to go into that to-night. The noble Viscount, after referring to what passed the other night in this House, said he was not going to try to draw out the Members of the Government with regard

to their policy. I cannot congratulate him on having carried out his expressed intention; for he did, I think, try very hard to put the case in such a way that I should disclose the policy of the Government with regard to this subject. The statement I made on the first evening of the Session in this House I have not now with me. I did not think that this matter was coming on to-night, and therefore I did not have the opportunity of referring, as the noble Viscount had, to what I said on that occasion; and if I make some mistakes I must throw the blame upon him for not having given me Notice. My recollection is that I pressed the Government to give information as to the condition of Ireland at the time I was then speaking. I believe I then stated, though the report read by the noble Lord does not bear this out, that if we went by the accounts in the newspapers such and such a state of things had occurred. I therefore pressed the Government to give us reliable information. If the newspaper accounts were true I said the state of intimidation in Ireland was tenfold, perhaps one-hundredfold, worse than what it was when I had the honour and responsibility of government in that country. I believe what I pressed for then was for reliable information as to the state of social order in Ireland, and that was a perfectly legitimate matter upon which to question the Government. I do not at all, therefore, blame the noble Viscount for pressing me and the Government to give this information; and I am quite ready on the part of the Government, if this will satisfy him, to give a Return showing the number of cases of intimidation which have taken place under the ordinary law since the expiration of the Crimes Act last year—distinguishing between the cases disposed of at the Petty Sessions and Assizes and those made the subject of indictment, with the number of convictions. This is the utmost we can do with regard to intimidation. The question of "Boycotting" is rather a new one for official Returns. We are quite ready to give information in the possession of the Irish Government as to the number of persons who are "Boycotted." I believe we have Returns which were made up to the time when I was leaving Office. They were quite new Returns; therefore I am not sure

Viscount Cranbrook

that we should rely upon them in so precise a manner as on those which are actual cases tried before the magistrates and the Law Courts. The Returns of the latter cases, of course, are perfectly reliable. But if the House thinks it desirable that we should give the Returns I refer to I shall be perfectly ready to lay them on the Table. They are submitted by the best officers in the country, and they refer to persons that were "Boycotted" on specified dates—on the 30th of June, 30th of September, and the 31st of December in last year. Then the noble Viscount, referring to the statement in "another place" of a right hon. Colleague of mine, said that the Chief Secretary for Ireland is going to take the place of the Courts of Law, and settle what are proper and what are improper decrees for the military and police to put in force. I do not understand that the Chief Secretary has said anything of the sort. What he did say was that when a request was made for the military to be called in he should carefully consider whether necessity for the use of the military arose or not. He did not say that with regard to the Royal Irish Constabulary, but simply made the statement with reference to the Military Forces. I will read the part of his speech which has reference to this matter. He says—

"While we shall be very careful to exact respect for law, and very careful to see that every subject of the Queen has all those rights to which he is legally entitled, it will be our duty to look into the cases as they arise, and in no case where it can possibly be avoided shall we be inclined to resort to military force."

Now, I do not know whether the noble Viscount will differ from that. Will he say that the military should be used in the defence of the civil power on all occasions? I must confess that during the years I had the honour of being Lord Lieutenant I always thought it a very grave thing indeed when it was necessary to send the military in support of the civil power. It was a most undesirable thing to do. Where it was expected that obstruction would take place, I always preferred to send as large a force of police as possible rather than of military, whether Infantry or Cavalry. That is what I understand my right hon. Friend to mean. He did not say that he would never use the Forces of the Queen.

What he did say was that he would look into every case to see whether there was any necessity for bringing these Forces into use. I confess that that seems to me a very different thing from that which the noble Viscount has stated. As far as reluctance to use these Forces is concerned, I entirely concur with the Chief Secretary.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY : My Lords, there is a remarkable contrast between the anxiety shown by noble Lords opposite at the beginning of the Session not to allow one or two days to intervene before a policy was announced and their demand now that we should abstain from any questions as to a policy even upon matters that affect life and property in Ireland until the magical 1st of April arrives. But if Her Majesty's Government will not announce to us any policy I wish that they would carry that system of silence and reticence out completely. The policy which might convey some comfort and consolation to the Loyal Party in Ireland is scrupulously kept back, while a policy suitable for the consumption of the National League is announced in the other House. A "no-rent manifesto" has been announced by Mr. Morley—at least, that is the way in which it will be interpreted by the tenants of Ireland. It is perfectly true that portions of the speech of Mr. Morley will bear the interpretations put upon them by the noble Earl; but there are other portions which will be abstracted and circulated and sent about to the encouragement of tenants who abstain from fulfilling their legal contracts by conveying to their minds that those legal contracts will not be enforced unless the Chief Secretary, a known sympathizer with Mr. Parnell, considers them to be desirable and equitable. These are the words of Mr. Morley—

"Decrees which, on the ground of public policy as well as that of equity, may seem inadvisable or unnecessary."

Now, there has been a strong effort on the part of the noble Earl to convert this statement of Mr. Morley into a much more innocent statement to the effect that he would be very reluctant, unless it was necessary, to use military force. But that is not what Mr. Morley said. Most of us, nay all of us, are very reluctant to employ military force where it is not necessary for the purpose of compelling fulfilment of contracts. But Mr. Morley

claims a totally different liberty, not to consider whether military force is necessary for the fulfilment of contracts, but to consider whether a contract in itself is one which is equitable, or which public policy requires should be fulfilled after the Court of Law had established the legality of the demands, and to withhold military force as unnecessary if the contract should not approve itself to Mr. Morley's judgment. That is going from a state of law to a state of absolute government, and is taking away the decision of contracts from the Courts of Law and giving it into the hands of a Parliamentary officer deeply prejudiced against one of the classes that take part in these contracts. I can very well fancy that Her Majesty's Government are very loth to accept such a doctrine, and deeply regret that it should have been announced by their Chief Secretary. But I must say that I think we require a more clear assurance that the policy which his words appear to sanction will not be in effect carried out. We require an assurance that the military will be employed, if it be necessary, in order to exact the fulfilment of contracts, whether these contracts are in equity or in policy pleasing to Mr. Morley or not. That is the dangerous part of the announcement that has been made. I confess that it seems to me that the Government are accepting a very deep responsibility when they refuse not for a few days, but for six weeks, to announce any policy at all with respect to the maintenance of law and the preservation of life and property in Ireland. At all events, if they do refuse such an enactment, let them repudiate in clear language the most unfortunate invitation which the authorized Representative of the Irish Government has addressed to the Irish tenants not to pay rents wherever those rents do not approve themselves to the policy of Mr. Morley.

FRESHWATER FISHERIES (EELS) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to declare the meaning of section eleven of the Freshwater Fisheries Act, 1878, so far as regards Eels—Was presented by The Lord Thurlow; read 1st. (No. 16.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

The Marquess of Salisbury

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 22nd February, 1886.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—William Henry O'Shea, esquire, for Galway Borough. SELECT COMMITTEES—Parliamentary Procedure, appointed; Endowed Schools Acts, appointed; Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms (House of Commons), appointed and nominated.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee—Resolutions [February 19] reported.

PRIVATE BILL (by Order)—Second Reading—Bedford and Peterborough Railway.*

PUBLIC BILLS—Ordered—First Reading—Rivers Purification* [101]; Mines* [102]; Hyde Park Corner (New Streets)* [103]; Leaseholds (Facilities of Purchase of Fee Simple)* [104]; Removal Terms (Burgths) (Scotland) Act (1881) Amendment* [105]; Corrupt Practices (Municipal Elections) (Scotland)* [106]; Glebe Lands (Ireland) Acts Continuance* [107]; Coal Mines Regulation Act (1872) Amendment* [108]; Real Assets Administration* [109].

Second Reading—Land Registry [91].

QUESTIONS.

POLITICAL MEETINGS—SPEECH OF MR. CHAMBERLAIN—"RANSOM."

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I beg to give Notice that on Thursday I shall ask the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he has seen the following passage in Mr. Burns' speech in Hyde Park yesterday at a meeting of the Social Democratic Federation:—

"You are told by Mr. Chamberlain that the day has come when property should pay ransom to those from whom property has been stolen;"

and, whether the quotation is correct, and conveys the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN): I will spare the hon. Member the trouble of putting the Question down. The quotation is not correct.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—ESTATE OF COLONEL CLIVE.

MR. NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Whether it is true that Colonel the honourable George Windsor Windser Clive has sued Bryan Byrne, Baillyland, and other tenants upon his estate in the Dundalk division of the county Louth, for the hanging gale due

1st November last; whether it is the fact that in former and comparatively prosperous years said hanging gale has not been asked from said tenants until six months after the day on which it became legally due; whether he is aware that this will make the third half-year's rent with law costs which has been demanded by Colonel Clive during the (for farmers) admittedly disastrous year, 1885; and, whether, in view of the great falling off in the prices of agricultural produce, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take steps for relieving the distress of Irish tenants?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): A communication has been made to me to-day by Colonel Clive which does not coincide with the information which had previously reached me; and if the hon. Member wishes to press that part of his Question, I must ask him to postpone it till further inquiry has been made. With regard to the general question raised in the last paragraph, I will ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone the matter until a future day, as I am in communication with the authorities in Dublin on the subject.

ARMS ACT (IRELAND).

Mr. LEWIS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Act restricting the possession of arms in Ireland does not expire on the 1st June next; and, whether the Government intend to introduce at an early date a Bill to renew or extend its provisions?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question. The Act will expire on June 1 next, I believe; but it would be quite premature for me to make any announcement now of the intentions of the Government with respect to it.

Mr. LEWIS gave Notice that he would repeat the Question on that day fortnight.

METROPOLIS—LONDON LIVERY COMPANIES—LEGISLATION.

Mr. HOWELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he intends to introduce a Bill to give effect to the Report of the late Royal Commission on the City Guilds?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): My hon. Friend is probably aware that in 1885 a Bill on this subject was introduced by the then President of the Local Government Board. I shall confer with my right hon. Friend who now holds that Office as to the re-introduction of that or a similar Bill.

INDUSTRIAL DWELLINGS ACT, 1885—DISUSED PRISONS, METROPOLIS.

Mr. GENT-DAVIS asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take steps at an early date in order that the disused prisons in the Metropolis named in the Dwellings Act of 1885 may be demolished, and that remunerative occupation for workmen as well as decent and cheap house accommodation for the poor may be provided by the erection of artisans' dwellings on the sites of these prisons?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (who replied) said: The only two prisons of those named in the Act of 1885 which have, up to the present, been finally discontinued are Coldbath Fields and Clerkenwell. Treasury sanction has been asked, but not yet received, for the sale by auction of Coldbath Fields. The Middlesex Justices have not yet decided whether to accept or refuse the re-conveyance of Clerkenwell. With regard to the other two prisons named in the Act, Pentonville will not be discontinued, and the fate of Millbank is not yet decided upon.

NAVY—THE ROYAL YACHT "OSBORNE."

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If it be true that the Royal Yacht *Osborne* is about to undergo extensive alterations; and, if so, whether he will be good enough to inform the House the nature and estimated cost of the same; also the total amount expended on repairs, alterations, and decorations upon ship and engine-room since the period when originally commissioned?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT): The *Osborne* is not about to undergo extensive alterations. A sum of £4,519 was approved on December 14 last for annual refit of hull, machinery, masts, yards, boats,

rigging, and stores. This amount includes £777 for providing extra accommodation on the bridge, and £54 for five other small alterations. The sums expended on account of repairs, alterations, and decorations of the ship and engine-room since the date of her completion for sea are as follows, completed in 1874:—Hull, £52,509; machinery, £19,044; masts, boats, rigging, stores, &c., £32,066; total, £103,619. A Parliamentary Return of April 27, 1883 (157) gives a great deal of detailed information about this vessel.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE NATIONAL ENSIGN.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether there would be any objection to the hoisting of the National Ensign over the Palace of Westminster during the Session of Parliament; and, if there would be no objection, whether he would give orders to have it so hoisted?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. LEVESON GOWER) (who replied) said: Technically the Houses of Parliament are a Royal Palace comprising the old and new Palaces of Westminster. When the Sovereign is present in the House the Royal Ensign is hoisted on the Victoria Tower. No other ensign could be properly hoisted.

POST OFFICE (PARCELS POST)—CARRIAGE OF PARCELS IN SUBURBAN AND RURAL DISTRICTS.

MR. BOORD asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, What provision is made for the carriage of packages transmitted by the Parcels Post in suburban and rural districts; and, whether any extra remuneration is given to letter carriers who, in addition to their usual burthen, have to carry heavy parcels?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER), in reply, said, that the wages of rural postmen did not vary with the weight carried, but with the distance traversed and the time occupied. The maximum weight was 35 lbs., which gradually diminished as the postman went on.

POST OFFICE—THE POSTAL UNION—EXTENSION TO AUSTRALASIA.

MR. J. H. HEATON (for MR. J. HENRIKSEN) asked the Financial Secre-

tary to the Treasury, What is the cause of the delay in the extension of the Postal Union system to Australasia; and, is there a probability of the present high rate of postage on letters to and from the Australasian Colonies being reduced in a short time?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER), in reply, said, it was not intended to lower the rate of postage to the Colonies; and no intimation had been received that the Colonies themselves desired any change to be made.

EGYPT — ARMED STEAMERS ON THE NILE.

MR. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, How many shallow water armed fighting steamers are at present engaged in patrolling the Nile, and, whether, at its next rising, it is intended that a flotilla of portable armed steam craft shall be despatched for the purpose of clearing the upper reaches of the river of hostile tribes between Wady Halfa, Dongola, and Berber?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): With the hon. Member's permission, I will reply to this Question. The Nile is at present patrolled by four armed shallow-water steamers, all stern-wheelers—the *Lotus* and *Shaban* above Wady Halfa, and the *Tamai* and *El Teb* between that place and Assouan. Two other vessels for this duty have been sent out and have arrived at Alexandria. I am not aware of any such intention on the part of the Government as that indicated in the latter part of the Question.

COAST DEFENCES—DEFENCE OF THE COAST OF DURHAM.

SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN asked the Secretary of State for War, What steps have been taken to carry out the official recommendations recently made for the Volunteer Naval and Torpedo Defence of the Wear and the Tees, and the intermediate coast line of South-East Durham?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): Establishments for submarine mining are in process of construction on the Tees and Tyne. Stores and vessels have been purchased for the submarine mining defences of

Mr. Hibbert

those rivers, and also of the Wear. In addition to the defence establishments, negotiations are in progress for the purchase at Middlesbrough of a site on which to erect buildings where instruction can be given in submarine mining. On the Tyne a local Volunteer Force for submarine mining has been raised, and has already been once trained in conjunction with a section of the coast battalion of Royal Engineers.

ARMY (ORDNANCE) DEPARTMENT—AMMUNITION.

MR. CARBUTT asked the Secretary of State for War, If the statement in *The Times* of the 6th February is correct, that the late Government have given an order to the firm of Messieurs William Armstrong and Company for half a million's worth of shot and shell; and, if so, can he state for which guns they are intended?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): No, Sir; the statement is not correct.

SCOTLAND — REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT — POLLING PLACES IN ARGYLLSHIRE.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the Lord Advocate, If he will lay upon the Table any correspondence that may have passed between the late Secretary for Scotland and the late Lord Advocate and Sheriff of Argyllshire, having reference to the polling places in that county?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): It is not usual to lay upon the Table of the House official Correspondence of this kind; but I know that my right hon. and learned Friend the late Lord Advocate will be very glad to answer any Questions upon the subject so far as it relates to his period of Office, and I shall be glad to do so in so far as it relates to mine.

INDIA—RELIGIOUS PROVISIONS—PROTESTANT CHAPLAINS AND CATHOLIC PRIESTS.

MR. DONALD SULLIVAN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that, while Protestant Chaplains with the Army in India are allowed full pay when they fall ill, and when they take their vacation, Catholic Chaplains under similar circumstances are de-

prived of all pay; and, if so, whether he will take immediate steps to remedy the unequal treatment of the Catholic Chaplains?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (who replied) said: Chaplains on the Indian Establishment—that is, Protestant chaplains—are Government servants appointed by the State. As such, they receive, under the provisions of the Leave Code, allowances when on leave, whether with or without medical certificate. The Roman Catholic priests who minister to the British troops in India are not Government servants, and are not appointed by the State. The Government merely pays them certain allowances for the ministrations which they afford to the soldiers; but beyond this they have no connection with the State. I am not aware that they are deprived of all pay when casually prevented by sickness from doing duty. The question of the position of Roman Catholic priests in India was carefully considered in 1876, and the matter was then placed on the footing on which it now stands. The details of the arrangement are to be found in Return No. 243 of 1876.

ARMY (SMALL ARMS)—USE OF GERMAN STEEL FOR SWORD BLADES.

MR. CARBUTT asked the Secretary of State for War, If the statement about Cavalry swords in *The Times* of the 16th instant is authoritative; if so, can he state why the contractor should apply for leave to use German steel when our own factory at Enfield found no difficulty in obtaining English steel; whether the application had been refused; whether it is a fact that, in addition to the blades coming from Germany, the hilts and scabbards were also made and fitted there; whether, in future, he will take care the swords are made in England, as, according to the War Office statement, there is no difficulty in obtaining suitable steel in Sheffield; and, whether he will issue the promised Report at once as so many swords and bayonets have proved defective?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): Yes, Sir; the statement referred to is authoritative. The contractor stated that he was unable to complete the number of swords he had to supply without, to some extent, em-

plying Solingen blades, and applied for permission to do so. This permission has been granted, as his contract only binds him to supply swords which shall stand certain tests. The order which was given from the War Office to Solingen to complete the required quantity which could not be obtained in England is for swords with scabbards complete. Orders for swords have not been given, and will not be given, to the foreign trade when the number required within a given time can be procured from the home trade aided by the Government factory at Enfield. The promised Report will not be complete until all the swords and bayonets shall have been tested, which we hope will be accomplished in a few weeks.

GOVERNMENT OF LONDON— LEGISLATION.

MR. CREMER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If the Government intend at an early date to introduce a Bill dealing with the Government of London?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): The hon. Member is probably unaware that on Friday I answered an identical Question. I stated then that it was out of my power to make any definite statement on this subject at present.

EGYPT—THE SLAVE TRADE—THE CONVENTION OF 1877.

MR. GOURLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Convention made between Italy and the United Kingdom, on the 21st December last, relative to the Convention entered into by Egypt, on the 4th August 1877, for the suppression of the Slave Trade is to be enforced, or remain comparatively a dead letter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BRYCE): The document to which the hon. Member refers is not a Convention, but a Declaration recording the adhesion of Italy to the Convention of the 4th of August, 1877, between Great Britain and Egypt. Under the provisions of the Slave Trade Act of 1873 the Declaration must be applied by Order in Council. The Order is in course of preparation, and as soon as it is issued the Declaration as regards this country will enter into force.

Mr. Campbell-Bannerman

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)— ARKLOW HARBOUR WORKS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will lay the Report of Mr. Stevenson, C.E., on the condition of the Arklow Harbour works, upon the Table of the House?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. JOHN MORLEY) (who replied) said: I shall be happy to lay a copy of this Report on the Table if my hon. Friend will move for it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF MICHAEL STOREY.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has seen a report of the observations of Mr. Darley, the County Court Judge, in delivering judgment, at the recent quarter sessions held in Wicklow, in the case of Michael Storey, in which he said—

"It was a very serious matter to send this man to gaol without the option of a fine, to send him to gaol for six months (with hard labour), because he put his hand against a policeman, saying, 'I won't allow you to cross my land,' was monstrous, and the moment the policeman remonstrated, and said he would arrest him, it was admitted he allowed the policeman to pass;"

whether the decision of the magistrates was reversed, and a fine of £5 imposed on Mr. Storey; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will advise the Lord Chancellor to take any notice of the conduct of Messrs. Truell, Acton, and Barton, the magistrates who presided on the occasion, and at the same time take steps to have the fine remitted, or reduced to such an amount as would be sufficient penalty for the offence of a "constructive assault?"

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I believe the observations of the County Court Judge are correctly quoted. The question of the action of the magistrates in the case is one for the Lord Chancellor; and I shall forward the Papers to him with a view to his dealing with it. With regard to the remission or reduction of the fine, it is right to observe that that penalty was imposed by the Court which reviewed and reversed the decision of the magistrates. However, if a Memorial on the subject is presented to the Lord Lieutenant it will be duly considered.

INLAND REVENUE—PAY OF CUSTOMS OFFICERS.

Mr. BAUMANN asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If it is true, as stated by *The Standard* and *Globe* newspapers of January 8th, that extensive reductions are to be made in the scales of pay given to Customs Officers; and, if so, whether care will be taken in applying the new scales to inflict no injury on the prospects of promotion of the officers now on the establishment who entered the service under entirely different conditions, but to confine their effect to those who may choose to enter the service hereafter?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT), in reply, said, that certain changes were being made in the Customs Department. No one would have his salary reduced in consequence; but he would not give any pledge that some modifications might not be made.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED OUTRAGES AT RICHFORDSTOWN, CLONAKILTY, CO. CORK.

Mr. HOOPER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a report in *The Cork Examiner* newspaper of a recent date of a series of alleged outrages on the holding of Mr. John Lucas, J.P., Richfordstown House, Clonakilty, county Cork; whether the police authorities of the district have furnished any report upon the subject, and, if so, what action, if any, has been taken in consequence, or is intended to be taken; and, whether, under the extraordinary circumstances of the case, Her Majesty's Government will consider it their duty to order a full local investigation into all the facts?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MONLEY): I have to acknowledge the receipt of a newspaper cutting which the hon. Member was good enough to send me in reference to this case. The Police Report of the matter having been laid before the late Attorney General for Ireland, he directed that summonses should be issued against Mr. Lucas and his wife on the charge of feloniously setting fire to their house; and I understand that that charge is being heard to-day. The

hon. Member will, therefore, not expect me to offer any opinion on the case.

POST OFFICE—DELIVERY OF TELEGRAMS.

Mr. FORWOOD asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Post Office have seriously delayed the delivery of telegrams, when addressed in the same manner as letters, which are delivered in course, on the ground that the telegrams were insufficiently addressed; whether parties complaining of the delay in, and, in some cases, non-delivery of telegrams addressed in a similar manner to letters, have been informed that "a direction which may be sufficient for a letter is not sufficient for a telegram;" and, whether Her Majesty's Postmaster General approves of this action on the part of the Post Office officials; and, if so, that the House may be informed of the additional particulars required to be given on the address of a telegram beyond what are required to be stated on the address of a letter?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER), in reply, said, that it had been discovered at the Post Office that an address which might be sufficient for a letter might be insufficient for a telegram. A letter insufficiently addressed might pass into the hands of a postman who had others to deliver to the same person; whereas a telegram must be delivered by a messenger, who, perhaps, had never heard the name of the person before to whom it was addressed. What was required was an address which should enable the messenger to deliver the telegram, even without the name of the person to whom it was sent. If the hon. Member would furnish him with the particulars of grievance he would see that the matter should be investigated.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE—INTERFERENCE OF PEERS IN ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THIS HOUSE.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked Mr. Attorney General, with reference to the Resolution of this House which declares—

"That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privilege of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament . . . to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament . . . or

for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission to influence the election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament ; ”

whether his attention has been called to the action of the Earl of Meath, in reference to the recent election for the East Wicklow Division of the county ; whether he is aware that Lord Meath, in his capacity of Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of the county of Wicklow, summoned a meeting of so-called Loyalists, at which he took the chair ; whether he has seen a report of Lord Meath's speech on the occasion, in which, referring to the election about to be held, he spoke of the honourable Member for Cork City as the leader of “ Communists ” and “ Anarchists,” adding—

“ He was not bringing forward one-half of the villainous projects these unscrupulous revolutionists sought to accomplish ; ”

whether he has noticed the following passage in the speech—

“ This autocratic leader went on plainly and without reservation to educate them in the political doctrines they were to support. First, the land of the country was to be taken from all landowners and applied to National purposes. Secondly, no property of any description was to be allowed to accumulate in the hands of any person ; ”

whether he has noticed the announcement made to the meeting by Lord Meath, who read a letter from Earl Fitzwilliam, in which it was stated—

“ You will be told by my son what I believe you already know, that I should wish to contribute to the election expenses of any candidate approved by the meeting,”

to which Lord Meath added—

“ He might say he had received a very large subscription from Earl Fitzwilliam, but he was not at present at liberty to mention the amount ; ”

whether it is a fact that several other Peers, including Lord Carysfort and Lord de Vesci, took part in the proceedings ; and, what steps he intends to take in support of the Resolution of the House in the case now brought under his notice ?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL): I am bound to point out to the hon. Member that it does not come in any special sense within the sphere of my duty to interfere in regard to this Question, which would more properly be addressed to the Leader of the House. However, in courtesy to

Mr. W. J. Corbet

the hon. Member, I may say that I understand that the speech to which reference is here made was spoken before the issue of the Writ for the Election for the Eastern Division of Wicklow ; and, under these circumstances, it is not usual to take any notice of a speech so delivered. Indeed, it is customary for Members of the House of Lords belonging to the two great political Parties in the State to take part before the issue of the Writ of Election by addressing public meetings ; and in this case the speech was, I understand, delivered before the issue of the Writ.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked whether the Attorney General would take into consideration the desirability, in order to make the matter plain, of inserting the words, “ after the issue of the Writ,” when a Motion was made for the issue of a new Writ ?

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL: That is also a Question which would be more properly addressed to the Leader of the House.

ISLANDS OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC— THE NEW HEBRIDES.

Mr. BADEN-POWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Is there any Treaty or exchange of assurances between England and France binding both Powers to respect the independence of the New Hebrides and of Raiatea ; is Her Majesty's Government aware that a Convention has recently been entered into by Germany and France, whereby Germany concedes to France the right to take possession of the New Hebrides and Raiatea ; was Her Majesty's Government informed by the contracting Powers that such a Convention was about to be made, and were they invited to take part in the Convention ; and, have the Governments of the Australasian Colonies requested Her Majesty's Government to insist upon the maintenance of the independence of the New Hebrides and of Raiatea, for the reason that their occupation by any Foreign Power would be contrary to Treaty engagements, and injurious to British interests in the Pacific ?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE): Agreements do exist between Great Britain and France whereby both Powers engage to respect the independence of the groups of islands referred to ; but a conditional arrange-

ment has been entered into with France in relation to the Raiatea group, securing full advantages to British commerce. Her Majesty's Government are aware of the Convention between Germany and France alluded to by the hon. Member; but it is not to the effect stated. It does not affect the agreement between Great Britain and France, but merely stipulates that Germany will do nothing to hinder France from eventually obtaining the islands in question. Under these circumstances, Her Majesty's Government did not receive, and did not expect to receive, notice of such Convention, nor to be invited to take part in it. The Australian Colonies continue to object to the abandonment of the agreement with France concerning the New Hebrides; and Correspondence is passing on the subject with the Colonial Governments.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)-- UNWHOLESOME HABITATIONS.

MR. SHIRLEY asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to certain correspondence in *The Times*, and to three leading articles in *The Times*, which appeared on 25th September and 2nd and 3rd October 1885 respectively, in which it was stated:—That a most dangerous and over-crowded structure in London, without sanitary arrangements, is owned by a member of the Metropolitan Board of Works; that the said member refused to obey the order of the vestry to fill up cesspools, construct drains, lay on water supply, and otherwise cleanse the unwholesome habitation; that the said member refused to obey an order of his own Board to pull down or shore up the dangerous structure; that the said member conspired with certain of the Board's officials to set aside the above order, and to use the public money on the said structure; and further, that the conspiracy was extended to the office in which the official books are kept, and that the books were dealt with in accordance with the fraudulent arrangement; that the structure is still inhabited, notwithstanding that the dwelling was condemned as dangerous by the Board's own officials; and, as neither the Board nor the member concerned have taken the ordinary means of replying to these

grave charges, will he inquire into this matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. CHILDERS) (who replied) said, he had no information at the present moment; but he was inquiring into the matter, and the hon. Member would be informed of the results of the inquiry.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—MR. REPTON, PROCURATOR FISCAL FOR EAST FIFE.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the appointment of Mr. Renton as Procurator Fiscal of the Eastern Division of Fife-shire has yet been confirmed; if so, on what conditions as to private practice; and, if not, whether Government will refuse confirmation to any appointment to the post except on condition that the Procurator Fiscal be restricted from engaging in private practice?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): No, Sir. This appointment has not yet been confirmed; and it has been intimated to Mr. Renton by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State that it will not be confirmed unless on the condition that he relinquishes his private practice. He has intimated, in reply, that he is willing to assent to that condition.

ARMY (SMALL ARMS)—STEEL FOR SWORD BAYONETS.

MR. JOHNS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is any difficulty in obtaining from steel manufacturers in this Country a suitable quality of steel for the manufacture of sword bayonets for the British Army; and, if not, whether it is his intention that in future all sword bayonets supplied to British Troops shall be manufactured in England from English steel, and not in Germany or from German steel?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): There is no difficulty in obtaining from firms in this country a suitable steel for sword bayonets; and if the number of sword bayonets required can be procured in this country, either from the Government factory or from private manufacturers, recourse will not be had to the foreign market.

THE MAURITIUS—APPOINTMENT OF
MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD AS LIEU-
TENANT GOVERNOR.

MR. COX asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that Her Majesty's Government have appointed Mr. Clifford Lloyd to be Lieutenant Governor and Colonial Secretary of the Mauritius, a colony where the Roman Catholics number 108,000 and the Protestants 8,000 of the general population; whether it is true that Her Majesty's Government have nominated three additional officials, all Protestants, to the Legislative Council of the Mauritius, although the eight officials already on the Council consisted of six Protestants and only two Roman Catholics, whilst the list of electors under the new Constitution contain three thousand three hundred Roman Catholics as against less than eight hundred Protestants, Mussulmans, Hindoos, Chinese, &c.; whether Mr. Henry Adams, a Member of the Legislative Council, has protested against the division of the ecclesiastical grants in the Mauritius, by which the Roman Catholics receive only one shilling and sixpence per head, whilst the Protestants receive eleven shillings and sixpence per head; and, why Her Majesty's Government have always appointed Englishmen to be Roman Catholic Bishops of the Mauritius instead of Prelates of the French Church?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, the late Government appointed Mr. Clifford Lloyd to be Lieutenant Governor and Colonial Secretary of the Mauritius. He believed the population of the Island amounted to 360,000, of which about 108,000 were Roman Catholics and 8,000 Protestants; and he was informed it had not been the practice to recognize any religious disability in the Colony. The late Government nominated three Civil officers to the Legislative Council, who, it appeared, were Protestants; he was informed that the officers so nominated were selected by them on account of their personal fitness and in consideration of the offices which they held. Mr. Henry Adams, a Member of the Council, had given Notice of a Motion in favour of a redistribution of ecclesiastical grants in the Mauritius,

but withdrew it; he, however, declared his intention of bringing it forward again if he was elected a Member of the new Council. The Roman Catholic Bishops of Mauritius were appointed by the Pope, and not by Her Majesty's Government; but it had always been understood that in a British Colony a Bishop receiving pay from the State should be a British subject.

In reply to Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL,

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN said, that the Indian population of Mauritius constituted more than two-thirds of the whole. The Registrar General of the Colony had given the following classification of the registered electors:—3,300 Roman Catholics, 450 Protestants, 295 Mahomedans and Hindoos, and 15 Chinese.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL gave Notice that he would take the earliest opportunity of calling attention to the injustice done to the Indian population of the Mauritius, numbering two-thirds of the whole population of the Island, under the arrangement by which they had only 1-15th of the representation.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether His Excellency Sir John Pope Hennessy was consulted in reference to the appointment of Mr. Clifford Lloyd as his Lieutenant Governor?

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN: I must ask the hon. Member to give me Notice of that Question.

SIR FREDERICK STANLEY: Perhaps I ought to say, on behalf of the late Government, that Sir John Hennessy was not consulted.

COAL MINES—THE USWORTH COL-
LIERY EXPLOSION.

MR. BURT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he can state when the promised full Report of the Evidence taken before the Coroner's Court in connection with the colliery explosion at Usworth will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDEAS), in reply, said, that the proofs of the evidence were then being corrected, and would be completed, he hoped, that day. They would then be printed and presented to Parliament in the course of next week.

SPAIN—CASE OF MR. WELFORD, MISSIONARY AT FERNANDO PO.

Mr. BURT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been called to the case of Mr. Welford, Primitive Methodist Missionary at Fernando Po; whether it is true that Mr. Welford was kept a prisoner by the Spanish authorities for thirty days; whether Mr. Welford has since been liberated on parole, but is still denied redress in the form of a trial; whether representations have been made to the Spanish Government on the subject; and, if so, what reply has been received; and, whether the Government will press for the speedy settlement of the case?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE): The attention of the late Government was called to this matter in October last. Mr. Welford was arrested on the 7th of September, and imprisoned for 20 days. Through the intervention, however, of the Commander of Her Majesty's Ship *Alert* he was released on bail; but he has not as yet been brought to trial. Repeated representations in favour of Mr. Welford have been addressed to the Spanish Government by Her Majesty's Legation at Madrid, and Lord Rosebery has given instructions that their earnest attention shall again be called to this question, with a view to its prompt settlement.

ARMY (ROYAL ARTILLERY)—VACANCIES FOR SUBALTERN OFFICERS.

COLONEL HUGHES-HALLETT asked the Secretary of State for War, The number of vacancies in the subaltern ranks of the Royal Artillery; and, what steps, if any, will be taken to fill those vacancies other than by the usual routine of a competitive examination and passage through the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN), in reply, said, there were at present 20 vacancies for subaltern officers of the Royal Artillery. Steps were not contemplated for filling these vacancies otherwise than by ordinary appointments from the Royal Military Academy.

WESTMINSTER HALL (RESTORATION).

SIR HENRY HOLLAND asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether any steps have been taken towards erect-

ing the building on the west side of Westminster Hall which was approved by the last House of Commons, and for which an Estimate was taken on account?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (who replied) said, the quantities for the building were being taken out, and the work would be proceeded with as soon as possible.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT—LOCAL TAXATION—LEGISLATION.

VISCOUNT CURZON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce any measure this Session dealing with the question of local taxation?

Mr. SAUNDERS asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Government intend to introduce a measure dealing with County Government, and when the Bill will be submitted to the House?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN): It is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill dealing with County Government at the earliest possible moment. I am not yet able to say definitely when I shall be able to introduce this measure. It will contain the proposals of the Government with regard to the question of the reform of local taxation.

LAW AND JUSTICE—APPOINTMENT TO THE RECORDERSHIP OF LIVERPOOL.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether any appointment has yet been made to the vacant Recordership of Liverpool; whether the Home Office have received any communication from the Corporation of Liverpool in regard to the salary attached to this office; whether any reply has yet been sent to such communication; what arrangements would be made with regard to sittings; and, whether the new Recorder will be allowed to engage in private practice?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDRES): Yes, Sir; Mr. Hopwood has been appointed. A letter has been received, not from the Town Council, but from the Finance Committee of the Town Council of Liverpool, asking that the salary may be reduced. I have replied that Mr. Hopwood accepted this

office subject to any alteration in the salary approved by the Secretary of State; and whatever the Town Council may recommend will receive my careful attention. In reply to the further Questions of the noble Lord, I can only say from memory that I believe the same number of sittings will be held at Liverpool as heretofore; and that, as to private practice, Mr. Hopwood will certainly not depart from his Predecessor's rule. If his Predecessor did not take private practice as an understood condition of his taking office, neither will Mr. Hopwood; but I can say no more without Notice.

MR. FORWOOD asked if the right hon. Gentleman would be good enough to hold over any further action in the matter until the Corporation had had an opportunity of considering his letter?

MR. CHILDERS said, there was no further action to be taken. The appointment had been made on the expressed conditions as to salary which he had explained.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON said, he was sorry to trouble the right hon. Gentleman further; but he must ask if he had any objections to apply to Mr. Hopwood the same limitations which were in force as regarded his Predecessor? The matter was really of great importance to Liverpool.

MR. CHILDERS said that if the noble Lord had given him Notice he could have said what communications had passed, and how they had been dealt with; but, as he had stated, Mr. Hopwood would be governed by the same rules as his Predecessor in office with regard to private practice.

MR. AMBROSE wished to point out that there was some misapprehension with regard to the Recorder of Liverpool taking private practice. That official always had taken private practice; and, so far from its being—

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is entitled to put a Question, but not to argue.

FRANCE AND MADAGASCAR—THE TREATY OF PEACE.

SIR DONALD CURRIE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the following telegram from Paris, published in *The Daily News* of the 19th instant:—

Mr. Childers

"Paris, Thursday Night.

"A member of the Committee named to report on the Patrimoine Treaty informs me that the Hovas would never have accepted that settlement of their quarrel with France had it not been for the screw put upon them by Lord Salisbury's Cabinet. In return for this service M. Haas, the French Agent at Mandalay, was, my informant says, disavowed by his Government, and King Theebaw abandoned;"

and, to be so good as to inform the House what are the facts of the case?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BRYCE): The statement referred to is entirely without foundation. Her Majesty's Government have not interfered, directly or indirectly, in the negotiations between France and Madagascar.

INDIA (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—PROMOTION—GRIEVANCES OF OFFICERS.

MR. CONYBEARE asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is the fact that the complaints of the officers of the Telegraph Department in the Government of India in respect of absence of promotion have been long admitted by the Government of India to be well founded; whether any and what steps have been or are about to be taken to remedy their grievances; and, whether he will communicate with the Government of India with a view of laying before Parliament, at an early date, all the papers relating to the subject?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): The fact that there are grounds for complaint has been admitted, and is the subject of correspondence with the Government of India, with the hope of increasing the efficiency of the Department, and remedying all just grievances. As soon as possible information will be given to Parliament.

BURMAH—THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES—MILITARY EXECUTIONS—THE PROVOST MARSHAL.

DR. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he will state the result of the promised investigation into the conduct of Colonel Hooper, the Provost Marshal, stated by *The Times* Correspondent at Mandalay to have attempted to extort evidence from one Burmese prisoner by unauthorised preparations for his execution, and to have photographed other prisoners

while in the act of being shot; whether his attention has been called to a Despatch from the same Correspondent, published in *The Times*, of the 29th ultimo, in which the Correspondent asserts that the Military authorities who conducted the inquiry abstained from taking evidence from European civilians, a number of whom he names as having been eyewitnesses of what he described, and received "only the evidence of the implicated parties;" whether, if this be true, he will take steps to secure a thorough and impartial inquiry; and, whether any and, if so, what steps have been taken in the case of Colonel Hooper in connection with this matter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): I have to say that we have received from Lord Dufferin the following Report—namely, that the investigation of the charges against the Provost Marshal shows that he did photograph men undergoing execution, but that the prisoners were blindfolded, and did not know that they were being photographed, nor were the executions in any way protracted; that on one occasion an attempt was made, under the Provost Marshal's orders, to extract evidence by threats of execution; that for both these offences he will be severely censured, and will lose the preferment which he had otherwise deserved; and that his office exists no longer. The results thus reported by the Viceroy by no means satisfied the Secretary of State. He has, consequently, communicated with the Viceroy by telegraph. As soon as the Secretary of State is in possession of further information, I shall take care to make it known to the House. Perhaps the hon. Member for Newry (Mr. J. H. McCarthy) will accept this as an answer to his Question.

DR. CAMERON: In a few days I shall put a further Question.

RAILWAY RATES—LEGISLATION.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, as the late Government had intended to introduce a Bill dealing with the question of excessive Railway Rates, and were prevented from doing so by resignation, Her Majesty's Government will consider the expediency of introducing a similar measure

dealing with Railway Rates generally; and, whether they are prepared to take immediate action with regard to the prohibitory rates now being charged for agricultural produce and fish, so that our Northern farmers and fishermen can bring their produce to the large centres of population at prices that will compete with that now being imported from the Continent of Europe, and so help in a tangible degree the present trade depression?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. MUNDELLA): In reply to the first portion of the hon. Member's Question, I beg to state that I have given Notice of my intention to introduce a Bill dealing with the subject of railway rates. In reply to the second branch of the Question, the only action I can take in the matter is to introduce and lose no opportunity of passing this legislation through the House; and this, I need hardly say, I fully intend to do.

DR. CAMERON: Can the right hon. Gentleman inform the House of the scope of his proposals?

MR. MUNDELLA: No, Sir.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Will the proposals extend to Ireland?

MR. MUNDELLA: Yes; I believe the Bill will extend to the whole of the Three Kingdoms.

BURMAH—THE ANNEXED TERRITORY.

LORD FRANCIS HERVEY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he can state the limits of the "territories formerly governed by Theebaw" which have been annexed by proclamation to the dominions of the Crown, and whether the territories annexed include the Karennee Country, Manipur, or other Countries marked "Independent" in the map prefixed to Mr. Colquhoun's work on "Burma and the Burmans;" whether it is the case that a garrison of 18,000 men is to be maintained in Burma; whether further Papers on the subject can yet be presented; and, if he will also lay upon the Table Papers relative to the cession of Gwalior, and the accompanying arrangements?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): The territories formerly governed by King Theebaw do not include the Karennee Country, nor the protected State of Manipur, nor certain tribes on the West already under the influence of

the Government of India. The noble Lord will readily see that it would not be possible, at so early a stage of the occupation of the country, to state the precise boundaries of the territories now incorporated in Her Majesty's Dominions. The present number of troops in Burmah, both Upper and Lower, does not amount to 18,000. Until the country is pacified it would be impossible to state what force it will be necessary permanently to maintain there. I hope shortly to lay on the Table further Papers promised by the noble Lord the late Secretary of State as to the Provost Marshal's acts, and as to the executions; but at present there are no other Papers which can be laid upon the Table with advantage. In answer to the noble Lord's last Question, as soon as the Correspondence regarding the cession of the fort of Gwalior is complete, the Secretary of State will consider in what form information can best be given to Parliament?

MR. O'KELLY: Will the hon. Gentleman include the number of men shot by the Provost Marshal?

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: Every information on the subject which we can get I assure the hon. Member will be communicated to the House.

THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT (IRELAND).

MR. P. M'DONALD asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to a certain Minute addressed by the Registrar General of Dublin to the clerks in his Department; and, if so, whether the contemplated changes in the staff whereby the juniors are to be discharged and the seniors to be advanced has the approval of the Right honourable gentleman; and, whether the head of the Department, whose duty it is to have charge of the safe keeping of all documents and records relating to his office, is the gentleman who, on being called upon by the Court, in the case of the Dublin Corporation against the Kingstown Town Commissioners, to produce certain necessary public documents, stated they were then made into pulp, the consequence of which was that the Corporation was nonsuited?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): The scheme recently

adopted for the reorganization of the Registrar General's Department was approved and issued before I took Office, and no occasion has yet arisen for its reconsideration by me. I understand that two gentlemen—one of whom is in his 60th year, and the other in his 54th year—have been selected for pensions in order to forward the work of reorganization. The document which was sought to be produced at the trial referred to was the "press proof" of the Census, which had never been in the custody of the Registrar General; and I am informed by my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland, who was counsel for the Corporation on the occasion, that its non-production was not the ground of the non-suit. It transpired in the course of the hearing that the Census Papers of 1861 had been pulped. This was done by order of the Government, in pursuance of an opinion of the Law Officers that these documents are privileged and might be destroyed when they had been used for the official Report.

MR. P. M'DONALD: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman how the case was to be proved by the Corporation of Dublin against the Commissioners when these very necessary public documents were destroyed? They were required at the trial, and were, consequently, essentially necessary. I might also ask the right hon. Gentleman if the reasons for the proposed changes were in order to increase the salaries of certain persons who hold high positions in the office, and for this reason it was proposed to discharge some of the clerks of the Department?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I am sure the hon. Member will excuse me if I do not answer that. As to the other points respecting the documents, all I can say is that the Attorney General for Ireland, who was counsel for the Corporation, gives it as his opinion that the document was not regarded as essentially necessary.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—SCHOOL BOARD SUMMONSES.

MR. JENNINGS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware of the facts reported in the daily papers, that, on the 10th of February, upwards of forty summonses were heard at the Thames

Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth

Police Court against parents for not sending their children regularly to school; that the defendants were, in the majority of instances, women of the very poorest class, and that they pleaded their inability to send their children to school on account of illness, poverty, and want of proper clothes; that, nevertheless, fines were imposed in some cases, and that, in default of distress, imprisonment followed; and, whether he is now disposed, considering the great and unusual hardships to which the poor are at present subjected, to use his authority with the magistrates to procure a more merciful administration of the Law in these cases?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): I have obtained a Report from the Chief Magistrate on the subject of summonses to parents for not sending their children to school. The hon. Member is no doubt aware that women are only by law entitled to appear for their husbands. I am assured that the Metropolitan Magistrates make a rule of always taking into their most careful consideration all extenuating circumstances, as poverty, illness, &c.; in fact, they are always being charged with too merciful an administration of the law. I see no reason to issue any special instructions.

POLITICAL MEETINGS—SPEECH OF MR. JOHN MORLEY AT CHELMS- FORD.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following is a correct Report of words he uttered at Chelmsford on 7th January 1886:—

"Do what you will with your Rules of Procedure, you will not have restored the British Parliament, you will not have made the British people master of its own house, until you have devised some scheme or other which will remove the Irish Members from the British House of Commons."

and, whether the Right honourable gentleman still adheres to the policy he then advocated?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, will he state whether he is aware that the proposal contained in his speech is exactly similar to a proposal made by Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, late Con-

servative candidate for North Camberwell?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I was not aware that Mr. Blunt's proposal coincided with the opinion I expressed. The report to which the hon. Member refers appears to be, in substance, correct. The hon. Gentleman asks whether I still adhere to the policy which those words appear to advocate. I think, on the whole, it would be more convenient that the policy to which I adhere should be stated in all its fulness on the proper occasion.

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES (IRELAND) —REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON TRAWLING.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, If his attention has been directed to the following paragraphs in the Report of the Trawling Commission:—

"The fishermen were almost unanimous in stating that the decrease of haddock and flat fish had been contemporaneous with trawling:

"In Norway and Sweden there is no beam trawling:

"In Denmark, in France (except in a few places for special reasons), and in Germany, off some parts of the Baltic Coast, it is forbidden by law within the three miles limit:

"The number of fish on particular grounds, especially in narrow waters, may be sensibly diminished by the use of the beam trawl;"

if it has now been officially admitted by the Government that the great majority of the fishermen and the inhabitants residing near Galway Bay would desire that trawling should be prohibited in the whole or part of the Bay; and, if the Government, either by legislation or otherwise, will endeavour to give effect to their wishes?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I think I shall best answer this Question by quoting a passage from a Report of the Inspectors of Fisheries on the subject. The Inspectors say—

"If it were admitted that the feelings of a certain class of fishermen or of the inhabitants of a certain place against a certain mode of fishing, such as trawling, should be the basis on which that mode of fishing should be prohibited, the Royal Commission should have reported that trawling should be prohibited on the East Coast of Scotland and parts of the East Coast of England in consequence of the feeling exhibited by other fishermen in these places. The practice of trawling should only be prohibited in cases where it may be proved that it is injurious and detrimental to the fisheries, and consequently to

the public interests. This has not been proved in Galway Bay. On the contrary, the evidence proved to the satisfaction of the Inspectors the necessity for repealing in 1877 a bye-law prohibiting it in certain places in that bay."

**SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT —
FOURTH INSTALMENT OF RATE
—POSTPONEMENT OF PAYMENT.**

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, If, in consideration of the difficulties caused by the agricultural depression, he would permit such unions as might apply for more time to defer the payment of the fourth and last instalment of the Seed Rate for another twelve months?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): We are in communication with the Treasury on this subject; and if the Question is repeated towards the end of the week, I hope to be able to give the hon. Member a definite answer.

**DISTURBANCES IN THE METROPOLIS
—POWER OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF POLICE IN EVENT OF
RECURRENCE.**

COLONEL HUGHES-HALLETT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Chief Commissioner of Police has absolute power to act on his own responsibility, and take what measures he deems necessary, should the occasion require it, to prevent the recurrence of such riots as disgraced the Metropolis on Monday 8th February, or whether he is bound to seek for instructions first from the Home Office?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): On Thursday last I explained the relations between the Home Office and the Commissioner of Police with respect to this matter. I gave not merely the dry law, but also the facts. The hon. and gallant Member asks me a Question which is really one of law. On the former occasion I stated that the Chief Commissioner was free to make what arrangements might be considered necessary with respect to any meetings to preserve the peace. I also explained that the Police Orders, after being issued, are forwarded to the Home Office; but the Commissioner does not, of necessity, consult the Home Office previous to giving them.

Mr. John Morley

BURMAH—LICENSED OPIUM SHOPS.

MR. HUNTER asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether, having regard to the consequences of licensing of opium shops in British Burmah, as disclosed in a Memorandum by C. U. Aitchison, esquire, late Chief Commissioner of British Burmah, addressed to the Government of India in 1880, the Government will prohibit the opening of opium shops, and the sale of opium, in the newly annexed territory?

THE UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): No information on the subject of the licensing of opium shops in Burmah has yet been received from the Government of India. But I have no doubt they will discourage the sale of opium in the newly-annexed territory, so far as this may be practicable, considering that the drug is believed to be already in common use.

**INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX—
SCHEDULE A.**

MR. BARRY asked Mr. Attorney General, If his attention has been called to a statement recently made in *The Daily News* in reference to the income tax, to the following effect:—

"We continue to be overwhelmed with letters on the subject of the deduction for income tax which a tenant is allowed to make from his rent. We must adhere to our original statement that the rent of a man's house is free from income tax. . . . We are hopeless of convincing one of our correspondents, who says that 'If a man agrees to take a house at a hundred a-year he has no legal right to deduct the income tax on that hundred a-year.' An Act of Parliament expressly says that he has, and we cannot expect that a gentleman who upsets the authority of the Legislature will accept ours;

"We will make a final attempt to explain our meaning by taking a concrete case. A. B.'s income from all sources is a thousand a-year. The rent of his house is a hundred a-year. He is entitled to no other exemption. Upon what sum does he really pay income tax? The correspondents to whom we have referred say a thousand pounds. We say nine hundred pounds, because he can deduct the tax from the hundred pounds which he would otherwise owe to his landlord;"

and, as there is evidently much confusion of opinion on this matter, would he say if the view taken by *The Daily News* is in conformity with Law?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL): The landlord of premises is liable to the Income Tax

under Schedule A. It is sometimes called the Property Tax. This tax is in the first instance paid by the tenant, who is entitled by law in the case put to deduct from the rent the amount. The tenant is liable for Income Tax on the full amount of his income; but if the premises are used for business the rent is taken into account in estimating the income. If the house is not used for the purpose of business from which he makes his income, then, like any other expenditure, it is not taken into account. It follows, therefore, that in the case put a tenant would pay on the full sum of £1,000. I hope I may be allowed to say that I do not consider it to be part of my duties, nor has it been considered so by my Predecessors, to answer any legal puzzle which hon. Members may choose to put to me.

IRELAND—SUPPRESSION OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to restore the authority of the Crown in Ireland by suppressing the so-called National League?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): I can assure the hon. Gentleman that Her Majesty's Government is very desirous to see the authority of the Crown in Ireland restored to that full state of efficiency which it enjoys in England and Scotland—in a great degree through the sympathy and sense of the people. We deem that the condition of Ireland in that respect is one requiring our closest and most anxious consideration and attention; but I have already stated that according to such investigations of facts as we have been able to make since our recent accession to Office, we do not conceive it would be wise, or justifiable, or politic on our part to seek the restoration of that authority to full efficiency through the medium of an immediate application to Parliament for special criminal legislation. That answer, of course, includes the negative to the Question which the hon. Gentleman asks.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE.

MR. NORRIS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will give such

recommendation to the Select Committee on Procedure, as will prevent any Bills of the importance of the Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill being brought on for discussion in this House after midnight?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): It is, of course, no part of my duty individually to give recommendations to the Select Committee. But the subject is one which may fairly be considered in that Committee; and I have no doubt the question will be taken notice of by some Members of that Committee with a view of giving it effect.

SCOTLAND—THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH—DISESTABLISHMENT.

SIR DONALD CURRIE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the present position of the ecclesiastical affairs of Scotland, and the guarantee of Presbyterians under the Treaty of Union, Her Majesty's Government will institute an inquiry, by Royal Commission or otherwise, into the wishes of the Scottish nation in regard to disestablishment, and the future application of the teinds in the event of disestablishment being desired by the people of Scotland, and decided upon by Parliament?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): In answer to my hon. Friend, I may say that it has been the feeling of the Members of the present Government, and I think generally of those who are in political sympathy with it, that this important question of the continuance and circumstances of the Established Church in Scotland should be left as much as possible to the spontaneous action and consideration of the country. I need not tell my hon. Friend how very competent the Scotch people are for the purpose of discussing such questions, and of considering whether a change ought to take place; and, if so, in what manner it should be adjusted, and what would be the probable consequences of it, either to the union or disunion of the great Presbyterian bodies. But my opinion is that if we were to appoint any Royal Commission, or appear to stir this question by the use of the Executive authority, it would hardly be consistent with the language that has been held in Scotland and with our desire that an unbiased opi-

nion should be formed upon it by the people of Scotland.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS— LEGISLATION.

MR. CONYBEARE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the declaration in favour of a review of the whole subject of Registration contained in his manifesto to the electors of Midlothian, it is the intention of the present Government to introduce any measure for the amendment and simplification of the Law relating to the Registration of Parliamentary Voters?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): I am not surprised at the appearance of this Question, which relates to a subject that has been specially commended to the consideration of the country and the new Parliament. The reason why Her Majesty's Government have not thought themselves justified, at the first moment on the assembling of the new Parliament, in opening this question for discussion in the House of Commons is that perhaps this is not the moment at which it is so urgent as it would be when the life of Parliament is somewhat further advanced. Another reason is that it is our first duty to examine whether we shall not have to make very large demands upon the time of the House with regard to important proposals connected with social order and other great questions in Ireland to which I have previously referred—namely, questions connected with the land and the government of that country.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, whether, in the meantime, the right hon. Gentleman would refer the question to a Select Committee?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I by no means meet that with a negative, and it will be a subject for consideration.

HOUSE OF COMMONS' ARRANGEMENTS —SELECT COMMITTEE OF 1867-8— OVER-CROWDING IN THE HOUSE.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government will undertake to deal with the subject of overcrowding in the House of Commons, or will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to whom shall be referred the Reports of the Select Committee of 1867-8 on

"House of Commons Arrangements," and in the meantime will take steps to reprint these Reports with the accompanying drawings?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): Whether beneficially in other respects or not, some relief to the state of tension which this question has reached at the opening of Parliament has been afforded by the change of Government which has taken place. It has brought about, if not a perfect division, a more equal division of the Members of this House. I think it very likely that this question may come up for consideration after the House has had a little more experience of its existence and working; and, in the meantime, I quite agree with my hon. Friend that the Reports of the Select Committee of 1867-8 on the House of Commons Arrangements may be very properly reprinted for the use of Members.

EASTERN AFFAIRS—SIR H. DRUM- MOND WOLFF'S MISSION.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What course the Government propose to take with regard to Sir Drummond Wolff and his mission to Egypt?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH interposing, asked, whether it would not be better that the debate on that subject should be postponed for a day or two, and not taken after a fixed hour?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): In answer to my right hon. Friend, I have to say that my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (the Earl of Rosebery) is expecting a detailed Report and full communications from Sir H. Drummond Wolff, without which, in point of fact, we should not be able accurately to appreciate his position with reference to the very important and complicated and difficult question which he has in hand. At the present juncture we have no intention of interfering with the continuance of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission. With regard to the Question of the right hon. Baronet, it had been our intention to proceed with the Vote to-night; but I will at once agree to postpone it. I am, however, informed that the Vote ought to be taken not later than Thursday.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID gave Notice that he would call attention to Par-

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liamentary Papers, Egypt, Nos. 1 and 2, 1885.

**DISTURBANCES IN THE METROPOLIS
—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF
INVESTIGATION.**

STATEMENT.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS : I promised on Thursday last to lay on the Table—which I now do—the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the conduct of the police on the 8th of this month, and into other circumstances. I am not able now to lay them in the form in which they can be circulated; but I hope they will be circulated either to-morrow or on Wednesday with my Memorandum, and, of course, with the evidence. The evidence is long, and has been taken at sittings held every day during last week—sittings which generally lasted four or five hours—and, of course, it could not be printed and corrected with that rapidity which would have otherwise been possible. I will not now read any considerable part of the Report—which is a long one—but I will read the last paragraph, which says—

“We conclude our Report by the strong expression of our opinion that the administration and organization of the Metropolitan Police Force require to be thoroughly investigated, and we hope that this investigation will take place without delay.”

I think I should also tell the House that I have communicated the substance of the Report to the Chief Commissioner of Police. I have told him what the recommendations of the Committee are, with my Memorandum upon the subject; and this afternoon I received a letter from Sir Edmund Henderson placing his resignation in my hands for the purpose of facilitating the re-organization of the Department, and that resignation I have accepted. I shall now lose no time whatever in instituting inquiries with a view of remedying the defects to which the last paragraph of the Report refers. Perhaps the House, in conclusion, will allow me to thank—as I very sincerely do—the four Gentlemen who assisted me in this most difficult inquiry—an inquiry which, without their assistance, it would have been almost impossible for me, only a day or two after entering Office, to undertake satisfactorily, but which I believe the House will find has been most

satisfactorily undertaken. I trust the Report will receive the approval of the House. I will lay it on the Table, and I hope the whole Papers will be distributed to-morrow or on Wednesday.

MR. W. H. SMITH : I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, considering the very great importance of the question, an early opportunity will be given for the discussion of the Report?

MR. CHILDERS : I think the House should have the Report before it before any Question of that sort is asked. If, after reading the Report, the right hon. Gentleman thinks it necessary to put the Question, no doubt it will be answered.

MR. W. H. SMITH : I beg to give Notice that on Thursday I will ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary what course the Government propose to take with regard to the Report, and especially to that portion of it referring to the re-organization of the police.

MR. CHILDERS : I have stated that I intend to propose a complete inquiry into the organization and administration of the police. I propose to undertake that inquiry as rapidly as possible. As to the means and machinery by which that inquiry is to be conducted, that is a Question which I will ask the right hon. Gentleman to put on Friday.

SIR JAMES FERGUSON asked, whether there had not been three exhaustive inquiries into the organization of the Metropolitan Force during the last 18 years?

MR. CHILDERS said, he could speak as to two of those inquiries; but he was not quite sure whether there had been a third.

CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND

MR. TREVELYAN said, it might be for the convenience of the House if he stated that he intended to postpone until Thursday the introduction of the Crofters Bill.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Local Government Bill, which, as stated by the President of the Board of Trade, was to include Ireland, would be introduced before the 1st of April?

THE FIRST LORD **MR. W. E. GLADSTONE** explained that what the President of the Board of Trade had stated

with regard to the inclusion of Ireland was as to an entirely different Bill—namely, that dealing with railway rates.

QUEEN'S SPEECH — HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

THE COMPTROLLER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Mr. MARJORIBANKS) reported Her Majesty's Answer to the Address, as followeth:—

I have received with much satisfaction your loyal and dutiful Address.

I rely with confidence on your assurance that the Measures which may be submitted to you will receive your most careful consideration.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.—RESOLUTION.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I am anxious, Sir, to ask your ruling upon a point of Order, arising out of the Business of the evening. Committee of Supply stands as the first Order this evening; and I apprehend that in that case it is subject to the 21st Standing Order, which provides that—

"Whenever Committee of Supply stands as the first Order of the Day on Monday or Thursday, Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without putting any Question, unless on first going into Supply on the Army, Navy, or Civil Service Estimates respectively, or on any Vote of Credit, an Amendment be moved or Question raised relating to the Estimates proposed to be taken in Supply."

But, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister proposes to move—

"That the Notices of Motions relating to Parliamentary Procedure and East India, Burma (Expenses of Military Operations) have precedence of the Orders of the Day,"

so that, although Committee of Supply stands this evening as the first Order of the Day, yet it is by no means the first Business of the evening, and may, in fact, not be reached until a late hour. I, therefore, wish to ask you, Sir, whether, under these circumstances, the Standing Order No. 21 applies to the Order for Committee of Supply to-night, or whether any hon. Member will have the opportunity, on your putting the Question "that you now leave the Chair," of raising any question he may think it

desirable to raise? I think I have clearly explained the nature of my Question.

MR. SPEAKER: In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to state that I do not consider that the fact of the Notices referred to taking precedence over Committee of Supply prevents the subsequent application of the 21st Standing Order to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred. I am bound by the Rules of the House; and this Standing Order explicitly says—

"That when on a Monday Committee of Supply shall stand as the first Order"

the Speaker shall leave the Chair without Question put. The House will observe that, notwithstanding the interpolation of these Motions, Committee of Supply will still stand as the first Order of the Day. I may say, however, that I know of no precedent for the course about to be proposed; but the Standing Order itself is of comparatively recent introduction. I think, under the circumstances, that it is not for me to interfere, and say that Committee of Supply, standing as the first Order of the Day, must be taken if the House should decide that other Business should be taken first. It is, in my judgment, for the House itself to decide whether any other Business, of which proper Notice has been given, shall take precedence of Committee of Supply.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): I desire to say a word which may simplify matters. I think the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly justified in the Question he has put; and I was aware of the point he was about to raise. But I wish to say that I would not have proposed to obtain precedence for these Motions over the Order of the Day for Committee of Supply except upon very specific grounds. As to the first Notice of Motion—namely, that relating to Procedure—I thought it would be greatly for the convenience of the House that no time should be lost, after what has already happened, in referring the subject to a Select Committee; and with regard to the second Notice, relating to the expenses of the Expedition to Burmah, it has been felt by Her Majesty's Government to be our absolute duty to avail ourselves of the very first day on which we could regularly introduce the subject, in order that

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we might obey the spirit of the law we have to administer.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Perhaps, by the indulgence of the House, I may venture to remind the right hon. Gentleman that, although it may be necessary to obey the spirit of the law, yet, at the same time, it surely ought to be necessary to obey the spirit of the Standing Order, and to follow that which has hitherto been the practice of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Notices of Motions relating to Parliamentary Procedure and East India, Burma Expenses of Military Operations) have precedence of the Orders of the Day."—(*Mr. W. E. Gladstone*.)

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, before the Motion was put he desired to make a few observations on what appeared to him to be the very inconvenient, if not objectionable, precedent that was about to be made. The spirit of the 21st Standing Order was that it should only apply when Supply was not merely the first Order, but the first and most important Business of the evening; for the object it aimed at was not solely to facilitate the progress of the Government with Supply, but to secure that hon. Members, interested as they all ought to be in the important matters connected with Supply, might know exactly when Supply would be taken. This object would certainly be defeated in a case such as this, for the Motions relating to Procedure and Burmah would occupy an uncertain time, and it was impossible to say at what hour Supply would be taken. As to the Burmah Motion, it was his own opinion that the law would be complied with if it was brought forward at any period of the Session; but, granting that it was imperative that it should be taken that evening, that certainly could not be said of the Motion with regard to Procedure. The House ought not to be asked to take an objectionable course under cover of this Standing Order, unless the necessity was absolutely imperative, otherwise they would be making a precedent; and on some other occasion they would be asked to postpone Supply to allow of the introduction of the Crofters Bill, or any other measure that the Government might wish to proceed with. It certainly was rather strange that, on

the very evening when the Prime Minister was going to appoint a Committee to amend the Rules of Procedure, he should propose to contravene the spirit of the Rules already in force. If the Prime Minister could not make some more convincing statement as to the necessity of introducing other Business before Supply, it was to be hoped that, since he had already postponed the most important Vote in Supply, he might practically comply with the spirit of the Standing Order by postponing Supply altogether.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (*Mr. W. E. Gladstone*) said, that that was not a subject on which he should wish to have any difference of opinion with any large section of the House, or with the right hon. Baronet opposite (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*). Indeed, he thought it was the last subject on which he should have met with any such opposition. He would unreservedly grant that the request for precedence, if acceded to, should not be taken as an example for ordinary occasions; and if it was the general desire of the House that Committee of Supply ought not to come on at a late hour that evening, or that it should be altogether postponed, he should have no difficulty in waiving the point, and would not resist. But before making any engagement he would state to the House what he conceived to be the exact state of the case. By the necessity for making that Motion, he virtually submitted to the House the question whether they were, or were not, justified in an interference with the ordinary course of Business, which he admitted ought only to be done on special grounds, and ought not to be a precedent for all occasions. In the view of the Government, it was their duty—as they had not been permitted to make an application to Parliament for leave to charge the Revenues of India before the cost was incurred—it was their duty, in order to act in the spirit of the law, absolutely to take the very first day in their power for making that application; and when the right hon. Gentleman said, and said truly, that they ought to pay attention to the spirit of the Standing Orders of the House, then he (*Mr. Gladstone*) must say it appeared to be an occasion upon which an exclusive attention to the Standing Orders of the

House would place them in conflict with a much higher authority—namely, with that of the Realm. It was to give effect to a Statute of the Realm that they proposed that night to interfere with the ordinary course of Business as regarded Supply. With respect to the first Motion, he might say that in making that Motion at that early date he had been very much governed by a desire to show respect to the proceedings of the right hon. Gentleman himself. The right hon. Gentleman had thought the subject of Procedure one of such commanding importance that he had considered it was his duty to give Notice that immediately after the debate on the Address he should propose that the subject should take precedence of all other Business whatsoever. He (Mr. Gladstone) hardly expected, therefore, to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the minute criticisms which he had addressed to the House on the subject, especially when they considered what a wholesale invasion he was prepared to make, not only of the usual proceeding of the House, but of the rights and privileges of private Members, in order to give free scope to the discussion of this very important question. It was a question with respect to which the view they had taken was that it was undoubtedly of a very urgent character. Could they have asked the House to do what the right hon. Gentleman opposite proposed to do? He did not think they could. At the commencement of the Session that would have been too great and, he had almost said, too violent an invasion of the proceedings and of the powers of private Members. But, at the same time, Her Majesty's Government thought it prudent that this subject should not be materially delayed. What was the position in which they stood? Not that night alone, but all Government days for several weeks to come would probably be required for the discussion of Supply. That being so, if he did not propose the Committee on Procedure that night, he would be met with the same objection next Thursday or next Monday, or on any subsequent Government night. In point of fact, the objection of the right hon. Gentleman amounted to this—that the proposal with regard to the Committee on Procedure should be postponed for several weeks; because they had no power what-

ever of securing the introduction of a proposal of this kind, except by Motion in the early part of the evening for the suspension of the Orders of the Day. That was hardly a reasonable proposition, and not consistent with the extraordinary demand the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to make on the time of the House in connection with this question. It came to this, then—that Her Majesty's Government had no choice but either to make the proposal in this way, or to submit the question to what he might call indefinite postponement. That they could not consent to, for it would not have been just in regard to the question itself, nor fair or respectful to the right hon. Gentleman or the House. He might also add that there was a peculiarity in this matter. The Government was supposed to have the command of the management of the Business of the House on Mondays and Thursdays. That was hardly a correct supposition, however, for they had that command of arrangements only in respect of Orders of the Day. When it was necessary to make a Motion in precedence of the Orders of the Day, then application had to be made to the House for the purpose, and the judgment of the House taken on the subject. If it were the feeling of the House that the appointment of the Committee on Procedure should be postponed until Monday, or until the most urgent part of Supply was got rid of, the Government would not object. No doubt, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General in the late Administration (Sir Richard Webster), whom he saw in his place, would place a different construction upon the Act of Parliament from what he (Mr. Gladstone) had done; but he thought he might claim to know quite as much as the late Attorney General of the construction of an Act of Parliament, and as to whether that was the right construction to put upon the Act. Of this he was quite sure—there were two things—first of all, his (Mr. Gladstone's) construction was favourable to the authority of Parliament and to the control of the Executive; while the construction of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite removed the control over the Executive established by enactments; secondly, be his (Mr. Gladstone's) construction correct or incorrect, it was a construction which they

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had always entertained and acted upon ; and, that being so, it was their duty to ask the House of Commons to act upon it. These were the grounds on which he made the Motion, which he admitted to be exceptional ; but he thought the House would see that they were amply sufficient.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, that as the Prime Minister had made a direct reference to him, he would venture to lay before the House his view of the construction of this Act of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he (the Prime Minister) knew a great deal more about Acts of Parliament than he (Sir Richard Webster) did. He freely admitted that, so far as Parliamentary experience went, he could lay no claim to enter into competition with the right hon. Gentleman. But, on the other hand, he would submit to the House that, both from a lawyer's point of view, and from a layman's point of view, they must not regard the construction of an Act of Parliament as affected by anything that passed in Parliamentary debate. Looking to the Act itself, he could not but think that both the letter and the spirit were opposed to the construction the Prime Minister sought to put upon it. At the same time, he might be forgiven for saying that he thought it would be a serious disadvantage if a debate upon the subject of Burmah should take place at a time when the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India

Lord Randolph Churchill) could not be in his place in the House. Probably these two sections of the Act of Parliament were so much the children of the right hon. Gentleman that he could see nothing in them except the thoughts he wished to have expressed there. The 1st section related only to the communication to Parliament of the fact that orders had been sent for the employment of Her Majesty's Forces within three months if Parliament was sitting, and within one month of its re-assembling if it should not be sitting when the orders were sent. The other section to which reference had been made did not contain one single word as to the time within which the consent of Parliament should be obtained for the application of the Revenues of India to warlike purposes. The obligation of the 1st section having been fulfilled,

there was no time limited for the other to be complied with. He fully admitted the power of the Prime Minister to draw distinctions about words in a way which he (Sir Richard Webster) would not attempt, for a single moment, to cope with ; but he appealed to the House, and to his hon. and learned Friends on both sides of the House, whether there was one single word in the section of the Act in question with regard to the way in which the expenses in connection with Burmah should be met ? He contended, further, that there was not a single word in the section which related to the question of the time when the discussion should arise as to how the expenses should be met ; and he would ask the Prime Minister to point out to the House what word there was in the section which made it incumbent on the Government to raise that particular question to-night.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that the arguments of the hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General amounted to this—that the law had been already broken, and that they might break it a little further without criminalizing themselves to any great extent. What he (Sir George Campbell) would ask was, had the Revenues of India been applied for military operations beyond the frontier or not ? He believed it was undoubtedly the fact that Indian Revenue had been devoted to that purpose, and that the law had been broken by the late Government in that respect.

MR. T. M. HEALY rose to a point of Order. He wished to know from the Speaker whether the hon. Gentleman was in Order in discussing the general question upon the Motion that certain Notices of Motion should have precedence over the Order for Supply ?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in Order in discussing the Main Question upon the Motion now before the House. The Question now before the House is—

"That the Notices of Motions relating to Parliamentary Procedure and East India, Burma Expenses of Military Operations, have precedence of the Orders of the Day."

The only question is whether they shall be entitled to take precedence of the Order of the Day for going into Committee of Supply ; and whether, on Supply being called on, I should be

entitled to leave the Chair without Question being put?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: We are discussing whether it is, or is not, necessary to bring on these Motions before Supply; and it appears to me that, as the law has already been broken by the late Government—

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now travelling from the Question before the House.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Then I will not pursue the matter further.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that the Prime Minister had not mentioned all the courses which might have been adopted. In his opinion, it would have been a much more convenient—and not at all unusual—course to have been pursued if the right hon. Gentleman had made a Motion that all the Orders of the Day after the first Order should be postponed; and then, after the House had gone into Committee of Supply for either a long or a short time, he might have moved to report Progress in order to discuss this question. Such a course would not have broken either the spirit or the letter of the law.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR. CHARLES RUSSELL) said, he understood that the Motion was a regular one, according to the construction placed by the Speaker on the 21st Standing Order. The other point raised by his hon. and learned Friend (Sir Richard Webster) was that there was no immediate necessity or urgency for the Motion according to his interpretation of the 55th section of the Act 21 & 22 *Vic.* A question which was greatly discussed during the Attorney Generalship of the late Sir John Holker was as to how far that Statute permitted the Government to spend money without having obtained the previous consent of Parliament; and he owned that there was a considerable difficulty in regard to the construction of the Statute. On the whole, he came to the conclusion—and he still adhered to it—that the argument of Sir John Holker at the time the question was raised was a sound one as a matter of legal construction; for he (the Attorney General) conceived it was impossible not to see that cases would arise in which some steps involving an expenditure of money might be taken under Section 54 before it was possible to obtain the consent of the House of Commons. But the

question now before the House was a very different one. Everybody, he thought, would admit that, although, as a matter of strict construction, it might be legal to spend money without having got the antecedent consent of the House, yet the Government were bound, at the earliest moment after they had taken a step which was at least doubtful, to come before Parliament and obey the spirit of the Act. This was simply what the Government proposed to do now, and this course was in accordance with Constitutional practice. What was the objection raised on the opposite side? It was that the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) was not in his place. Well, whose fault was that? The noble Lord knew very well that the question would be brought forward, for he had the information given him on Thursday; but, instead of being in his place to discuss it—a matter which the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) thought so important—he had gone on a war expedition of another kind. There was no violation of the true spirit of the order of procedure in the course which the Government proposed to adopt on the present occasion; and he submitted that they were bound to take the earliest moment they could to communicate to the House the steps they had taken, and to obtain the consent of the House. In doing so, they simply obeyed the evident spirit of the Statute as it occurred to him.

SIR JOHN GORST said, he was rather disposed to agree with the hon. and learned Attorney General that it was the duty of Her Majesty's Government to come forward, at the first possible moment, to ask for a Resolution of this kind; but why, if they had wished to do so, did they not come forward last Friday? It was true that by a Standing Order Supply must be the first Order on a Friday; but the Government did not scruple to override a Standing Order for their own convenience, and they might have done it on Friday. They might just as well have overridden the Standing Order then as now; or they might have allowed the Committee of Supply to go on in its usual course till half-past 6 or 7 o'clock, and then have brought this Motion forward. The Speaker had ruled that the Motion was not in violation of the letter of the

Mr. Speaker

Standing Order; but would any hon. Member venture to assert that it was not contrary to the spirit of that Order? He protested against the postponement of Supply.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

SUPPLY [19TH FEBRUARY].

Mr. MAJORIBANKS and Mr. JACKS, Two of the Tellers in the Division upon Friday last upon Vote 15 in Committee of Supply, came to the Table and acquainted the House that they had erroneously reported the number of Noes as 136 instead of 146, which was the proper number corresponding with the Division List.

Ordered, That the Clerk do correct the said error in the Journal of this House by stating the number of Noes as 146 instead of 136.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE), in rising to move—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the question of Procedure in the House of Commons, and to report as to the amendment of existing Rules, and upon any New Rules which they may consider desirable for the efficient despatch of business."

said: The object of the Motion which I make to-night upon exceptional grounds—and it is a Motion of considerable urgency with regard to the Business of the House—is to give the best expedition and despatch that it is in the power of the Government to give to the examination of a question which has, I trust, ceased in substance to be a controversy between the two most numerous Parties in this House. I had better refer to what has taken place with regard to the subject during the course of the present Session. On the evening preceding the delivery of the Queen's Speech I received a courteous communication from the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), inclosing to me an important Paper, which embodied the views of the Government with respect to the subject of Procedure. The right hon. Gentleman invited me to make those views the subject of a previous and friendly communication with a view to the easier settlement of the matter.

He added that it was his intention, unless I wrote in reply to him that I accepted that offer, to lay a Paper containing the plans of the late Government upon the Table of the House on Thursday at the opening of the Session before the commencement of Business. At that moment—or at least within two or three hours afterwards—I was expecting the usual communication with respect to the Speech from the Throne which, by the courtesy of the Government, is made known to the Leader of any Party; and it was not possible for me, as I at once wrote to the right hon. Gentleman, in those circumstances, considering the importance of the topics before us and the variety of forms which the announcement of them might take, and which it was my duty to consider beforehand—it was impossible for me to make, or for me to ask one of my Friends among the leading men to make, any proper examination or statement about the important Paper of the right hon. Gentleman, or to meet, at so short a notice, his friendly proposal. When the right hon. Gentleman, in consequence of what he had said, laid his Paper on the Table of the House, as he was quite justified in doing, on the day when the Speech was delivered, we proceeded to examine that Paper immediately after the delivery of the Queen's Speech on the first night of the debate on the Address. We found that the proposal of the Government, in placing a great variety of particulars before us, naturally did not—and, indeed, could not—be expected to coincide with our views upon the whole of these particulars. But, nevertheless, we arrived at two conclusions—first, that it would be very desirable to make that plan the basis of further and friendly considerations; secondly, inasmuch as we did not see how private Members, independent Members, of the House could be asked to surrender their means and opportunities of bringing subjects of legislation before the House, we came to the conclusion that it would be well to refer the whole subject to a Select Committee; and that Select Committee we thought ought to be constituted upon a different basis from the ordinary basis, which prescribes a limit of 15 Members. We thought it ought to be a Select Committee of very much more considerable extent, perhaps consisting of as many, or more than twice that number, so as

to give free representation of opinion to the various quarters and sections of the House. Sir, in point of fact, we were desirous not to lose what appeared to us an excellent opportunity of arriving at a discussion of this rather difficult question, necessarily giving rise to a good deal of scope for even friendly differences. We were anxious not to lose the opportunity of approaching this question in a friendly spirit, if it were possible to do so. If this were the 21st of January, the question of reference to a Committee might be a more open question than it is at the present moment; because on the 21st of January, and with the command of the time of the House from that date onwards, there would have been, for any Government, a considerable choice with regard to the taking of Votes in Supply, and a certain portion of Government time might have been devoted, not without advantage, to the consideration of Procedure. But in the condition in which the Government found themselves on taking Office last week it was impossible to do that; and the alternative was either to postpone the subject of Procedure until, perhaps, the crowding of Sessional Business had become greater than at the opening of the Session, or to take the course of asking the House to refer the subject to a Select Committee. From the first of these courses we were dissuaded by the feeling that, in the first place, such a postponement would not be agreeable to the sense entertained by us for a long time past of the importance of a settlement of this matter, nor would it have been agreeable to the sense so distinctly manifested by the Government in Office a month ago with regard to the importance of an immediate and effective prosecution of this subject. Moreover, this circumstance offered us a favourable opportunity, and enables us to form a sanguine hope and expectation, that the proceedings of a Committee of this kind would not be very virtual, and would be useful in results. The question of the devolution of Bills, which was proposed in the plan of the late Government, and which was fully raised by them, opens up a channel through which I believe that we shall proceed with the greatest hope of success in the important business of expediting the performance of the weighty tasks which are incumbent upon this House; and never before has there been a period

Mr. W. E. Gladstone

when there was so favourable a prospect of a friendly and effective handling of that subject. With regard to coercive or penal procedure, I certainly still adhere to the opinion that not a great deal is to be hoped from further progress in that direction. [Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Hear, hear!] I am very glad to see that that opinion has the sanction of the right hon. Gentleman. But, in regard to amicable arrangements for multiplying the means and instruments at the command of the House, I am sanguine enough to believe that we may perform a very great public service by putting that mode of procedure into operation. These are the general grounds on which we propose to refer the subject to a Select Committee, and thereby to give effect, so far as circumstances permit, to the intentions entertained by us, and also by a large number of Gentlemen on the other side of the House. It will be asked of me what course I should propose that Her Majesty's Government should take in respect to the proceedings of this Committee? It will be felt and thought that a Government proposing the appointment of a Select Committee on a subject of this kind charges itself with a great responsibility. It charges itself with the responsibility of making known at once and in full to the Committee the views which it entertains upon the subject, with all the points of the greatest importance. That, Sir, is the course which we intend to take. The Committee will not be bound to have regard to any one Paper or any one piece of evidence in particular; but, no doubt, considering the importance of the Paper laid upon the Table by the right hon. Gentleman, that Paper must have a prominent place in whatever attention the Committee may give to the subject. The right hon. Gentleman may ask whether we propose to submit a Paper of our own, displacing or attempting to displace that Paper. We do not propose to do so, and for this plain reason—that with regard to the main proposals of that Paper we consider ourselves in sympathy with them. But the right hon. Gentleman may make one further demand upon us. I have already said that there are points in which we think some addition, some substitution, some change should be made. And the right hon. Gentleman will ask—"Is it your intention, when you come into the

Committee, to lay before it the views of the Government upon those points?" In answer to him, I must say, in the most explicit and unequivocal manner, it is our intention to do so. It is really an acknowledgment which we feel to be due to the spirit in which the subject was considered by the late Government that we should not make what would be an unfair and untrue appearance of setting up a rival plan when we do not propose a rival plan. But, on the other hand, it is necessary for the right hon. Gentleman and for those who may represent the framers of the plan to know, and to know at once, what are the points, or what are the principal and particular points, upon which we should be prepared to propose modifications of the plan; but it is, however, quite plain that I should be wasting the time of the House were I to enter at this time upon particulars. Were we engaged now in sharp controversy upon every one of the leading items of the subject of Procedure it might be necessary that I should make a statement with regard to those leading items. It might even be necessary that I should, as it were, make my case upon those leading items in order to justify our proposals; but we have before us the broad fact—in the first place, that much time was spent by the late Parliament upon the subject; in the second place, that it is generally felt that the work, as it was left by the late Parliament, was not complete; and, in the third place, that we have now a great degree of concurrence, not only as to the need of resuming, but as to the mode of resuming, the subject; and I am happy to think that, even since I rose, I find that concurrence to be more positive and extensive than I had thought it to be, because we appear to be, in a great degree, at one in the opinion that it is not by penal and restrictive measures—not by a severe Code of Procedure, but by the judicious use of our means of multiplying our instruments of action—that we should really make the greatest and most effective progress. If there is any point upon which the right hon. Gentleman opposite or any Member of the House desires to be informed as to our views and intentions, I shall be most happy to supply it. We accept the responsibility for the Committee we propose. We shall endeavour to deal with it as a

Committee proposed on the responsibility of the Government. We shall make known to the Committee at once the plan that we propose to adopt, though the main portions I believe to be contained in the plan proposed by the late Administration. I believe that, with these particulars before them, the House will be perfectly ready to judge whether this proposal is a right proposal or not. Little advantage will be gained by entering upon the particulars of Procedure in Debate in the House. I am in hopes that it may not be found necessary to spend a great deal of the time of the House in the discussion of the Motion which the House has agreed to entertain. The grounds on which we propose this Committee I believe to be clearly before you, and I conclude by moving the Resolution of which I have given Notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the question of Procedure in the House of Commons, and to report as to the amendment of existing Rules, and upon any New Rules which they may consider desirable for the efficient despatch of business."—(*Mr. W. E. Gladstone.*)

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Sir, I wish, on my own behalf and that of my Colleagues forming the late Cabinet, to acknowledge the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman has alluded to our labours in this matter. It is a fair return for the spirit in which we approached the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends when we were in Office; and I would only say that it is a most satisfactory contrast to not a few speeches made by hon. Members now sitting on the Government Bench during the late Election campaign in regard to our conduct on this question. During the whole of the late autumn there was no more favourite subject of accusation against myself and my Colleagues than that we were the friends of Obstruction, and were determined to resist, or at any rate not to support, any alterations of Procedure which would make this House more efficient for its Business. Now, in contradistinction to those accusations, and I may venture to say in complete refutation of them, we have the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues frankly taking up our proposals for the amendment of Procedure, and saying that they are so satisfactory that the Government

propose, with some small alterations, to recommend them to the adoption of a Select Committee of the House. I trust that that will be remembered in future, as a proof that this kind of accusation brought against a political Party has sometimes no real foundation in fact. We have shown, by our action in this matter, that we are as anxious to improve the Procedure of the House of Commons, and to make the House of Commons, of which we are proud, thoroughly efficient for its purpose as any Liberal or Radical who ever addressed a constituency. I quite agree with what fell from the right hon. Gentleman as to the question of coercive or penal Rules. It was not our intention, in framing the Standing Orders which I placed on the Paper, to deal either with individual obstruction or misconduct on the part of Members of this House, or even with the greater offence of obstruction of Business by any Party or section of a Party. These are matters with which, to some extent, our existing Standing Orders deal; and if it should be at any future time necessary to take any further steps in that direction, I think those steps must be of a completely different character to any that are included in the proposed new Standing Orders. The objects with which they were framed are simply these—to enable the House to spend its own time to the most profitable purpose, to put a reasonable check, consistently with the liberty of debate, on the undue protraction of debate, and on that garrulity to which I am afraid we are all too prone, and to enable us to transact the Business of the country with somewhat less tear and wear than we suffer from our existing Parliamentary life. Those are the objects, as I understand from the right hon. Gentleman, with which, on behalf of the Government, he proposes the appointment of this Committee. He took some exception to the mode in which we had undertaken to deal with this matter. It appeared to us, I must say, that it would be better, considering the importance of this subject, remembering that the right hon. Gentleman himself had placed it on the threshold of all the subjects which, in his opinion, the new Parliament ought to undertake, and had forcibly observed that—

“Those who were so keen for legislation on one subject or another should recollect that, with regard to each and all of them, the primary

question was as to the sound working condition of the great instrument by which all legislation is accomplished.”

It occurred to us that the first Business to be done by this House, subject, of course, to matters of great urgency, or those which had to be dealt with within a certain time, was to consider this subject of Procedure. Therefore it was I asked the House, on behalf of the late Government, to give the question precedence. Instead of that, the right hon. Gentleman has proposed the appointment of a Committee. I do not rise now for the purpose of objecting to the appointment of a Committee; but I must say I think our proposal was the best, because it insured, I think, a more early decision upon this most important subject. I remember that on February 20, 1882, when last the right hon. Gentleman called the attention of Parliament to the matter, he then alluded to the numerous Committees which the House had appointed to consider the question of its own Procedure. He told the House that—

“There have been more Committees of this House upon this subject than upon any other matter. There have been 14 Committees since the Reform Act, or one Committee in every three Sessions and a-half. There have been seven more Committees upon Private Procedure, which is practically part of the subject, making 21 Committees in all, or an average of a new Committee in every two and a-half years.”—(3 *Hansard*, [266] 1134.)

And what was the result? Why, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman—

“These Committees, never leading to adequate results, have now, for many years past, taken effect in what I may, for practical purposes, call total failure.”

Now we have another Select Committee appointed. It differs, I admit, from previous Committees in this, if I may accurately interpret the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman—that in spite of the wide terms of the Order of Reference which he has moved, it will not be expected or asked to deal with the many and varied sides of this great subject; but that it will have placed before it, on the authority of the Government, a series of Resolutions which will be framed by the Government; that it will be guided by the Government in its deliberations; and that the Government will then be responsible for carrying its proposals into effect. If that be so, I admit, although I do not think much practical good will

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach

be gained from the previous consideration of the proposals by a Select Committee, yet that we have some kind of guarantee that something more is likely to come out of its labours than out of the labours of its predecessors. I will only say that, as far as I and my Colleagues in the late Cabinet are concerned, we made the proposals which I placed on the Paper in no Party spirit whatever. We made them after the fullest and most careful consideration, after much consultation with you, Sir, and the authorities of the House; we made them on our responsibility; and what we proposed in Office we shall be prepared, to the best of our ability, to support in Opposition. We shall enter the Committee in that spirit; and although I should have much preferred that the right hon. Gentleman had brought forward his proposals for discussion in the House, still, as far as I can, I will do my best to bring the course which the right hon. Gentleman has suggested to a successful issue, in the hope that, by so doing, we may really promote the efficiency and usefulness of the House of Commons.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, the House and the country, in his opinion, were to be congratulated on the spirit in which the vexed question of Parliamentary Procedure was being approached. It was not now a Party question, but a Parliamentary one, and that was satisfactory. When the subject was formerly discussed, irritation was caused by the attempt to coerce the House and limit the rights of free speech. That policy was now to be abandoned, and he rejoiced at it. Everyone was agreed that the work of Parliament had increased and was increasing, and that new modes of Procedure required to be adopted; and he was glad to see that the Prime Minister conceived that these modes could best be found in conciliation and mutual forbearance rather than in restraint and restriction. Thus far, he agreed with what had been said; but he could scarcely say that he was as hopeful as to the result of the Committee as the Government seemed to be. The Committee would be appointed, and 15 or 30 Gentlemen, as the case might be, would argue out the subject in much detail upstairs, sitting for that purpose for many days, perhaps for many weeks,

and then it would all come back and be argued out afresh in that House. There was no subject that more men spoke on than Procedure, and it usually happened that those who thought least spoke oftenest and longest. The Rules of the House, like the rules of a Club, were considered to be matters that everybody understood; but if the Government thought that the Committee would help to bring about an understanding he had no objection to its being tried, though he was not hopeful as to the result. His main object in rising was to say to hon. Members that it was quite possible, without any New Rules, to contribute very largely to the better progress of Business. There were many amendments that could be put in force, without Rules, by mutual understanding. Take, for example, the custom of giving Notice of Questions. Members read out long Questions on purely local subjects. Many of those who did that declaimed against Obstruction. Yet the reading of those Questions was virtually a kind of Obstruction, although it might be unconscious. There was no necessity for the Questions to be read out. They could be taken to the Clerk at the Table and printed in the Order Papers. Everything that was gained by a Question would be gained by that process. A quarter of an hour a night was sometimes spent in listening to Notices of Questions of that kind, and a quarter of an hour at the commencement of the proceedings was important. Again, the House was not interested in the Questions, the only people who were so being the Members who read them and a section of their constituents. If the new Members who were anxious to advance the proceedings of Parliament would act on that plan, there would be an immediate improvement made in the Procedure without any Committee or without any discussion. There was another suggestion he would offer. All parties were agreed that the answers to the kind of Questions he had indicated might be printed and distributed with the Votes. There was no Order of the House required for doing that; and if the Speaker and the Leader of the House could agree to allow purely Departmental Questions to be replied to in that way, a further saving of time would be effected. He was quite sure that if Members would, in that and many other like ways, have

regard to the general welfare, and not to the gratification of personal objects, the usefulness and force of Parliament would be very materially increased without any of the elaborate machinery that was sometimes put in operation.

MR. STEVENSON expressed his approval of the course taken, and hoped something would immediately be done to save the time of the House. He hoped that the Prime Minister, in the Resolutions to be submitted to the Committee, would not overlook the great difficulties, amounting almost to absolute impossibility, which private Members at present suffered under in getting legislation through the House. There were between 100 and 200 Bills before the House, introduced by private Members, and, under the present Rules of Procedure, there was no certainty that any one of them would pass, if persistently opposed by one or two Members. He urged, therefore, that the Rules of Procedure on Wednesdays should be thoroughly reformed.

MR. RYLANDS said, he entirely concurred in the course which the Government had decided to take; and he hoped the Select Committee would enter on the discussion of the proposed New Rules, not in a Party spirit, but with a desire, as far as they were able, to promote the conduct of Business in the House of Commons. They could all remember the time spent on this question in the last Parliament. He remembered the Autumn Session, with the large amount of irritation it produced in the minds of many Members on both sides of the House. On that occasion the Rules were half crushed down their throats; and, indeed, there was little or no independent action in criticizing some of those Rules. It was made a Party affair, and he always thought that was a most unfortunate state of things. The result was that the New Rules, being passed without the concurrence of the Opposition and the suppressed dislike of many Liberal Members, were not loyally adopted by the House, and they had been practically inoperative. They were entering on this discussion in a different spirit; and the proposals would be met, not in a Party spirit, but with a desire to promote the conduct of Business. He considered it a very desirable thing that, in the first instance, they should have a

strong Committee to thoroughly thresh out the proposals made by the Government. At the same time, care should be taken of the rights and privileges of private Members.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE said, it was touching to hear from his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Rylands) of the pressure which he was under during the Autumn Session. That was all over now; and he, for one, hoped there would be no Party spirit on this occasion. He could not doubt, after the language of the Prime Minister, that the proposal was brought forward in good faith; but he agreed with the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen) that the Committee would not lead to any practical result unless its deliberations were kept within reasonable limits. He hoped the Committee would not be abnormally large, and that those who would have to make up the Committee would resist the pressure which would be put on them and keep the numbers of the Committee down. For his own part, he hoped that, at no very distant date, they would arrive at a conclusion by means of which they would be enabled to get through the practical Business of the House, and find themselves in bed at an hour which was more likely to promote their health than the hours which they were now obliged to keep.

MR. WHITBREAD said, that the House appeared to be willing to accept the reference of the question to a Committee. That was, no doubt, a correct decision; for the House was not a good body to thresh out the details of such proposals as these. He did not share the hopelessness of the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken (Sir William Hart Dyke) with regard to the results of the labours of the Committee. It was quite true that many Committees on the subject had sat since the Reform Bill with but little result; but the reason of that was that the pressure on the House had not been so great, nor had the scandal of arrears of Business before the House been so marked. There had also been a very strong feeling of reverence for the Rules under which they always had worked, and they had been unwilling to lay their hands upon those Rules in a really reforming spirit. But it must be remembered that what came out of the Committee was

Mr. Joseph Cowen

very much affected by the spirit of those who went into the Committee. There was now a strong feeling, both in that House and throughout the country, that their Procedure was in need of drastic reform. With regard to the question of the numbers, he thought that it should be a large Committee. He quite agreed that a small Committee might be able to get through their business quicker than a large one; but they must remember that there were two things to be thought of—they had not only to thresh out a satisfactory scheme of Procedure, but also to get it accepted by the House. If they could get a large number of acceptances in a Committee, it was certain that the scheme would be more likely to be received by the House. There was another urgent and vital part of the Business to which he wished shortly to refer. Ever since he had been a Member of that House, it had been a matter of complaint that Select Committees before whom great public questions were raised consisted too much of a repetition of the same names. Too many Members were called upon repeatedly in the same Session to serve on different Committees, while too many were left out altogether. There was power and vigour enough in that Assembly to deal even with such a stupendous task as that before them, if they availed themselves of the whole powers of the House. But, under the system of selecting Committees by arrangement between the two Front Benches, it was impossible to avoid the old evil of having the same name recurring over and over again on different Committees. Everyone who had charge of any subject, or any Bill, was always anxious to get the most experienced men he knew; and such Members were called upon to serve on Committees until they were weary, while a large portion of the House was entirely left out. In that way a large portion of the House did not take its fair share of the Business, while a large amount of practical experience was not made use of. What he hoped to see was, some plan by which the whole House might be employed on Committee work, and by which every Member of the House should serve on some Committee for the purpose of dealing with those subjects which could not be dealt with by the whole House. He fully agreed that it would be of great advantage to get rid of

some of the useless stages of their proceedings.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he hoped that they would be able to get a Committee which would be thoroughly representative of the general views of the House upon this important question, and not merely those of the two Front Benches. He would suggest whether the Prime Minister should not lay upon the Table his own plan of Procedure, so that it might be considered along with that of the late Government. He was glad that he had heard no suggestion made as to any further application of the Rules with regard to closing the debate after a few Members only on each side had spoken.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) had anticipated almost everything that he (the Marquess of Hartington) had desired to say with reference to the appointment of this Committee. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member that, in his opinion, the Government had taken a wise course, and that it was desirable, under the circumstances, that the Committee should be a large one. No doubt, a small Committee might succeed in drawing up a plan as thoroughly as a larger one; but, as his hon. Friend had pointed out, the object of a Committee of this kind was not only to draw up a plan, but also to endeavour to bring before the House the greatest possible amount of agreement of representative Members of the House. It was not necessary to say more on that point; but he wished to call attention to one subject which it was fully as necessary to consider. There had, up to the present time, been a general disposition to object to any extension of what had been called "coercive or restrictive regulations." He was entirely in favour of remedial legislation, in preference to coercive or restrictive legislation, if the former would accomplish the object; but, in his opinion, it would be unwise that anything should be said which would make it absolutely impossible for the House to consider the question of the power of the closure as it had operated up to the present year, and as it might be extended or otherwise. Having had two years' experience of that new system, it appeared to him it would be certainly necessary that any Com-

mittee which had to investigate the Rules of Procedure should discuss and consider what had been, up to the present time, the operation of the Rule, and whether it had been so far successful, or whether it could be in any way amended. And in view of the proposal of his right hon. Friend, it appeared to him to be all the more necessary that the consideration of the question of closure should not be excluded from the scope of the Committee. It appeared to him that if the House were going to consider the closing of its deliberations at 12 o'clock, or half-past 12, or at any fixed hour, it was absolutely necessary, if they did not desire that Business should be a great deal more obstructed instead of being less obstructed, that they should consider whether the power of closure could not be made more effective. In fact, he could not conceive that the Members of the late Government themselves, when they laid these Resolutions on the Table, could have thought that they could lend them any improvement for the transaction of Business, unless they were accompanied by some improvement of the Rule relating to the closure. He could very well understand that they (the Opposition) might not have liked to meddle with that subject themselves; but he thought they must have anticipated that a suggestion of that kind would have emanated from some part of the House. He did not want to discuss in what way the closure ought to be amended at the present time. He did not think it was necessary that they should discuss any of the Resolutions. All he wanted was that it should not be understood that that subject was to be excluded from the consideration of the Committee that might be appointed to consider the question; because, in his opinion, it was intimately and very closely connected with the proposed Resolutions that, as his right hon. Friend told them, were to form practically the basis of the Reference to the Committee.

SIR JOHN GORST said, he hoped that some arrangement would be made by which the proposals of the Government, which were in the nature of Amendments to the scheme of the late Government, would be made public, and that thus they might have the advantage of that publicity which the proposals of the late Administration obtained. They

should be printed with the Votes and Proceedings of the House from day to day, as they were decided on.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, he was glad to notice that the present question appeared to be entirely removed from Party influences. The longer they were kept from those influences, the more hope there would be of the efforts of the Committee being brought to a successful issue. He wished to make a practical suggestion. The extension of the franchise last Parliament took place principally by a friendly consultation between the two Parties; and he would submit to the Prime Minister that, as the Conservative Party had placed its proposals before the country, if the proposals of the present Government at all assumed in Committee the appearance of being opposite proposals, then, in a very short time, no matter how the Committee was constituted, Party feeling would arise. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would consider whether, by consultation with the Leaders of the Conservative Party, he might not eliminate all questions which might lead to such deplorable results. He would further suggest that there could be no Procedure unless there were Members in the House to take part in it; and there could be no Members continuously present as long as they were accommodated so badly as at present. He thought they should appeal to the Prime Minister to endeavour to ascertain how strong was the feeling in the House on this matter; and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would agree soon to appoint another Committee to investigate the subject.

MR. GREGORY said, he had often heard it stated that it would be highly inconvenient for business men to attend the Sittings of the House if they commenced at 2 o'clock. At those periods of the year when it was usual for the House to meet at 2 o'clock twice a-week, he, though a business man himself, found no difficulty in attending.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER said, he strongly objected, as a man of business, to the proposal that the House should meet at 2 o'clock. Two o'clock to 4 were two of the principal business hours of the day, and he declared that the proposed alteration would be most inconvenient; and he would be surprised to find that the Legal Profession did not

The Marquess of Hartington

give a similar opinion. He would point out that Ministers did their official work up to 3, when they received deputations, so that they might be in their places by 4 o'clock. He also had a strong objection to a regular October Session. They all knew that any man who sought a seat in the House must be ready when the House was summoned to give up his time to the public service; but, at the same time, they understood that to be on the supposition that, in ordinary times, the House would meet in February and prorogue in August. Unofficial Members of the House having discharged their duties for six months might surely be allowed the remaining six months for business or relaxation. He apprehended the meeting in October would be a very great inconvenience, and he hoped the Committee would give no sanction to it.

CAPTAIN FIELD said, that the House consisted of 670 Members, of whom 320 were old and 350 new Members; and he thought that before the latter were called upon to take part in the reform of the Procedure of the House they ought to be afforded an opportunity of learning what the old Rules were. He was a new Member, and the first thing he did as such was to endeavour to obtain a copy of the Standing Orders and Rules of the House; but he was told there were none available. He was further informed that he might go to a bookseller, and purchase a copy; but he declined to do so. *Laughter.* He maintained that he was entitled to be supplied with a copy; but whether he ought to apply for it to the Speaker, or to the First Commissioner of Works, or to the Serjeant-at-Arms, he was at a loss to know. All he could say was that if, in the course of his career, he should commit any breach of Order, he should plead as an excuse that he had been unable to obtain a copy of the Standing Orders from the authorities of the House.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE said, he ought to answer the appeals made to him. In the first place, with regard to what fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, he had perfectly understood the spirit and intention with which he (Mr. Gladstone) had spoken. Their desire was to propose a Committee upon a scale which they deemed to be most agreeable to the

ideas of the House; and he had been able to gather some light on that subject from the course of the present debate. They would endeavour to make, with regard to the Chairman of the Committee, that arrangement which they thought would be most likely to command approbation and confidence. With regard to the appeal made to him to publish the Amendments which the Government might propose, or additions, or the variations, whatever they might be, that the Government might desire to recommend to the House, there was a great deal to be said in favour of that proposal; but he would rather not give a positive answer upon it at the present moment, because he thought it was a matter that perhaps the Committee itself would be best able to deal with. They might be inclined to publish, not only the suggestions of the Government, but other suggestions also, and he did not at all see any objection to the proposal, or to the spirit in which it had been made; but he thought perhaps the Committee itself would best deal with its consideration. Then, as to the appeal made by his noble Friend the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) as to what was commonly called the closure, undoubtedly when he said that, in his opinion, the House had more to expect from multiplying its means of action, and judiciously and thriftily applying them, than it had from coercive and restrictive proceedings, he did not mean to go beyond the utterance of a general opinion. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) was under the impression that he (Mr. Gladstone) was the person to whose unnatural and perverse attachment to what was called the closure it was due that the House had to occupy so much time upon it during the year 1882. If the right hon. Gentleman were acquainted with the internal history of those proceedings, he would find that he was far wide of the mark in what he had just stated.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: I spoke of the irritation consequent upon it.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE said, he did not know if he produced the irritation; but he quite agreed there was a good deal of it, and he hoped there would be none of it on that or any proximate occasion. He had not intended to give

more than a general opinion on the matter; but, obviously, he would suppose, the Committee could not refuse to look into a question of that kind. All he could then say was, that neither in regard to that nor any other point could he conceive that they could wish to enforce beforehand considerations upon a Committee which he believed would be so constituted as to deserve and carry along with it the fullest confidence of the House.

Motion agreed to.

Select Committee appointed, "to consider the question of Procedure in the House of Commons, and to report as to the amendment of existing Rules, and upon any New Rules which they may consider desirable for the efficient despatch of business."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

EAST INDIA, BURMAH (EXPENSES OF MILITARY OPERATIONS).

RESOLUTION.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH), in rising to move—

"That, Her Majesty having directed a Military expedition of Her forces charged upon Indian revenues to be despatched against the King of Ava, this House consents that the revenues of India shall be applied to defray the expenses of the Military operations which may be carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian possessions,"

said, that he must claim some indulgent allowance as it was only a fortnight since he entered the India Office. The statement which he would make to the House would be short and simple. It was the intention of the Government, following the course announced by their Predecessors, to propose to both Houses of Parliament that there should be a Joint Committee upon the Acts relating to the Government of India; and it would be part of the duty of the Committee to consider whether the meaning of the 54th and 55th sections of the Government of India Act was perfectly clear, or whether anything could be done to remove ambiguities which existed according to many learned authorities. Meanwhile, the Government, acting in the spirit of the Act, sought, at the earliest possible moment, the sanction of Parliament to the step which had been taken of applying the Revenues of India for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the Burmese

Mr. W. E. Gladstone

War. It was not necessary for him to detain the House with any regular narrative of the events that led to the annexation of Burmah. King Theebaw ascended the Throne in 1878, and, not to go further back, ever since that time the relations of the Indian Government with that of Burmah had been anything but satisfactory. The history of those relations was contained in the Blue Book. Matters culminated in the Ultimatum which was sent by the Viceroy in October last year to Mandalay. That Ultimatum contained certain terms to which the Burmese Government refused to accede, and Theebaw issued a hostile Proclamation threatening to efface the heretic Christian barbarians, and to conquer and annex their country. On November 11 the late Government ordered the Military Expedition to Upper Burmah which Sir Harry Prendergast commanded, and on January 1 Theebaw's Kingdom was annexed under instructions from Her Majesty's late Ministers. When Parliament met it was announced in the Speech from the Throne that Her Majesty had decided that the most certain method of insuring peace and order in those regions was to be found in the permanent incorporation of the Kingdom of Ava with the British Empire. What the present Government had to do was to deal with the situation so created. When they acceded to Office the Viceroy (the Earl of Dufferin) was on his way to Mandalay. Her Majesty's present Government awaited the opinion of Lord Dufferin formed on the spot. He had not gone so committed as to prevent his forming an impartial opinion, and he had now telegraphed a very clear and a very strong opinion in regard to Burmah; and acting upon his opinion, and in view of the situation created by the Proclamation of Annexation, and the announcement in Her Majesty's Speech, Her Majesty's Government had had no doubt whatever as to the course which they should pursue; the annexation effected under the late Government must be maintained, and consequential administrative measures had been authorized. He did not know that he could give much idea of what those administrative measures would be. There could, however, be no doubt that Upper Burmah would be administered under the authority of the Viceroy; and it was hoped that a system

of administration might be introduced suitable to the peculiarities of the country and the people of Upper Burmah, and not burdensome in cost. The Viceroy was perfecting a scheme with these objects; but Her Majesty's Government were not yet so fully in possession of his views as to make a more explicit statement at present. Having said that much, he thought the House would expect him to supply some information as to our relations with the great Chinese Empire, our neighbour. With regard to that subject, he need hardly say that Her Majesty's Government were most anxious to show a thoroughly friendly disposition towards China, and he had every reason to believe that that desire was heartily reciprocated by that country. It would be premature, however, to say anything about the precise arrangement that might be come to between this country and China; but the Government were hopeful that the negotiations begun a little while ago would be brought to a perfectly satisfactory termination. As to the cholera, about which there had been one or two rather alarming statements, calculated to make people at home anxious as to the health of the troops, British and Indian, now employed in Upper Burmah, he was able to give most reassuring information to the House. Between November and January a slight outbreak of the malady did occur; but there had been no case of cholera among the troops in Upper Burmah since the first week in January. With respect to the cost of the Expedition, he was happy to say that the estimates which had reached them from the Viceroy at Mandalay, although they were necessarily rough, and perhaps to some extent conjectural, confirmed the statement made by the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India, the estimate of the Viceroy being that the total cost of the Expedition would not exceed £300,000, even if it should reach that figure. The Secretary of State desired that the most ample recognition should be given of the prompt and complete manner in which the Civil and Military Authorities both of the Indian and Madras Governments had equipped, organized, and despatched this Expedition. He desired also to recognize the able conduct of Mr. Bernard, our Chief Commissioner in British Burmah, during the whole of this affair. He was anxious

to acknowledge the promptitude of General Prendergast and Colonel Sladen in their Expedition up the river and entrance into Mandalay. And, lastly, he wished to say a word as regarded the efficiency of the Indian and British troops in many duties often of a harassing character, and to acknowledge the ready assistance given by the Naval Commander-in-Chief and his forces in furnishing a Naval Brigade, whose services were worthy of all praise. He had already given some information upon a very mournful subject—namely, the conduct of the Provost Marshal at some executions in Upper Burmah. Further information would be given as soon as possible. In a communication received from the Viceroy that evening, he stated that, after inquiries, it was certainly untrue that the troops shot persons indiscriminately who had been made prisoners. Those shot at Mandalay during the past six weeks had been cases of convicted offenders, under sentence by civil officers. The Viceroy explained that occasionally, when taken red-handed, the leaders of marauding parties were shot; but whenever that was done, it was in every case only upon the advice of the civil officer accompanying the column intrusted with the duty of suppressing these dacoits and so-called insurgents, both of whom robbed and murdered innocent villagers. They were cruel and barbarous, the Viceroy said, not to us, but to these innocent villagers. This dacoity had been an old evil in Upper Burmah, but exceptionally ripe under Theebaw's bad government. So far as the Viceroy could ascertain, there had been no undue severity on the part of our troops; and he spoke of the calmness and humanity of General Prendergast, and said Mr. Bernard would not countenance excessive punishment. For the safety of the country, and for the happiness of its inhabitants, it was absolutely necessary to suppress these gangs of robbers, and to punish these robbers and murderers. Further, the Viceroy said that the pacification of the country was being effected as rapidly as possible, although the fact that a large part of the country was covered with jungle rendered the work exceptionally difficult. Coming to the Amendment of which the hon. and learned Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) had given Notice, he observed

that his hon. Friend proposed to move that it was unjust to defray the expenses of this Expedition out of the Indian Revenues. He (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) did not know by what arguments his hon. and learned Friend proposed to support the Amendment. But he anticipated that one of these would be that this was a war for British trade. There could be no doubt that the annexation might have an effect on British trade; he hoped, indeed, that an improvement in the trade of the country might be one of its effects. But a war undertaken for that purpose would have been unjustifiable. Her Majesty's Government was, however, prepared to deny that the war was undertaken for any such purpose. The real ground of the Viceroy's action, as Her Majesty's Government concluded on reading the Papers, was the protection and safety of British Burmah, and of Her Majesty's other Dominions in that part of the world. The Government of King Theebaw had been endeavouring for some time past to establish political relations with other Powers; and its object was clearly to annoy the Government of India. It was obvious that the results of such conduct would eventually be dangerous to the Indian Empire; and it was evident that it was largely on that ground that the Viceroy based his action. If that view were correct, he (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) ventured to contend, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, that the British taxpayers could not be fairly asked to pay the costs of this Expedition, and that it was properly payable out of the Revenues of India. There were two other arguments which might be used against his hon. and learned Friend, though upon the first he did not lay much stress. This was a comparatively small sum. So far as the information sent by the Viceroy was concerned, the expenses of the Expedition were, as he had before observed, estimated not to exceed £300,000. Not only, therefore, was this a comparatively small affair, but the Expedition was distinctly undertaken for the defence of British Burmah and other Possessions in that part of Asia. On the other hand, there was no ground for laying the burden of this war on the British taxpayer. But there was a further argument for placing this burden on the Indian Revenue which he would place before the House. For

Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth

many years British Burmah had been a source of very considerable Revenue to India. Here was an Expedition undertaken for the defence of British Burmah, and so far as the taxpayers of the rest of India were concerned, they were only asked to make a small return out of this large annual contribution. As to the probable future of Upper Burmah, he did not wish to put before the House any very rosy or sanguine view regarding the development of trade likely to spring from our annexation of Upper Burmah. It was safer not to indulge in prophetic anticipations, which were often not realized, and he would not hold out any exaggerated anticipations. There was, however, one fact before the House which was of an encouraging character, and which would form much more solid ground than any anticipation he could put forward, and that was the fact that the population, the Revenue, and the trade of British Burmah had increased enormously since it had become a British Province. In 1862-3 the population of British Burmah was 2,500,000, while in 1883-4 it amounted to 3,700,000. The Revenue in the earlier period he had mentioned did not reach £1,000,000; but in 1883-4 it was nearly £3,000,000. At the former period, the trade of the country, including imports and exports, was under £2,000,000; whereas, in 1883, it approached £10,500,000. That was to say, the Revenue of British Burmah had been trebled in the period referred to, while its trade had been more than quintupled. If any such results should be obtained in Upper Burmah, then this House would have very good reason to be satisfied. The hon. Baronet concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, Her Majesty having directed a Military expedition of Her forces charged upon Indian revenues to be despatched against the King of Ava, this House consents that the revenues of India shall be applied to defray the expenses of the Military operations which may be carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian possessions." — (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth.)

Mr. HUNTER, in rising to move, as an Amendment—

"That this House is of opinion that it would be unjust to defray the expense of the Military operations in the Kingdom of Ava out of the revenues of India,"

of administration might be introduced suitable to the peculiarities of the country and the people of Upper Burmah, and not burdensome in cost. The Viceroy was perfecting a scheme with these objects; but Her Majesty's Government were not yet so fully in possession of his views as to make a more explicit statement at present. Having said that much, he thought the House would expect him to supply some information as to our relations with the great Chinese Empire, our neighbour. With regard to that subject, he need hardly say that Her Majesty's Government were most anxious to show a thoroughly friendly disposition towards China, and he had every reason to believe that that desire was heartily reciprocated by that country. It would be premature, however, to say anything about the precise arrangement that might be come to between this country and China; but the Government were hopeful that the negotiations begun a little while ago would be brought to a perfectly satisfactory termination. As to the cholera, about which there had been one or two rather alarming statements, calculated to make people at home anxious as to the health of the troops, British and Indian, now employed in Upper Burmah, he was able to give most reassuring information to the House. Between November and January a slight outbreak of the malady did occur; but there had been no case of cholera among the troops in Upper Burmah since the first week in January. With respect to the cost of the Expedition, he was happy to say that the estimates which had reached them from the Viceroy at Mandalay, although they were necessarily rough, and perhaps to some extent conjectural, confirmed the statement made by the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India, the estimate of the Viceroy being that the total cost of the Expedition would not exceed £300,000, even if it should reach that figure. The Secretary of State desired that the most ample recognition should be given of the prompt and complete manner in which the Civil and Military Authorities both of the Indian and Madras Governments had equipped, organized, and despatched this Expedition. He desired also to recognize the able conduct of Mr. Bernard, our Chief Commissioner in British Burmah, during the whole of this affair. He was anxious

to acknowledge the promptitude of General Prendergast and Colonel Sladen in their Expedition up the river and entrance into Mandalay. And, lastly, he wished to say a word as regarded the efficiency of the Indian and British troops in many duties often of a harassing character, and to acknowledge the ready assistance given by the Naval Commander-in-Chief and his forces in furnishing a Naval Brigade, whose services were worthy of all praise. He had already given some information upon a very mournful subject—namely, the conduct of the Provost Marshal at some executions in Upper Burmah. Further information would be given as soon as possible. In a communication received from the Viceroy that evening, he stated that, after inquiries, it was certainly untrue that the troops shot persons indiscriminately who had been made prisoners. Those shot at Mandalay during the past six weeks had been cases of convicted offenders, under sentence by civil officers. The Viceroy explained that occasionally, when taken red-handed, the leaders of marauding parties were shot; but whenever that was done, it was in every case only upon the advice of the civil officer accompanying the column intrusted with the duty of suppressing these dacoits and so-called insurgents, both of whom robbed and murdered innocent villagers. They were cruel and barbarous, the Viceroy said, not to us, but to these innocent villagers. This dacoity had been an old evil in Upper Burmah, but exceptionally ripe under Theebaw's bad government. So far as the Viceroy could ascertain, there had been no undue severity on the part of our troops; and he spoke of the calmness and humanity of General Prendergast, and said Mr. Bernard would not countenance excessive punishment. For the safety of the country, and for the happiness of its inhabitants, it was absolutely necessary to suppress these gangs of robbers, and to punish these robbers and murderers. Further, the Viceroy said that the pacification of the country was being effected as rapidly as possible, although the fact that a large part of the country was covered with jungle rendered the work exceptionally difficult. Coming to the Amendment of which the hon. and learned Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) had given Notice, he observed

engagement entered into by the French Government on the one hand, and by the Burmese Government on the other. This Agreement, it was alleged, would make France and French influence dominant in Burmah, and exclude British trade from the Valley of the Irrawaddy. But what were the facts? The French Government, on September 26, 1885, in a despatch, informed Lord Salisbury that—

"There was no truth whatever in the report that a Convention had been concluded between France and Burmah by which a concession for railways, with interest guaranteed, is secured to a French Company, control given to the French Government over the Customs of the Irrawaddy River, and a concession granted for the establishment of a bank at Mandalay."

Thus, on September 26, before the date when the Ultimatum was sent to King Theebaw, our Government were in possession of two facts—in the first place, that their Chief Commissioner was entirely opposed to annexation; in the next place, that he consented conditionally to annexation, if the representations referred to were true, and they had positive information from the French Government that there was no truth whatever in those representations. As to questions of etiquette at the Burmese Court, about which so much had been said, he (Mr. Hunter) considered that taking off the shoes in a hot climate was not worse than taking off the hat in a cold; leaving one's sword outside the Palace was not more absurd than a civilian wearing a sword, to which he was in no way accustomed, when he went into the presence of his Sovereign; and as for sitting on the floor, that was, no doubt, an attitude to which they were not much accustomed, but neither were they to walking backwards, like a crab. He maintained that the blame for the breaking-off of diplomatic relations did not rest with the Burmese, for it appeared from the Blue Book that it was insisted that the request for the return of the British Agent to Mandalay, after he had been withdrawn in the panic after the catastrophe at Cabul, must come from the Court of Ava. He thought this disposed of the pretexts for the war; and as to the Bombay Company, it declined to enter into any compromise with the Burmese Government. There never was a war in which the people of India took less interest, and there never was a clearer case of a commercial war. It was

unjust—he might use a stronger term—to place this charge upon the people of India; and to give the House an opportunity of expressing approval of that sentiment he moved the Amendment which stood in his name.

MR. RICHARD: I rise to second the Amendment. I could have wished that my hon. Friend had given a wider scope to his Motion, so that we might test the feeling of the House, not merely on the point of defraying the expenses of our military operations in Burmah from the resources of India, but on the still more important question of the general policy we have lately pursued in that country. For my part, I must state my opinion that the summary annexation of that Kingdom was an act of high-handed violence for which there is no adequate justification. Recent events and present appearances seem to indicate that it was not only an act of injustice, but an act of flagrant folly. By suddenly overturning the existing Government, it looks as though [we] had [consigned the country to what may prove to be a prolonged anarchy; while there is no little danger of our becoming involved in serious troubles and complications in more than one direction, especially with China. I am sorry that the present Government are disposed to endorse and adopt that policy. I believe it would have been better if they had acted as they did in Afghanistan and the Transvaal, and reversed the policy of their Predecessors, instead of following it as they did in Egypt, with what consequences to themselves and the country is now only too well known. The pretext assigned for this act of wholesale confiscation is the misconduct of King Theebaw. But I fear the real motive was that we coveted his possessions, and were determined to have them at any cost. When Naboth's vineyard is wanted, it is not difficult to make out a case, to our own satisfaction at least, why Naboth himself should be put out of the way. There are two strong presumptive and *prima facie* reasons which incline me to put this construction on the matter. The first is the general fact that our countrymen, especially in the East, have a perfect passion for annexation. And the reasons for it are not far to seek. For whatever these acts may cost the people of England, or the people of India, they are certain to re-

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dound to the interests of the classes that clamour for them, or such, at least, is their belief. When the issue of the last war with Burmah was pending, there was a discussion on the subject in the House of Lords, when Lord Ellenborough made a remarkable speech. Some parts of it are so singularly pertinent to the present occasion, that I ask permission to read a few sentences from it. After referring to the pressure brought to bear on the Indian Government by "certain enterprising British merchants and the Press of Calcutta" in favour of our "occupying the whole Burmese Empire," he added—

"I hope that my right hon. Friend the Governor General of India will treat that Press with the disregard which it deserves. But, my Lords, there is also another serious pressure which my right hon. Friend ought to disregard, and which it will be more difficult, I am afraid, for him to resist—that is the pressure of a part of the Civil and of the whole Military Service. They have before their eyes the occupation of Afghanistan, which produced a complete revolution in the Army of Bengal. That will always be the case where a great territory is to be occupied even for a time, and still more where a new territory is to be annexed to and brought under our dominion. Young officers are then placed in command of districts; others are placed in political employment, where they are usually first the operation of troops under the command of their superiors. Great rewards and distinctions are obtained, great talents exhibited—and every man, with a natural ambition, looks forward to the promotion he may attain; and thus the idea of a new war, likely to terminate in new conquests, is dear to that Army—an Army full of enterprise and of those feelings which naturally excite military men to great actions. Under such circumstances, I view with great alarm the annexation to our Empire of a large portion—aye, or even of any portion—of the Burmese territory."

Remember this was in 1853, when there were people already demanding that we should occupy the whole Burmese Empire. This leads me to my second reason for believing that the conduct of King Theebaw was a mere pretext for the act now consummated. It is perfectly notorious that the settlers in British Burmah, backed by the Anglo-Indian and Anglo-Chinese Press, have been for a long time—for many years before Theebaw came to the Throne—hankering after their neighbour's possessions in that region, and never ceasing to address vehement exhortations to the Indian Government to go in and seize the land, on any pretence whatever. Colonel Laurie informs us that when he

was in Rangoon, in 1864—14 years before the accession of Theebaw—he found a loud demand even then for war and annexation. My hon. Friend the Member for North Aberdeen has already, on a former occasion, referred, as a significant indication of the feeling prevalent at Rangoon, to the pretty sharp rebuke administered by Lord Mayo, in 1869, to the Chief Commissioner, expressing the extreme regret and disapproval with which he would regard any action tending towards further annexation. And when young Margery was murdered on the foolish expedition on which he was sent from China to Burmah, though there was ample evidence that the Burmese Government were in no way implicated in that transaction, and the Governor General in Council issued a special Minute, absolving that Government from all imputation, the Anglo-Indian and Anglo-Chinese Press eagerly seized upon the incident as furnishing a capital pretext for the confiscation of Burmah. *The North China Herald* said—

"If the Burmese King's complicity can be proved so much the better. His deposition and the advance of the British Frontier to the borders of Yunnan would be a great political gain."

And, then, mark this other extract from the same source—

"The political advantage of occupying Burmese territory would not be confined to India. The contiguity of the British Indian Frontier with that of Yunnan would mean a pressure on China that could hardly fail to be felt at Peking."

But it looks now as if China were going to put a rather inconvenient pressure upon us. All this proves that the spoliation of Burmah was a foregone conclusion for many years. The principal points relied upon by those who vindicate the annexation are three. First, the massacres and cruelties perpetrated by the King upon his own relatives to protect himself against rival claimants to the Throne. Secondly, his daring to enter into communication with the French and Italian Governments without our leave. And, thirdly, his quarrel with the Bombay and Burmah Trading Company about certain logs of wood. With regard to the charges of cruelty, I dare say King Theebaw is not a very desirable person. It is likely enough that he followed the abominable custom

which seems to prevail in that country at the accession of a new Sovereign, of putting out of the way other members of the Royal Family. But I have no doubt myself that some of the representations which have been sent to this country of the "horrible cruelties" committed at Mandalay have been greatly exaggerated, coloured, and cooked for the home market, to prepare for further outcries in favour of annexation. Indeed, some of them bear on their face a questionable character; for we have given to us the minutest details of what was going on in the recesses of Burmese prisons, not only as to the number of executions, but as to the precise mode in every case; and, in some instances, we have the conversations that took place between the prisoners before they were led out to execution. One would like to know how all these particulars were got at. In one of the despatches sent by the Indian Government to Lord Cranbrook when he was at the India Office, they dilate, as usual, upon the cruelties and barbarities practised by the King, and then add, very naively, that all they knew of them was from popular report, and from the statements of one of the rival Princes, who was a pretender for the Throne—not a very satisfactory testimony, surely, on which to rob a man of his Crown and country. Then, our sensibilities are very partial and local, for while we shudder and are filled with indignation at the violent death of 100 or 200 people at Mandalay, we seem quite comfortable in conscience when we know that our own Government, during the last 10 years, must have slaughtered 50,000 or 60,000 human beings. For my part, I am bound to say that I have come to look with a good deal of suspicion on the representations sent home by our countrymen settled in those remote regions, whether they are mercantile adventurers, or newspaper correspondents, or even Government officials. We know, from past and quite recent experience, that it is very easy for British subjects in foreign lands to trump up charges of a formidable kind, against any Ruler with whom they want to pick a quarrel, especially as they have it all their own way, and the inculpated parties have no fair opportunity of stating their own case. We have not forgotten how grossly Shere Ali, and Cetawayo, and the leaders of the Transvaal Boers, and Arabi Bey

were misrepresented and calumniated by our Representatives abroad, though, unhappily, those calumnies were not discovered until the irreparable mischief they occasioned had been done. One very remarkable thing is the striking family likeness between all these acts of aggression and annexation. We are always told that they are undertaken for the benefit of the people of the countries annexed; that the great body of the inhabitants are passionately in our favour and eager for our coming. We are assured that there will be very little occasion for fighting; let us send a few regiments, or two or three ships of war, and the people would crowd to welcome us, and fall down and embrace our knees with transports of gratitude and loyalty. We were told that this would be the case in the Transvaal and in Zululand. But the very reverse has always happened; for we soon find that the people do not like to have their country stolen from them, do not like to see their Native Government overturned, do not like to see all places of authority and influence usurped by a people who are aliens to them in race, language, and religion. And when, instead of receiving us with welcome and gratitude, they betake themselves to arms to defend their own national independence, we christen them rebels or dacoits, and shoot and hang them, without mercy, to any extent. But whatever may be the rights or wrongs of our quarrel with Burmah, why should India pay for it? Is India in a position to bear further burdens? Not long ago, an Indian official had said that there were 40,000,000 of people in that country who had to go through life on insufficient food; and I have lately seen a statement in *The Times*, on what I believe is good authority, that in the 19 years between 1861 and 1880 more than 11,500,000 people had died of famine. And is this a people on whose shoulders we should throw the cost of our own quarrels? The bill which they would have to pay for this war may grow to be a very large one. We are told that it would only be £300,000. But we always begin our wars with very modest demands. When we entered upon the Abyssinian War we were assured that the expenditure would not amount to more than £2,000,000 or £3,000,000, whereas it had not been much less than

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£9,000,000. The Government which had promoted the Afghan War had estimated the cost at first at £1,250,000, but that had swollen to £18,000,000 or £20,000,000. And what security had we that the Burmese War might not lead to some such sum? I maintain that we have no right to tax the people of India for this war. They have had no part or lot in bringing on the conflict. They have never been consulted as to its policy; and they are not represented in this House. But though they have no means of expressing their opinions here, they have done so in the only way in their power. I am told that the whole Native Press of India has with one accord pronounced against both the necessity and the equity of this war; and I warn you that the time is not distant, if indeed it has not already come, when it will not be wise or safe for you to disregard Native opinion on matters of this kind.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House is of opinion that it would be unjust to defray the expenses of the Military Operations in the Kingdom of Ava out of the Revenues of India,"—*Mr. Hunter.*)
—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. J. M. MACLEAN said, the Mover and Seconder of the Amendment had asserted that the Indian people had not been consulted as to the laying upon the Revenues of India of the expenses of the Burmese War; but it must be admitted, nevertheless, that the Indian people had found very able advocates in that House. Those Gentlemen were men of extreme sensibility; and it was noticeable that whenever a discussion arose as to the advance of Russia in Central Asia they were generally found to be apologists of Russia, who pointed out the advantages of extending Russian civilization, while in all cases of the advance of British civilization nothing but invective and disparagement was to be heard from them. He had listened attentively to hear the reasons stated why India should not pay for this war; but, instead of dealing with that question, they confined themselves to considering the question of justification for the war, which

was quite another matter. At the meeting of Parliament it was, no doubt, a question whether there was or was not any justification for making this war without the sanction of Parliament. But now it was admitted that Lord Dufferin had made out a case for urgency, and shown, by his despatches, that it was necessary to act promptly. Lord Dufferin had explained that he had proceeded without delay in order "to circumscribe the extent of the war, the loss, and the duration of the campaign." The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen (*Mr. Hunter*) had said that the only people who agitated for the war were the English merchants in Rangoon. He seemed to overlook the fact that Lord Dufferin never consulted the mercantile communities, either in the East or in this country, and that his reasons for declaring war were of a totally different character. Lord Dufferin pointed out in his despatches that the mere misgovernment of Burmah had not been deemed a sufficient reason for his interference, but that he did consider it to be his duty to intervene when the King of Burmah endeavoured to enforce unjust exactions against British subjects. Even, however, after this, he was willing to refer the matter to arbitration. No doubt, the reasons for the war were not stated with that frankness which would convince every reader of the Blue Book. Lord Dufferin was really forced to go to war by the French intrigues in Burmah; and it was undesirable that the Viceroy of India should put the case plainly against a Power with which we were still in friendly alliance. It was said that the French intrigues only commenced in 1884. But that was not the case. In 1882 the Burmese sent a "Scientific Expedition" to Europe, and it remained 18 months in Paris without even calling on Lord Lyons. It was said by the Mover of the Amendment that the French Government explicitly disclaimed any intention of interfering in Burmah. But Lord Lyons reported a remarkable conversation with M. Ferry in 1884, who, while asserting that the French Government merely intended to conclude a Mercantile Treaty with the Burmese, added that the Burmese Expedition had come to France to say that Burmah was quite ready to throw itself into the arms of France. Some valuable information was also afforded by

the Correspondent of *The Bombay Gazette*, who stated that the Italian Consul at Mandalay, having obtained access to certain private papers, had discovered a secret engagement between the King of Burmah and the French adventurers out there; that this had been transmitted to the English Government, and had convinced Mr. Bernard and Lord Dufferin of the necessity of immediate action. It was said that the Imperial Government had no right to invade the Dominions of an independent Sovereign; but those who asserted this could not have had any appreciation of the real position of the British in India. They had to protect the people of that country; and it was clearly in the political interests of India that Lord Dufferin made war upon Burmah. Lord Wellesley acted similarly at the beginning of the century in banishing rival European influences from India; and fortunately England possessed, in the brilliant Irishman now ruling over India, a worthy Successor of that other great Irishman who laid so broad and deep the foundations of her Indian Empire. The French Government disclaimed what was going on; but European Governments generally did disclaim intrigues until they were successful. If action had not been taken these French adventurers would have established rights in Burmah, and representations would have been made to every European Government, and there would have been a demand to place the Irrawaddy in the position of the Congo, and so destroy the exclusive British influence over it. The hon. Member (Mr. Richard) had talked of £300,000 being a large sum to be paid by India in the critical state of her finances; but were not the finances of England also in a critical position? And it seemed rather an austere self-denying ordinance to say that the English taxpayers were to bear the expense of all extensions of Her Majesty's Dominions in the East. India surely ought to pay her share. It was, he thought, Lord Lytton who laid down the rule that India might fairly be taxed for wars on her Frontier and to the East of the Isthmus of Suez when no European Power intervened; and that when a European Power intervened England might contribute. India had a commerce of £150,000,000 sterling; and if

she were an independent State, to protect that commerce she would have to maintain a Fleet on every sea and an Ambassador at every Court, whereas she only made a small payment for the Indian Squadron. Therefore, she might be fairly asked to bear the cost of that small war undertaken in the East for the benefit of the Empire. The Province of British Burmah had, at present, a commerce of fully £5,000,000 sterling carried on with India alone, whereas the whole of its commerce with all the other countries in the world did not amount to double that sum. India was also one of the largest customers of the Chinese, and one great advantage of our having possession of Upper Burmah was that we should get a short cut into the interior Provinces of China never yet touched by our commerce. It was said that the new Province would be a costly possession; but when the hon. Member for the Evesham Division of Worcestershire (Sir Richard Temple) was sent to report on the prospects of British Burmah when it was annexed, he made an estimate that it would yield about 80 lakhs of Revenue some day. That prophecy had been far more than fulfilled, for the Revenue of British Burmah now amounted to 280 lakhs. They might look for similar results from Upper Burmah, especially if the same energy was shown by the present Government in completing the negotiations at Peking as was displayed by the late Government in bringing the war to a conclusion. He therefore sincerely hoped that the same decision and vigour of purpose would be evinced in realizing for England and India the fruits of that war as were shown both by the Statesmen and the Generals concerned in conducting it to a successful issue.

Mr. McIVER said, the hon. Member who had just spoken had suggested that previous speakers had dealt with subjects not strictly to the point. He (Mr. McIVER) feared he should sin in the same direction, for he did not rise to support that particular Amendment, but to speak of what seemed to him a yet graver matter. He only interposed in that debate to express his regret and surprise that Her Majesty's Ministers should not have thought fit—should not have thought it proper or found it convenient—to lay before the House full and adequate grounds why they should

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confirm what he held to be the precipitate action of the late Government in annexing Upper Burma. The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) had indicated to the House that there was no going back from the sentence in the Queen's Speech relating to that subject, and had seemed to suggest that though they might drive a coach and four through an Act of Parliament, yet once they had adopted a paragraph in a Royal Message there was an end of the matter. He did not know whether hon. Gentlemen called that a fundamental law; but, for himself, he questioned whether it was quite a constitutional use to make of the Sovereign's name. He would remind the present Advisers of Her Majesty that they had gone back before under much more dubious circumstances in South Africa; and, although he did not refer with unmixed satisfaction to that precedent, yet he would point out that they had gone back before in India. The circumstances then and now might not be identical; but they had given Mysore back to Native rule after 18 years of British rule; and there was no reason why the results should be deemed unsatisfactory in that case. Although the Under Secretary had held out no promise of reconsidering the situation in Upper Burma, matters had developed there since the annexation which it would be well for Her Majesty's Government to consider. The despatch of the late Secretary of State for India, explaining why they had annexed Upper Burma, said that Her Majesty's Government derived special gratification from learning that their troops were welcomed by the people of that country, and spoke of the genuine desire on the part of the Natives for our rule. According, however, to recent reports, it required 16,000 British bayonets to keep alive that "genuine desire," which was evinced by the whole country rising in arms. Was it a "genuine desire" which required a large number of executions to take place, and which required that large force to repress those people? The attitude of that people, who were panting to be British, closely resembled that of other peoples who "were struggling, and rightly struggling, to be free." The Burmese did not desire British rule. It might be incomprehensible to some that there should be a

people so lost to all sense of their own interests; but it seemed to be the fact, nevertheless. The Burmese had a national sentiment. It was not precisely identical in form with what they knew as national sentiment; but it was analogous in its effects. Their idea of government was not as our idea. Our central idea was civil order, personified by the policeman. Their idea was religion, personified by a semi-Divine Royalty. In the Burmese mind, no social scheme was conceivable without a King; life was incomplete, government impossible. Their loyalty or devotion to their King was not personal or dynastic, but purely religious. It was rendered, not because the King was the son of his father, but because he had passed through several stages of existence before he became qualified to be a King. And his position was based on a principle which was the central principle of the Buddhist religion. The Burmese did not wish to see their King—he might be good, bad, or indifferent—they only wished to know that he existed. That might be considered a strange state of facts; but he was speaking of a feeling which was common to the people of the Provinces of Upper and Lower Burma. In the past the British respected that feeling. They honoured the religious feelings of the Burmese, and by this course succeeded with them; but now we had needlessly and recklessly outraged this national sentiment. The evidence was to be found in the way that the people, not only of Upper, but of Lower Burma were set against us, and had broken out in a way which was unprecedented during the last quarter of a century. Telegrams in the newspapers had informed the English people of movements of troops, and of engagements with what were called dacoits. The use of that word was very ingenious, but it was very misleading. Dacoits were being hunted up and down the country by British troops, and we were told of engagements against them at places with grotesque and unfamiliar names—Sittang, Kyeikto, Shwegyeen—and the public assumed that those places were in the newly-annexed but still unconquered region of Upper Burma. Not a bit of it. As a matter of fact, the places mentioned were not in Upper Burma at all; they were in the heart

of British Burmah. They were old settled Provinces, which had enjoyed all the privileges of British rule for more than a quarter of a century. They had enjoyed English law, English policemen, and English tax-collectors. They were quite as settled as Westminster, and far more settled than Limerick. The Commander of the British Forces reported on the excellent demeanour of the people on his way up the river. No doubt, his report was correct. Sir Harry Prendergast was a friend of his own; and he recognized in that Commander not only a man of great personal courage, but a gallant, capable, and skilled General. Sir Harry Prendergast, it must be remembered, only met the riverain people, who were perfectly familiar with foreigners, and who knew the advantages of that contact; and at the time when he interviewed the Natives there was no suggestion that we were going to tamper with the central idea of their social scheme and deprive the Burmese of their Kingdom. But there was no recent Report of Sir Harry Prendergast with regard to the attitude of the people towards us. Only two days before we were informed that in one of our maritime districts, which had been for 30 years in our possession, military operations had been directed against us. Two days before the Hlootdau or Royal Court declared that we must have obtained Mandalay by fraud, because they never imagined there existed people so wild as to pretend that Mandalay could be governed without a King. He ventured, before leaving that subject, to point out to the House how large a part the religious feeling played in this Burmese Question. In the past, great deference had been paid to that feeling; and the first time that we trespassed on that religious feeling was when we entered that country with the loudest protestations that we had no intentions to touch on anything religious. Among the other suggestions justifying annexation was that annexation was the inevitable result of the deposition of King Theebaw. He did not think there was any evidence of that; and although it might be an unpopular suggestion he did not know that there was any absolute evidence that it was necessary to depose King Theebaw. What was the evidence against King Theebaw? The popular story was that he was a drunken savage who

murdered his mothers-in-law. Some critics had gone so far as to say that he was insane on that ground. But there was no evidence to show that he was drunken, and there was no evidence to show that he was insane. What was known about him? As a wretched boy of 18 he was selected from school to be the husband of his wife. He was not King because he was his father's son, but because he was the husband of the daughter of her mother. There was no evidence that he was in any way responsible for those massacres about which they had heard so much. It was no part of his (Mr. McIver's) duty to whitewash King Theebaw. All he said was that there was no evidence that King Theebaw's deposition was necessary, or that his deposition rendered annexation necessary. He (Mr. McIver) was convinced that if, as he freely admitted, intervention was necessary, nothing was to be gained by annexation which could not have been equally well secured by a strong Protectorate; and by the latter course many great dangers might have been avoided. The assumption of the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill), under whose auspices the annexation was carried out, that we might anticipate the same wealth and prosperity in the new Province as in the old Province, was a very pleasing assumption. It was, however, based on the belief that the two Provinces consisted of countries with identical soils. But the prosperity of Lower Burmah was owing exclusively to the fact that it was one of the richest deltas in existence, and that the country which had 3,000,000 inhabitants was able to export nearly 1,000,000 tons of rice per annum. The surplus Revenue, of which they had heard so much that night, consisted almost exclusively of the export duty on that rice. The Province which they had annexed—but not conquered—did not grow rice; it only grew wheat and a little cotton; and it was so poor that a large section of its adult male population crossed the frontier in search of employment, just as the Irish came to this country to assist in the harvest. There was, indeed, no prospect of this Province developing the same wealth as Lower Burmah, or of being anything else but a poor country and a hindrance to its neighbour. It had been suggested that this was a beneficent war; and they

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were told that all the hindrances to trade would be removed; and the hon. Member opposite Mr. Maclean) said that it was a gain to British commerce. Now, on that matter, he would ask on what information or responsible advice was this annexation decided in the first instance, and what additional information and responsible advice had Her Majesty's present Advisers for confirming it, beyond that already received from five Secretaries of State, three Viceroys, and two Commissioners, not a single one of whom had ever given a definite opinion in favour of annexation, whereas any such definite opinion that had been given was directly opposed to annexation? If the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) who annexed Burmah did not receive his advice from responsible officials, from whom did he receive it? He thought the answer was to be found in those pages of the Blue Book which were devoted to the Reports of the Chambers of Commerce. The late Government had given an exaggerated importance to the interests of commerce as represented by the Chambers of Commerce, and had appealed to the worst instincts of a nation of shopkeepers. The doctrine was that, in order to open new channels for trade and find a market for piece-goods and raw spirits, it was well to make war, remove a dynasty, and stifle a nationality. In the Blue Book he did not find one word of responsible advice. The present Government were in a worse position than their Predecessors in adopting this policy. It was suggested that the Viceroy had assented to this annexation; but on the 1st of December the Viceroy said he hoped shortly to submit recommendations as to the future government of Upper Burmah, and before doing so he wished to go to Mandalay in order to study the very "elements of the question." On the 23rd the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India telegraphed to the Viceroy to annex Burmah. They were told now that, after a few hours' residence at Mandalay, the Viceroy had confirmed the annexation. A few days ago some hon. Members were making merry over the rapid capacity for assimilation displayed by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith), when, after a short sea voyage, he was able to advise Her

Majesty's Ministers on Irish affairs. But in that case the right hon. Gentleman was dealing with facts, with a large portion of which he was already familiar, and was speaking to people whose language was very much the same as his own. The Missions of the right hon. Gentleman and the Viceroy were very much alike. They were now told that the Viceroy had assented to what had become irrevocable. Both Gentlemen had to confirm a foregone conclusion, and both gave fresh proof of loyalty to Colleagues. The hurried assent of the Viceroy did not improve the position of the present Government; indeed, recent events made it worse. The conduct of the late Secretary of State for India was, at all events, straightforward and consistent. As the prominent Leader of a Party seeking for empirical remedies for depression of trade, he decided to take his advice from Chambers of Commerce, and, having taken it, to stick to it. He was consistent, too, with the teachings of a school which adopted the forward policy of the Earl of Beaconsfield in India. On this occasion he showed his consistency to the extent of the religious observance of a particular date. The Viceroy had asked for time; but the Imperial instincts of the noble Lord would brook no delay. He realized that his own time was short, and he wanted to crown the edifice of his Indian administration and on the proper date. The 1st of January was the birthday of their Indian Empire, the *fête Napoleon* of Anglo-Indian Jingoism. On the 1st of January, 1877, the Earl of Beaconsfield made the Queen an Empress. At that time 5,000,000 of Her Imperial Majesty's Indian subjects were preparing to die, and they did die, for want of the food which the money spent on that Imperial pageant would have gone some way to buy. The 1st of January was again selected as the day on which to add another Province to the Empire; but the consistency of the noble Lord could not be imputed to the Liberal Government. If there could be said to be any Liberal policy in relation to India, among its cardinal principles, were those that they must govern India in the interests of its people devote their taxes to internal purposes, and respect their national traditions. That annexation in itself was bad, because their Empire was

as large as they could well manage; and if annexation were justifiable in any case, it must be on some ground of Imperial importance, such as the safety of their frontier. If a people expressed a desire to be annexed it was essential that their country should be able to pay its way. An increase to their trade, more or less illusory, would not justify the present Government in confirming the act of the late Government, and thus violating all their own principles. What had been done would add another grievous burden to those of the Indian taxpayer. Apart from that, recent events which were associated in the Reports with the word dacoit—events which had occurred since the noble Lord arrived at his decision—should give the present Government pause. In endorsing the action of the late Government with a larger knowledge of facts, and, therefore, with a smaller justification, they were incurring grave responsibility. Their misfortunes in Egypt were almost entirely due to a similar course. In that case they received a legacy, and accepted it instead of rejecting it. Now they were accepting a new legacy without question; and if they refused to avail themselves of breathing-time, they would saddle the Indian taxpayer with a new and intolerable burden, incur new relations with new and difficult neighbours, and awaken feelings of uneasiness and unrest in the breasts of the loyal Native Princes of India.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): I am desirous, Sir, of saying a few words in this debate in order to remind the House of the nature of the question we are called upon to decide. Before referring to India, I must first endeavour to do justice to the able speech we have just heard from the hon. Member for the Torquay Division of Devonshire (Mr. M'Iver), in whom it is plain, both from the ability of his speech and from the spirit by which it was animated, that we have received a valuable addition to our ranks. Perhaps he will permit me to observe that, as he himself stated, his speech did not in strictness relate to the question before us. He said that the Mover and Seconder of the Amendment had departed from what was strictly the question before us, and he intended to follow their example. I do not make the smallest complaint of that course;

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it was to be expected, considering the nature of the subject, and considering the great interest that attaches to the question of Burmah, and the difficulties that Members often feel in finding opportunities for bringing forward the precise Motion they wish to make. It must have been expected, therefore, that this occasion would undoubtedly be used, more or less, in discussing the merits of the Expedition to Burmah. But the merits of the Expedition do not form the question which we have to decide; and I am anxious to bring the House back to the question which is placed before us by the Resolution. I would, in the first place, refer to a matter which was touched upon earlier in the evening, and which is now evidently germane to the subject. There is no allegation and no opinion on the part of the present Government that the law of 1858, according to the construction which we have been disposed to place upon it, has been broken in the present instance. We do not deny that it is perfectly within the competency of those who made war in Burmah to allege that the invasion of Burmah was due to urgent and unforeseen necessity. Now, Sir, as to the construction of that Act of Parliament I will only say a brief word. Do not let the hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) suppose that upon the construction of the section in the Act I venture to set my opinion against his *cuius in arte ead credendum*. It is the very last thing I think any man ought to do—to enter into a dispute with distinguished lawyers upon the strictly legal question of the construction of an Act of Parliament. All I observe is this—that having been conversant with the motives which dictated the language of the Act, I set out, in my ignorant reading of it, with the assumption that the words had a rational purpose in view. If I am right in holding that their meaning was that the Revenue of India should not be applicable except under certain circumstances without the consent of Parliament, and that those Revenues could not be charged without that consent, then a certain presumption arises in favour of the belief which I ignorantly entertained that the consent of Parliament meant the prior consent of Parliament. On the other hand, the construction which, upon irresistible authority, we

are told is the legal construction, is to this effect—that the consent of Parliament does not mean a prior consent of Parliament at all; it means the consent of Parliament at any time between this time and the Day of Judgment. There is no limit whatever. The hon. and learned Gentleman carefully guarded himself against its being supposed that the Act meant that the consent of Parliament was to be had in three months, in six months, in the next Session, in the next Parliament, in the next generation, or in the next century. He has never committed himself. If at any period in the future such consent be asked for, the Act is made a legal Act; and as you can never be certain that it cannot be asked for a century or two hence, you are never justified in saying that it is not a legal Act. That is the distinct construction put by the late Attorney General; but, at the same time, I bow implicitly to his judgment. As this difficulty has arisen either in the interpretation or construction of the Act, it is quite plain, I trust, that as we are to have a Committee to inquire into the working of the India Act the matter in dispute between us will be entirely settled. Objection may be taken, I know, to our reading of the Act. I will not enter into the question that we never literally complied with the Act; I make that admission, however, at once. It is quite true, and it is always the same case that happens in England. There is no better understood and established law, I think, than this—that in England Her Majesty's Government are not entitled to spend money without the consent of Parliament. That is, without dispute. But what happens in an analogous case on every Vote of Credit submitted to this House? Invariably, before the House gives a Vote of Credit, money has been laid out in the expectation of it. That is a practical consideration which arises in this way. The House never can be asked, and the Government can never determine to ask the House, for a Vote of Credit until it is certain that the Vote will be wanted. That has been the usual and almost invariable rule; but when it comes to be morally certain that the Vote of Credit will be wanted, and there is a moral certainty that it will be given, then it becomes of the utmost importance that not a day should be lost in making the necessary preparation; and,

as a question of common sense and practical utility, undoubtedly there is established in the English case and also in the Indian case that deviation from the letter of the law which, notwithstanding, is perfectly compatible with the strictest observance of the law. There is no question here about the breaking of the law, and no such allegation has been made. The state of the case is this. It has been alleged by those who have assailed the policy of the invasion and annexation of Burmah that this is a war which has been made for trade. Well, Sir, I must own that in the speeches we heard on the first night of the Session there were sentences and sentiments used which may have induced the belief that that was the main cause why these operations were undertaken. But the late Government has not asserted that it was a war for trade. I do not think that there is any man of weight and experience in this House who would deliberately rise in his place and contend that we should be justified in making any war whatever for the sake of trade. It must be universally admitted that we must have justification of a totally different character. I, therefore, cast entirely aside that allegation. It is not an allegation on which the defenders of the proceedings in Burmah have, at any time, founded their action; and it is, consequently, hardly fair and equitable to take the ground of the defence they offer, and treat it as a justification of the claims of a defence which they do not offer. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has laid down what he thinks is a sound principle to be observed in the Government of India, and a principle which he thinks we are departing from on this occasion. Now, our position is exactly this. If we thought, from the evidence before us, that there was a presumption that this war was a wanton or a needless war, I admit that we should be placed in a position of great difficulty. I will not admit that even in that case it would follow that a reversal of the annexation ought to take place, because there is a great precedent which I have referred to on former occasions in this House—the precedent of the war and annexation of Sindh, which took place under the Government of Sir Robert Peel. When that annexation was made known there was not a single man in the Cabinet of

Sir Robert Peel—from Sir Robert Peel to the Duke of Wellington and downwards to myself, who was then the youngest Member of that Cabinet—who did not heartily disapprove of it; and yet there was not a single man there who thought that any step ought to be taken for the purpose of reversing the annexation. The question is not the original justice of the annexation, but whether you will do more good or evil by proceeding to a reversal—that is, upon the supposition that it was an unjust annexation. I am bound to say that, as far as we are able to follow the case, we do not find any proof of that allegation. We are not responsible for the policy of the late Government in regard to Burmah; but it is our duty to judge it fairly. My hon. Friend says that Indian funds should be expended in Indian interests. Most certainly; and it is upon the grounds of Indian interests, if at all, that this war and this annexation are to be justified. My hon. Friend says that we should respect the sentiments of national existence. I cordially agree with him. But, at the same time, it is perfectly well known that in India cases have arisen where we have unjustly and greedily made annexation. But other cases have arisen. For example, the conquest and annexation of the Punjaub. In the case of the Punjaub, I believe, there was a real sentiment of nationality to recognize and to respect. But there was a just cause for war, and that led to operations which convinced the British Government of that day and the English nation that the annexation of that country was the best thing for the people of that country, as well as for the security of India. I think experience has shown that that was a sound and a right judgment to arrive at. A distinguished man whom I had the honour of knowing well, and who was greatly concerned in that policy—the late Lord Hardinge—and I am convinced that no amount of temptation or inducement would ever have induced that gallant soldier and sound and prudent statesman to deviate, for one moment, from the strict rule of right, either in India or in any other part of the world; and, therefore, although we may respect this sentiment of nationality, we cannot take it as an absolute rule to guide our actions. My hon. Friend says annexations are bad; and then he admits—what I am rather

disposed to allow and to assert—that in every case prior to examination the presumption is against annexation. But then, on the other hand, my hon. Friend admits that it may be required for the safety and security of our own frontier and our own people. That is the very ground and justification for the annexation in this case. It was not to extend trade, to gratify passion or ambition, but because a door was threatened to be opened through which would have been brought into India danger, insecurity, loss of happiness, and prosperity. The mass of people depend entirely on our sovereign rule in that country; and it was to defend them, and not for the purpose of giving effect to any idle dreams, that this war was believed to be necessary. My hon. Friend has himself confessed that it was necessary. He said that a great deal has been stated about dacoits, and most unnecessarily stated; and among the places which have been referred to he notices places within British Burmah. That I do not contest. I do not contest the fact that disturbances have been produced in British Burmah in consequence of the state of Upper Burmah. But the question we have to consider is whether we are to give credence or not to the allegations of the highest responsible authorities in India on this matter. My hon. Friend thinks that the Earl of Dufferin did not take time enough to make up his mind on the question whether the annexation was just or unjust. I think it would be very difficult indeed, and I think it would be more than difficult—that it would be rash and unwarrantable on our part—were we to lay down in this House at this time, at this distance, and under the circumstances, the exact amount of time it was necessary for the Earl of Dufferin to take in order to make up his mind. We are disposed to place confidence in the Earl of Dufferin. I know of no reason for withholding confidence in him, or questioning the soundness of his judgment. He is a man in whom, from his great public services, as well as from his temper and his character, we have the greatest reason to place confidence. The war that has been made in Burmah has been made for the gravest public reason. It was a war against which I had a certain degree of prepossession myself, simply upon the ground of the promi-

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nence given to the alleged wrongs of a British Company; but it was a war made in perfect good faith; it was a war made, not in any violation of any plain and intelligible principle governing the intercourse of nations, but it was made on grave political causes, and it is supported by great, and, I think, irresistible authority. So much for the war; but, then, what is the question we are now debating? If the war was bad, that issue ought to be directly raised. It is quite evident that the general sense of our administrative system is that India is to pay for what is called a *bond fide* Indian War. I perfectly understood the contention that if a Party in this country is prepared to challenge radically the justice or propriety of a war, then a case may be raised for the purpose of arguing that the expense of it ought not to be borne by India, which cannot be heard upon the question, but by the superior power and authority of this country. But that is not the case. There are no such allegations to be made or sustained; and until such allegations have been made, and made good, it is not to be expected that this House can properly entertain the question whether the charge should be made on the people of India. Nothing, it seems to me, can be more plain than that if we are to make an entire departure from the general rule which makes Indian Wars an Indian charge, it ought to be done on grounds already established to the satisfaction of the House. It will not do, in the course of a debate as to charging the Indian Exchequer, to make speeches, however ingenious and able, which may be answered by other speeches as ingenious and able; it will not do to make that a ground for laying on the British taxpayer the expense of an operation in which he himself had almost as little voice as the Indian taxpayer. That is the question before us to-night. My opinion is that there has not been to-night established a case which would lead us to think that this war is a war on principle worthy of condemnation. I do believe that it has been in reality, and certainly in intention, a defensive war. I do not believe, for a moment, that the late Government would have taken up this question in a spirit of aggression. There is no evidence that they have done so. All the evidence is to the contrary effect. In protesting against the policy of our own Governor General, and of

those who advised him, you would incur a heavy responsibility. But if that responsibility is to be incurred, and if that question is to be raised, let it be raised on the merits, and not collatorally, as it is on this occasion. No doubt, it has been our duty to depart from the general rule. The general rule is that Indian Wars go to the charge of India; and the whole question now before the House is that authority be given, so far as the House is concerned, to lay that charge upon the people of India.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I am not very much surprised that the speech of the hon. Member for the Torquay Division of Devonshire (Mr. M'Iver) was not altogether satisfactory to the Prime Minister, for it cannot certainly be a very pleasant thing to say that a number of Liberal principles have been laid down as applicable to this case, and then to be told that every one of them have been broken. I cannot think that that is a very pleasant thing, and I must say that with regard to the principles which the hon. Member has laid down there is a great deal of force in the arguments he has put forward. I do not wish, however, to pursue that subject further. I would rather go back to the more general proposition which has been put before the House. The Prime Minister has himself admitted that a debate of this nature must necessarily take a very wide turn. Upon these occasions, when it is necessary to satisfy the requirements of a statute, it is customary to allow the debate to take a wide turn, and discuss the whole question of the policy of the Military Expedition. On this occasion the Military Expedition has hardly been seriously challenged. I will not, indeed, enter into the arguments of the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard), because I am satisfied that no circumstances, to his mind, would ever justify a war. Therefore, I cannot hope to satisfy him; but, Sir, if any hon. Gentleman desires to approach the subject with a desire to ascertain and decide from the facts whether the Expedition was legitimate or not he will, after reading the Blue Book which has been laid upon the Table of the House, come to the conclusion which the Prime Minister has distinctly set forth—that that Expedition has been amply justified. I think he will find in the Blue Book abundant

proof of great patience on the part of the Government of India, and great self-control and self-restraint, and the greatest possible anxiety and desire to avoid and overlook causes of complaint which might have led to a collision. A collision certainly would have occurred much earlier if there had been any desire on the part of the Government of India and the Government at home to bring matters to a climax. But the time came at last when we had to consider not only our relations with King Theebaw, but the character of his relations with other Powers, and when we had also to consider the grievous interference with the trade of Burmah, which, although I do not propose to dwell upon it now, certainly required the most earnest attention on the part of the Government of India. Fortunately, when the time came for dealing with the case, the Governor General who had to deal with it was a man who could not be suspected of any undue leaning on the side of interference outside his duty. The Earl of Dufferin was not a man who was at all inclined rashly to apply the principles of any one particular political Party to the complex system now existing in India. The Earl of Dufferin calmly and carefully considered the whole circumstances of the case; and I do not think the Prime Minister has done more than justice to the Earl of Dufferin, or to those who approve of his action, when he said that the steps which they took in vindication of the duty of England to Burmah were not in intention in any way aggressive. But when the necessity for action arose, the interests of humanity, if not also the success of the Expedition, required that our action should be decisive, and that we should strike quickly, and strike home. I come now to the second point which has been raised in the debate to-night—namely, the question of the expense of the Expedition, and I am the last person to say that the House is not fully entitled—nay, more, that it is absolutely bound—to scrutinize very carefully any questionable expenditure of this description before allowing it to be charged upon the people of India. We are trustees for the people of India, and are bound to respect our trust, and to examine all matters connected with expenditure with the greatest care. I should, therefore, never complain of any

complete discussion which might take place in this House when such proposals are brought before it. But the question we have to consider on this occasion is, what is the interest of India in the Expedition which has just taken place! Upon that subject we have had a good deal of information. We were advised by the Viceroy of India, speaking with all the authority of his high position, and with all the advantage of the skilled advisers who surround him—we were told by him that the interests of India demanded the annexation, and the same view has been taken at home. All the advisers who surround the Secretary of State, all those in this country who understand the relations between India and Burmah, were of opinion that this Expedition was founded upon justice, and that it was undertaken in the interests of India herself. India's interest in the matter is a great and increasing one. Our trade in Burmah was not only in danger, but had been brought to a standstill by the anarchy which prevailed in Upper Burmah. The danger to Indian interests was real, substantial, and obvious; and I do not think that anything further is needed than the contents of the Blue Book now laid before the House to justify the Resolution which the Under Secretary of State for India has submitted to us. But then it is said—"That may be all very well; but can you justify the annexation of Upper Burmah?" It may be said that, although the Expedition was justifiable, the annexation was not so. Upon that subject I will only say, in answer, that we, who advised the annexation of the country, acted only with the utmost care and deliberation. The whole matter has repeatedly been before the people of India, and the India Office at home. It has been the subject of constant communication officially, and what is called at the India Office "semi-officially," between the Viceroy of India and my noble Friend the late Secretary of State (Lord Randolph Churchill). My noble Friend was perfectly aware of the views entertained by the Earl of Dufferin, and he and his Colleagues were thoroughly well acquainted with all the arguments which had been urged for and against the annexation of Upper Burmah. And it was our deliberate opinion, being in possession of all the facts, and having every opportunity

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of forming a deliberate conclusion on the matter, that the annexation ought to take place, and that, in mercy to the population of Burmah, it ought to take place without delay. Our conclusion, therefore, was that Upper Burmah ought to be added to Her Majesty's Dominions. I understand that Her Majesty's present Government entirely concur in that opinion. We believed—and no doubt they also believe—that anything short of the annexation of Burmah would have run the risk of reproducing within a very short time all the evils which have prevailed during past years. If anything short of annexation had been adopted, we should have failed in our duty to the people of India and of Burmah. Unhappily it is the case that our commercial interests in that country have hitherto been prejudicially affected; but we hope that they will be largely benefited by the annexation of Burmah. That, however, has not been the main reason for the annexation; but that step has been primarily dictated by a desire to serve the real interests both of India and the Burmese people. I listened with great interest to the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Oldham (Mr. J. M. Maclean), who addressed the House for the first time this evening in an able and comprehensive speech. My hon. Friend, who, from a thorough knowledge of the subject which I cannot pretend to rival, spoke of the policy of annexing British Burmah, and expressed a sanguine hope that the annexation would prove to be as advantageous as that of British Burmah in the past. We certainly, as the Government who advised that annexation, did so in the hope and belief that there would be a great development of trade in that country. We look forward not only to the promotion of the interests of that country, but of those of England and India also; and I believe that hereafter it will be recognized that the step which has been taken was necessitated by a regard for the best interests of India, and could not possibly have been avoided by any Government in this country.

Dr. CLARK: I rise for the purpose of heartily supporting the Amendment which has been moved by the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter). The effect of the Motion of the Under Secretary of State for India is simply that the Revenues of India shall be charged with

the expense of this war; and the Amendment of my hon. Friend is to negative that proposition, and to provide that the Revenues of India shall be charged with no portion of the expense. No grounds have been given why the expense should not be charged upon the Imperial Exchequer beyond the general ground that charges of this nature have usually been thrown upon India. Now, when the Address in reply to the Queen's Speech was before the House the noble Lord the then Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) asked those hon. Members who felt very strongly as to the injustice of the war not to discuss the question upon the Address, but to wait until a Vote was asked for, and upon that Vote to discuss the merits of the Expedition to Burmah. Hence on the question now raised, whether the Revenues of India should bear the charges which have been incurred in the war in Burmah, I think we are entitled to enter fully into the general question upon the Amendment of my hon. Friend (Mr. Hunter). I entertain a strong opinion that the war was altogether unjustifiable. It was a kind of freebooting Expedition undertaken against Burmah—one of the wars entered into at the instance of those modern freebooters, the commercial Jingoos, who believe that they are entitled to do anything in the name of British trade. I have gone carefully over the grounds which have been urged in justification of the steps we have taken, and I cannot see that there has been any justification given for them. I admit that for some time there have been strained relations between the Court of Mandalay and ourselves; but if hon. Members will inquire into the causes of those strained relations, I think they will arrive at the conclusion that the Court of Mandalay was not to blame. What were the questions in regard to which those strained relations sprung up between ourselves and the Court of Mandalay? First of all there was the shoe question. Before 1878 the Court at Mandalay had exercised its rights, and had prevented any Ambassador from a Foreign Power entering the Presence Chamber without taking off his shoes. In the East that was not considered more dishonourable than requiring a Member to take off his hat on entering this Assembly; but it has become a very

serious matter, and is one of the principal causes which have led to the annexation of Burmah. I do not think, however, that if there had not been a change of Government in 1880 the country would have been annexed on that pretext. King Theebaw refused to have any intercourse with the Representatives of any Foreign Power who did not comply with the usual observances of his country. That had been a vexed question in the time of King Theebaw's Predecessor; and when King Theebaw came to the Throne a sense of irritation sprang up, because, in the first place, our Resident refused to take off his shoes on entering the Presence Chamber; and, secondly, because we refused to give him the right of sending an Ambassador to this country. This may be considered a small matter; but it is well known that small matters seriously affect the dignity of small States. When we entered into negotiations with the King of Burmah he complained that he could only have official communication with this country through a gentleman who was Secretary to a Commissioner; and his first Ambassador was not allowed to go further than our frontier. In 1883, under the Governor Generalship of the Marquess of Ripon, negotiations with regard to a Commercial Treaty, as will be seen by reference to the Blue Book, came to an end. At that time the Burmese Government were willing to waive many of their claims if we had conceded their right to send an Ambassador here; and that, I believe, was the principal ground upon which the negotiations broke down. But surely a question of this kind affects the King of Burmah as much as it would any other Monarch. He was an independent Sovereign just as much as the Emperor of China or the King of Siam. Even the Sultan of Zanzibar has made similar complaints. We have been told by the noble lord the late Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) that there were several reasons for our action which led to the war—that there had been unprovoked attacks and outrages upon British subjects in Burmah. The noble Lord said that in November, 1879, an unprovoked attack was made upon a British steamer lying at anchor in the Upper Irrawaddy, and that in consequence the Government of India had

recommended a renunciation of all engagements with King Theebaw. Now, what are the facts of that case? The facts are, a Mahommedan merchant from Surat, at a time when the River Irrawaddy was crowded with vessels, went on board the *Golden City*, and, desiring to go to a part of the vessel which he was warned had been newly painted, was refused. He persisted in making his way, and a disturbance ensued, in which a number of Burmese coolies went to the assistance of the interloper. The resistance of the crew is said to have been an unprovoked attack upon British subjects by the Burmese Government. Can anything be more absurd? Nevertheless, these are the kind of excuses we make for sending out a warlike Expedition and annexing the country. It is also said that a Scindian—a Mahommedan—had been subjected to an unprovoked attack in connection with a question of trading. The fact is that in the case of the Surat merchant he was fined 10 rupees; those who assisted the aggressor were also punished, and every redress was afforded by the Burmese Government. In this case it is quite evident that the real object was simply to get an excuse for raising money from Burmah. It appears that the salt taken into Upper Burmah was taxed at a lower rate than that which was taken into Lower Burmah, and the Government of Lower Burmah were anxious to place a 5s. duty upon salt going into Upper Burmah, in order to make it not worth while for people to smuggle the salt back again. This so-called outrage was made to allow the Government to unduly tax the people of Lower Burmah and make the lives of the unfortunate Burmese harder, because there can be no doubt that the absence of salt is a prolific source of disease both in regard to human beings and cattle. Having gone carefully through the Blue Book, I must confess that I see nothing in the evidence which has been brought before us that is not unimportant and trivial. The most substantial cause of complaint was the attitude of the Burmese in connection with the miserable squabble with the Bombay-Burmah Company. My hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) has shown very clearly, from the despatches which he read from the Earl of

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Dufferin and Mr. Bernard, that up to last year there was no reason or pretext whatever for a war with Burmah, and that up to that period Mr. Bernard urged the Government of India not to interfere. There is one quotation I will refer to, which the hon. Member did not read, which states that there were strong Petitions coming from the Burmese Chamber of Commerce, asking that Upper Burmah should be annexed, because the trading interests were suffering from the state of affairs in Upper Burmah. Upon the 15th of January last year Mr. Bernard writes that King Theebaw was not nominally an ally of the British Government, but an actual ally; and he expresses an opinion that at least it was questionable whether any Power had a right to expect that it would be justified in sending a force up to Mandalay and expelling King Theebaw on the ground that his subjects were suffering from the arbitrary character of his rule. Upon this point, it is said, the Viceroy suggested arbitration; but I do not think that the Viceroy did in reality suggest any fair mode of arbitration. I do not wish to enter into the merits of the case, except to say that before the Blue Book reached me the case of the Burmese Government had been sent to me. I can see no justification for the action taken by the Trading Company. When the question arose the Burmese Government sent down to our frontier station for information, so as to enable them to determine the question, and from the information furnished by the British officer the High Court of Burmah, which is analogous to our House of Lords, gave their decision upon the merits of the case. It may be that the Court was mistaken; it may be, as we have been told, that the evidence sent by our officer was not reliable. It was that which caused all the trouble. What was to be the character of the arbitration? Mr. Bernard admits that he did not desire arbitration, for fear that the French Consul might be appointed the arbiter. The kind of arbitration we suggested was that the Indian Government should appoint the arbiter; and the Burmese Government were asked whether, in that case, they would abide by the decision? Practically, it was to be an arbitration in which the arbiter was to be appointed by one of the parties.

We have had information to-night that the Italian Consul was suggested; but we were not told that the Italian Consul was the agent for the Italian Company, and agent also for the Bombay-Burmah Company—one of the parties in the case. We are told that higher grounds of policy existed; but from the despatches which have been sent by the Earl of Dufferin and Mr. Bernard in this Bombay Company's trading dispute can we find the only ground for our interference. It is said that French adventurers were obtaining concessions in Upper Burmah. Why should not French adventurers have just as much right to go to Upper Burmah and obtain concessions as the British merchants, such as Price and Maxwell, who went there and obtained concessions? ["Divide!"] I have no desire to take up the time of the House; but we are not going to allow an ancient Monarchy to be annexed without offering a strong protest against it; and we do not intend to allow the Indian Government to be saddled with the expenses of this unjust war without raising our voice in protest also. What is the position of Burmah? Look at the map. The idea of foreign interference is ridiculous, seeing that the only modes of entering into the country by means of the Irrawaddy and Pegu Rivers are, practically, in our hands. When we annexed Pegu we obtained possession of the key of the country, and no one else can get into the country except with our knowledge and consent. Indeed, one accusation made against us is that we have not allowed King Theebaw to obtain sufficient arms to defend himself. To be told, as we have been to-night by the Prime Minister and others, that questions of high policy come in—that to allow the French to get a position in Upper Burmah would leave India open to attack and weaken our position in Lower Burmah—all this is arrant nonsense, because anyone studying the map will see at once that we hold the key of Burmah, and that our Indian Empire is no more affected than China. I will not enter further into the reasons which have induced us to attack Burmah, or the reasons why we have stolen this ancient Kingdom; but perhaps I may be allowed to say a word upon the second part of the question. ["Divide!"] Hon. Gentlemen opposite are making a

great noise; but I must be permitted to say that if we keep Burmah there will be two classes who will benefit by it—namely, the Anglo-Indian officials, who will receive pay and pension, and the English merchants, who will find room for further trade. But I am bound to say that the poor overtaxed Indian ryot, who will have to pay for the annexation, will not benefit by it; and that is the reason why I support the Amendment, and am of opinion that the charge ought to be placed upon the Imperial Exchequer instead of the Indian Revenues. In the first place, Burmah is not a portion of India. To-night it has been assumed that Burmah is a portion of India. Now, Burmah is no more a portion of India than China or our Malay Provinces; and we might just as well annex China and Malay. The Burmese people are different in race, language, and customs, and everything else. In fact, the Burmese are a very distinct people, and occupy a very high and promising position, especially when compared with India. The first thing which struck me on going to Burmah from India was the position which the women occupy there as compared with that which they occupy in India. In India they take no part in public life; but in Burmah the ladies take even a more prominent position than the men; and they are far more civilized. That being the case, and seeing that we have in Ceylon a Crown Colony very similar and near to India, and more associated with Indian interests than Burmah, why not make Burmah a Crown Colony, like Ceylon, allowing the costs to be defrayed from the Imperial Exchequer and paid back again? The people of Lower Burmah have been agitating this question for a number of years; and we have now a good opportunity, if we are going to take possession of Burmah, to make it a Crown Colony, and so prevent this Burmese question from interfering with and complicating the very difficult problem of India. At present it is not likely that Burmah will be able to pay its expenses. It is not as rich as Lower Burmah, and a great number of complicated questions will arise. For instance, the King of Burmah claims to be the Suzerain over the Shan States. The Suzerainty over those States is equally claimed by Burmah, Siam, and

China. I am also afraid that the annexation of Burmah will open up the question of Yunnan, and that we shall be told that as the people of Yunnan are Mahommedans, and as we are the largest Mahommedan Empire in the world, we ought also to annex that country. It may further be stated that we require Siam in order to keep the French out of it. The ryots of India are strongly opposed to the annexation of Burmah; that is the view expressed by the Native Press. I do not see why the Native opinion of India should not be considered as well as British opinion in connection with this question. I am sorry that the Prime Minister has so changed his views since he made his first speeches in Mid Lothian, and I notice with regret how great a difference there is between his speech to-night and his addresses on the occasion of the Mid Lothian Campaign.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: In rising to make a few remarks on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter), I ask for the indulgence which this House always accords to a Member who addresses it for the first time. I should not have presumed, at this late hour, to make this claim but for the fact that the subject-matter of the Amendment before the House is one of special interest, not only to myself, but also to a large number of my constituents. I have passed a large portion of my life in India, which is the country more immediately concerned with the Amendment of the hon. Member; and, as an Anglo-Indian, I desire, most emphatically, to express my entire sympathy with the sentiment which I believe lies at the back of the Amendment of the hon. Member, and many of the speeches which have been made on both sides of the House to-night—namely, that in affairs of combined action between the Government of England and the Government of India there is always a certain amount of danger lest the interests of the weaker Government should be sometimes subordinated to the interests of the stronger. I remember, some time ago, that the Prime Minister illustrated the action of the two Governments, when working together, by the famous apologue of the giant and the dwarf; and the right hon. Gentleman told us that the dwarf—India—got all the kicks, while the

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giant—England—got all the halfpence. I confess I have a good deal of sympathy with that opinion, and I also sympathized with the hon. Member for Caithness-shire (Dr. Clark), when, just now, he deplored the change of opinion which has taken place on the part of the Prime Minister. I was most disappointed not to hear from the Prime Minister, in response to the speech of the hon. Member the Mover of the Amendment, some definite statement of a hard-and-fast rule by which we in Parliament could judge what sum should be paid by England, and what by India. We were told, it is true, that Indian Wars, broadly speaking, should be paid for by India. I think that was the expression of the Prime Minister. Now, I maintain that a much closer and more definite rule is required than that. A rule which, I think, is a very just one, was enunciated by the late Viceroy of India (the Marquess of Ripon) when he stated that wars which the Government of India has exercised the right of initiating, and in regard to which it has been able to control the initiation, the Indian Government should be compelled to pay for, but not for those over which it has had no control whatever—as, for instance, the case of the Egyptian Wars, when Indian troops were employed in Egypt and the Soudan. At that time the Indian Government had no control over the initiation of the Expedition; and, therefore, the Marquess of Ripon urged that the Indian Exchequer ought not be called upon to pay anything towards the cost of that war. With that I entirely agree, and hon. Members will remember that that was really the principle laid down by the Earl of Lytton at the time of the Afghan War. It was then stated by the Earl of Lytton that India should pay for the Afghan War because the Government of India had had full control over its commencement. Now, at that time some of the Leaders of the Party opposite wished that England should pay at least a portion of the expenses of the war. Well, the feeling of many Anglo-Indians, and of many Indians, was "*Times Denies it done foretime*;" and I venture to think that that fear has been realized in later wars. But now, looking at the circumstances of the present war, I would venture to put before the House, and to appeal to the Mover of the Amend-

ment, whether it is not the case, with regard to this war, that the conditions of Lord Lytton and Lord Ripon have been fulfilled, and that the Government of India has had full control over the initiation of the war? Therefore, it can hardly be said that the Government of India can fairly put forward the same claim—put forward rightly, I think, at the time of the Egyptian War—to be excused from the payment of the cost. Still, I do hope that the result of the discussion to-night, and of the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter), will be that some Member of the Government will rise in his place, and will endorse that opinion of the Marquess of Ripon and the Earl of Lytton to which I have referred. I turn now to the question which was largely dealt with by the Mover of the Amendment and by other speakers as to the general policy of the war. It has been suggested that the war was a merchants' war. That is a statement which I entirely deny. I would join with any hon. Member of this House in denouncing a war that was initiated simply for the purpose of trade; but if there is one thing which has been brought out more clearly than another, in the Papers which have been laid before Parliament, it is this—that every Indian authority, from the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah to the Viceroy of British India and the Secretary of State, have all, with one accord, absolutely refused to listen to any recommendations of the Chamber of Commerce at Rangoon or anyone else who asked them to engage in a war with Burmah, or to annex Upper Burmah for any purpose of commerce. The hon. Member himself quoted, as a proof that the war was objectionable on some other ground, the very language of the Chief Commissioner of Burmah (Mr. Bernard) and of the Viceroy of India (the Earl of Dufferin), in which they distinctly refused to comply with the requisition of that great meeting of the Rangoon merchants which was referred to by the hon. Member. Now, these are the very authorities who, not much later, endorsed and carried out the principle of the policy of the attack upon Upper Burmah. What was it that had happened in the meantime to produce that change? Why, Sir, all the circumstances of the case had changed, and the change is

shown and exemplified in the letter of the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah to the Viceroy of India, dated September 4, 1885. The House, I am sure, will see by comparing the letter of the Chief Commissioner, written in the earlier part of the year with his letter in September, 1885, that in the meantime the events had so changed as to render an invasion of Upper Burmah absolutely necessary. What has been the history of our relations with Burmah from the earliest times? We have had the same difficulty which cropped up last year from the earliest times to contend with—namely, the arrogance and ignorance of the Court of Burmah. Why, in point of fact, did Lord Amherst annex Arakan in 1826? Why, simply because, if he had not done so, the King of Ava would have annexed Assam and Cachar. Then, again, in 1852, Lord Dalhousie found it necessary to annex Pegu, a similar attitude of arrogance having forced that step upon him. Coming down to later times, even the pacific Administration of the Earl of Northbrook—and I wish to speak of that Administration in terms of the most complete respect—that pacific Administration was absolutely compelled by the arrogance and by the ignorance of the Court of Ava to take military precautions against that country, and to send what was virtually an Ultimatum to the King of Ava. There was at that time habitual violations of the frontier, and injuries committed on British subjects which were loudly complained of by the Earl of Northbrook. Two hon. Members opposite, speaking of the difficulties which have always occurred in our relations with Burmah, owing to the peculiar customs of that country in regard to the treatment of our Resident, have omitted certain points with regard to that matter. The Government of India have endeavoured for years to maintain a Resident peaceably there—a most necessary measure for the trade of India and of England, if trade is to be carried on with Burmah at all, or if we are to have any relations with that country in any way whatever. We obtained by Treaty in 1862 the right of sending a Resident there. How was that Resident treated? The hon. Member has told us that our Resident was obliged to take off his sword before going into the Royal presence, and to take off his boots

before gaining admission to the Royal Palace. That is true enough; but there were other indignities which I think the hon. Member ought to have discerned from reading the Blue Book, and which are certainly well known to anyone who has any personal acquaintance with Burmah. It will be remembered that when the Earl of Northbrook sent a Resident there, our Resident complained that on coming into the Royal presence he was ordered to sit on the floor with his feet behind him. Now, Sir, if any hon. Member will attempt to sit on the floor with his feet behind him, I maintain that he will find the task a most difficult one, and one which, in the end, will prove most disastrous to him. Therefore, it is not unreasonable, as the Earl of Northbrook said, for our officers to protest; on the contrary, it was impossible for us to permit such a state of things to exist any longer. And remember that this was the Earl of Northbrook, than whom no more pacific Viceroy has ever ruled in India. I pray the House to listen to this one point. During last year there was a very heavy accession of new causes of complaint, which rendered some action on the part of the Earl of Dufferin's Government absolutely necessary. First of all, there were the actual massacres which have not been spoken of much to-night, but which were most important. At Mandalay in the preceding October the massacres in the gaol comprised a large number of British subjects from Chittagong. That was a point which did demand the interference of the Indian Government. Further, there was a spirit of lawlessness spread throughout Burmah, and a considerable part of the country was no longer within the control of the King himself. That lawlessness spread into British territory, and the Province of British Burmah would very soon have been in a similar state of lawlessness and disturbance if the Earl of Dufferin had not interfered. Be it remembered that the victims were *employés* of the Bombay and Burmah Trading Company, and the rafts of that Company were actually fired upon by some of the Burmese soldiers, and that, again, constituted a direct *casus belli*. But, as has been mentioned to-night, the point that changed the whole aspect of affairs most materially during the past year was the intrigues of the French Consul,

Sir Roper Lethbridge

M. Haas. They had reached such a point that the question was whether we should entirely lose our paramount position on that side of India, or should maintain it by force of arms. There can be no question whatever as to the intrigues of the French Consul; and it is known to the House that the King of Burmah had steadfastly determined to do all he could to draw closer the bonds of friendship between himself and the French and Italians. He had sent out an Embassy for that purpose; and it was on that account, and on account of the various other provocations I have recited—it was these facts, I submit to the House, which induced Mr. Bernard, the Chief Commissioner at Rangoon, and the Earl of Dufferin, to say at last—"This can go on no longer, and we must interfere." I was very glad to hear, in the very lucid statement which was made by the Under Secretary of State for India, his remarks upon the successful operations that have been conducted there, and his praise of our troops. I rejoiced to hear the hon. Gentleman praise the bearing of the Native troops engaged in that Expedition. I feel, Sir, that that praise was entirely deserved, and that it will give real pleasure and satisfaction to our fellow-subjects throughout India. I hope that the Government will follow up the speech of the Under Secretary of State by some statement to-night as to the rules by which, in future, the charges, as between the English and the Indian Exchequers, will be apportioned. One word in conclusion. The time for deciding formally the way in which these charges shall be apportioned is a very appropriate one, for, as has been noticed to-night, there is at present at the head of the Government in India a statesman belonging to the great Liberal Party, who, at the same time, commands the entire confidence of every Member on this side of the House. The Earl of Dufferin is making a great reputation for himself in India; and he has, I am bound to say, been supported most heartily by the late Government, and the Party to which I belong on this side of the House. Therefore, I maintain that the present time is one in which Party questions with regard to India are fairly in abeyance, and when it would be most appropriate for the Government to lay down some hard-and-

fast rule by which such charges as this may be in future apportioned.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 297; Noes 82: Majority 215.

AYES.

Acland, A. H. D.	Coddington, W.
Acland, C. T. D.	Cohen, L. L.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.	Collings, J.
Amalie, W. G.	Colman, J. J.
Allen, H. G.	Commerell, Adml. Sir J.
Ambrose, W.	Compton, Lord W. G.
Amherst, W. A. T.	Coote, T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.	Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Ashton, T. G.	Cranborne, Viscount
Atherley-Jones, L.	Crawford, D.
Baden-Powell, G. S.	Crompton, C.
Balgallay, E.	Cross, rt. hn. Sir R. A.
Baily, L. R.	Crossley, E.
Baird, J.	Crossman, Geo. Sir W.
Baker, L. J.	Currie, Sir D.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.	Curzon, Viscount
Balfour, G. W.	Denison, E. W.
Barbour, W. B.	Denison, W. B.
Barnes, A.	De Worms, Baron H.
Bartley, G. C. T.	Dillon, J.
Bartlett, Sir W. B.	Dimadale, Baron R.
Bass, Sir A.	Douglas, A. Akers-
Bates, Sir E.	Duff, R. W.
Baumann, A. A.	Duncan, Colonel F.
Beach, right hon. Sir	Duncan, D.
M. E. Hicks-	Duncombe, A.
Beale, W. J.	Dyke, rt. hon. Sir W.
Beith, G.	H.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.	Edwardes-Moss, T. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W.	Egerton, hon. A. de T.
De la Poer	Ekerton, hn. A. J. F.
Bethell, Commander	Elnot, hon. A. R. D.
Bickersteth, R.	Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Buckford-Smith, W.	Evelyn, W. J.
Biddulph, M.	Ewing, Sir A. O.
Bigwood, J.	Fairbairn, Sir A.
Birkbeck, Sir E.	Farquharson, H. R.
Blaine, R. S.	Farquharson, Dr. R.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.	Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Bolton, J. C.	Ferguson, rt. hn. Sir J.
Bolton, T. H.	Field, Captain E.
Bonsor, H. C. O.	Finch, G. H.
Boyd-Kinnear, J.	Finch-Hatton, hon. M.
Brand, hon. H. R.	E. G.
Brassey, Sir T.	Finlayson, J.
Brinton, J.	Fisher, W. H.
Bristowe, T. L.	Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Broadhurst, H.	Fletcher, B.
Brookfield, A. M.	Flower, C.
Brooks, J.	Folkestone, Viscount
Brown, A. H.	Forwood, A. B.
Brunner, J. T.	Fowler, Sir R. N.
Bryce, J.	Fowler, H. H.
Burghley, Lord	Fraser, General C. C.
Campbell, Sir A.	Fuller, G. P.
Campbell, J. A.	Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Campbell-Bannerman,	Gent-Davis, R.
right hon. H.	Gill, T. P.
Cavenish, Lord E.	Gulstone, H. J.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.	Glyn, hon. P. C.
Chamberlain, R.	Goltsend, Sir J.
Charrington, S.	Goldsworthy, Major-
Clarke, E. G.	General W. T.

Gorst, Sir J. E.
 Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
 Gower, G. G. L.
 Grant, Sir G. M.
 Grey, Sir E.
 Hamilton, Lord C. J.
 Hamilton, Lord E.
 Hamilton, Lord F. S.
 Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
 Hamilton, Col. C. E.
 Hamilton, J. G. O.
 Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
 Hankey, F. A.
 Hardcastle, F.
 Harker, W.
 Harrington, E.
 Hartington, Marq. of
 Hastings, G. W.
 Havelock - Allan, Sir H. M.
 Hayne, C. Seale-
 Heaton, J. H.
 Heneage, right hon. E.
 Henry, M.
 Herbert, hon. S.
 Hobhouse, H.
 Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
 Holmes, rt. hon. H.
 Hope, right hon. A. J. B. B.
 Houldsworth, W. H.
 Howard, H. C.
 Howard, J. M.
 Hoyle, I.
 Hughes - Hallett, Col. F. C.
 Hunter, Sir G.
 Hutton, J. F.
 Isaacs, L. H.
 Jacks, W.
 Jackson, W. L.
 James, rt. hon. Sir H.
 James, hon. W. H.
 James, C. H.
 Jenkins, D. J.
 Jennings, L. J.
 Johns, J. W.
 Johnson-Ferguson, J. E.
 Joicey, J.
 Jones-Parry, L.
 Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir U. J.
 Kenyon, hon. G. T.
 Kimber, H.
 Knatchbull-Hugessen, hon. H. T.
 Lacaita, C. C.
 Lane, W. J.
 Lawrence, Sir T.
 Lawrence, W. F.
 Lethbridge, Sir R.
 Lewisham, Viscount
 Llewellyn, E. H.
 Lockwood, F.
 Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
 MacInnes, M.
 Maclean, F. W.
 Maclean, J. M.
 M'Arthur, A.
 M'Culloch, J.
 M'Donald, P.
 M'Iver, L.
 M'Lagan, P.
 Magniac, C.
 Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
 Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
 Maskelyne, M. H. N.
 Story-
 Mason, S.
 Menzies, R. S.
 Mildmay, F. B.
 Mills, hon. C. W.
 Milvain, T.
 Montagu, S.
 More, R. J.
 Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
 Mount, W. G.
 Muntz, P. A.
 Murdoch, C. T.
 Newnes, G.
 Nolan, Colonel J. P.
 Norris, E. S.
 Northcote, hon. H. S.
 Norton, R.
 O'Connor, J.
 O'Shea, W. H.
 Paget, T. T.
 Paulton, J. M.
 Pearce, W.
 Pease, A. E.
 Pease, H. F.
 Pelly, Sir L.
 Percy, Lord A. M.
 Pilkington, G. A.
 Pitt-Lewis, G.
 Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
 Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
 Pomfret, W. P.
 Powell, F. S.
 Powell, W. R. H.
 Price, T. P.
 Priestly, B.
 Puleston, J. H.
 Quilter, W. C.
 Ramsay, J.
 Richardson, T.
 Robertson, H.
 Robertson, J. P. B.
 Robinson, T.
 Roscoe, Sir H. E.
 Ross, A. H.
 Rothschild, Baron F. J. de
 Round, J.
 Russell, Sir G.
 Russell, C.
 Russell, E. R.
 Rylands, P.
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. M.
 Saunders, W.
 Slater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
 Seely, C.
 Seton-Karr, H.
 Sheridan, H. B.
 Shirley, W. S.
 Sidebottom, W.
 Sitwell, Sir G. R.
 Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
 Smith, D.
 Spencer, hon. C. R.

Stafford, Marquess of
 Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
 Stanley, rt. hn. Col. Sir F.
 Stevenson, F. S.
 Stevenson, J. C.
 Stewart, M.
 Strong, R.
 Sturgis, H. P.
 Sullivan, D.
 Swinburne, Sir J.
 Talbot, J. G.
 Taylor, F.
 Temple, Sir R.
 Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Tipping, W.
 Tottenham, A. L.
 Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
 Vanderbyl, P.
 Vincent, C. E. H.
 Walrond, Col. W. H.
 Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
 Wardle, H.
 Waring, Colonel T.
 Warmington, C. M.
 Wason, E.
 Watson, J.
 Watson, T.
 Wayman, T.
 Webster, Sir R. E.
 Westlake, J.
 Weston, J. D.
 White, J. B.
 Wiggan, H.
 Will, J. S.
 Wilson, C. H.
 Wilson, I.
 Winn, hon. R.
 Winterbotham, A. B.
 Wodehouse, E. R.
 Woodall, W.
 Woodhead, J.
 Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
 Wroughton, P.
 Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Marjoribanks, hon. F.
 Morley, A.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
 Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
 Allison, R. A.
 Balfour, Sir G.
 Biggar, J. G.
 Blaine, A.
 Blake, T.
 Bradlaugh, C.
 Bright, W. L.
 Bruce, hon. R. P.
 Buchanan, T. R.
 Burt, T.
 Buxton, E. N.
 Cameron, C.
 Cameron, J. M.
 Campbell, H.
 Carew, J. L.
 Channing, F. A.
 Clark, Dr. G. B.
 Cobb, H. P.
 Cohen, A.
 Coleridge, hon. B.
 Conybeare, C. A. V.
 Cook, E. R.
 Corbett, A. C.
 Cox, J. R.
 Craven, J.
 Crawford, W.
 Cremer, W. R.
 Crilly, D.
 Dixon, G.
 Ellis, J.
 Ellis, J. E.
 Fenwick, C.
 Fry, T.
 Gourley, E. T.
 Haldane, R. B.
 Hayden, L. P.
 Healy, M.
 Healy, T. M.
 Hervey, Lord F.
 Holden, A.
 Holden, I.
 Howard, E. S.
 Illingworth, A.
 Ince, H. B.
 Jacoby, J. A.
 Kelly, B.
 Kenrick, W.
 Lawson, H. L. W.
 Leicester, J.
 M'Carthy, J.
 Mayne, T.
 Molloy, B. C.
 O'Brien, P. J.
 Otter, F.
 Pickard, B.
 Pickeragill, E. H.
 Picton, J. A.
 Power, P. J.
 Pyne, J. D.
 Rathbone, W.
 Redmond, W. H. K.
 Roberts, J. B.
 Robertson, E.
 Robson, W. S.
 Rogers, J. E. T.
 Salis-Schwabe, Col. G.
 Sexton, T.
 Shaw, T.
 Spensley, hon. H.
 Spicer, H.
 Storey, S.
 Stuart, J.
 Sturrock, P.
 Verney, Captain E. H.
 Williams, A. J.
 Williams, J. C.
 Wilson, H. J.
 Wilson, J. (Durham)
 Wolmer, Viscount
 Yeo, A. F.

TELLERS.

Hunter, W. A.
 Richard, H.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That Her Majesty having directed a Military expedition of Her forces charged upon Indian revenues to be despatched against the King of Ava, this House consents that the revenues of India shall be applied to defray the expenses of the Military operations which may be carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian possessions.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [19th February] *reported*.

Resolutions 1 to 12 *agreed to*.

Resolution 13. £159, Salaries and Expenses of the General Valuation and Boundary Survey of Ireland.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY: Sir, I rise to call attention to a matter connected with this Resolution, which is of much consequence to the Party to which I have the honour to belong. This Vote is for the payment to be made to the officers of the Ordnance Survey in Ireland in connection with the service of re-arranging the polling districts in Ireland under the recent Acts for the registration of voters and redistribution of seats in Ireland. I have respectfully to protest against the manner in which these officers have discharged the duties assigned to them. I think this House, which devoted its time and labours to this important work, did not intend that the Irish voters should be left in the hands of hostile, or, at any rate, unsympathetic officials in that country, who attach to the franchise such conditions as, under its exercise, are either difficult or inconvenient. I think, Sir, I shall succeed in showing you that that is the course which the officials have taken in this matter. I may, perhaps, briefly mention the Acts under which these charges are incurred. The services for which this charge is made were performed in connection with the Registration of Voters Act passed for Ireland in the last Session of Parliament. It became necessary, having regard to the change in the franchise law made by the Representation of the People Act, to re-arrange the polling districts in Ireland so as to place the power of voting within easy reach of the humblest voter who succeeded in getting on the Register; and what I charge is that the officials to whom that duty was confided, instead of discharging it in such a manner as to

render the exercise of the franchise an easy thing, devoted their attention, so far as it lay in their power, to make the exercise of the franchise by voters of the under classes in Ireland as difficult and inconvenient as possible. Now, Sir, I have made inquiries of many Members of the Irish Party as to the circumstances under which voters in their districts were compelled to exercise the franchise; and I think the House will be surprised at some of the figures which I will now lay before them. I have learned from my hon. Friends that in some cases voters had to travel a distance of eight or nine miles to exercise the franchise; I have learned that in some cases it was necessary for voters to travel as much as 14 miles for that purpose, and one extreme case has been brought under my notice in which the voters of one division of Donegal had to travel no less than 20 miles; and I wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that this represents not merely a journey of 20 but 40 miles, for, having had to travel 20 miles from their home, they had afterwards to go 20 miles to get back, a process which involved the necessity of a journey the day before the poll. The House is aware that the elections in Ireland took place in the month of November. It will be in the recollection of hon. Members that the weather during the greater part of the time during which the General Election was going forward was of a very inclement character; and I ask the House to consider the hardship involved in compelling voters, many of whom were old and decrepid, to travel this enormous distance before they could exercise the franchise which this House had given them. I say, respectfully, that the facts which I have brought under the notice of the House are facts which are eminently deserving of its attention. I say that it is not for this House to stand by and see the enactments which Parliament has, after great labour and trouble, passed, rendered practically nugatory by officials who—I will not say designedly, but through carelessness—place these obstacles and embarrassments in the path of voters who desire to exercise the franchise. Sir, I have to complain, in this connection, of two things—first, of the state of the law itself; and, in the second place, I have to complain of the mode in which that law is administered. The Registration Act, under which the polling districts in

Ireland are arranged, does not itself enter on any specific enactment on the subject of polling districts. Instead of laying down rules which were to regulate the polling districts in Ireland, it proceeded simply to revive certain enactments contained in the Ballot Act—namely, the Act passed in the year 1873—and those provisions incorporated in it from the Ballot Act placed the task of re-arranging the polling districts in Ireland in the hands of the county magistrates. I say that if this House were deliberately to set itself to seek for a tribunal more than any other unsatisfactory for the performance of this duty, they could not have better succeeded than in selecting the tribunal which I have mentioned. To-day, I need hardly tell the House that the magistrates of Ireland are not merely not in sympathy with the people, but are, in this very matter of the franchise, in direct enmity and conflict with them. I ask, Sir, what would be thought of an Act of Parliament in England which vested the duty of arranging the machinery of the franchise in the hands of one of the political Parties? I ask what would be thought in this country if the power of fixing the polling districts, or the power of arranging any other machinery connected with the franchise, were vested solely in the hands of the Liberal Party or in those of the Conservative Party? And let me tell the House that such a condition of things by no means represents the state of things in Ireland that is created when a task of this kind is placed in the hands of the Magisterial Bench, for I need hardly say that the degree of strife between English political Parties by no means represents the corresponding relations between the tenant and landlord classes in Ireland; and for the purposes of this Election it was, practically a contest between landlords on the one side and tenants on the other. Yet in this, as in other matters in Ireland, the unfortunate tenant farmers found that the tribunal selected to sit upon and arrange their electoral rights consisted of landlords who were hostile to them from a political and religious, as well as a social, point of view. But I complain not merely of the enactments which were so introduced—I complain not merely that that tribunal was selected for this purpose; but I also complain that in re-enacting the provisions of the Ballot Act this House, for

some reasons which it is difficult to understand, left out certain provisions which were in the former Act, and which would have provided a remedy for this very evil. Let me remind the House that the original enactments regulating this matter provided for the power of appeal from the magistrates to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in Council. Well, when the Registration Act was passed no such provision was contained in it. The original enactment in the Ballot Act provided not that there should be one final fixing of the polling arrangements, but that if it should afterwards turn out that those arrangements were imperfect and unsatisfactory, it should be in the power of the Bench of Magistrates, from time to time, to review, alter, amend, and improve the arrangements they had originally made, so as to remove any grievance which might be found to come up in the working of the scheme formulated. I have said that, for some reason which it is difficult to understand, the enactment under which the present arrangements were made omitted these powers, and so prevented any change in the present imperfect conditions of taking the poll in Ireland until this House again interferes by enactment. There is another matter to which I should like to refer. The Registration Act under which this money was spent makes no provision for any interference by the Ordnance Surveyors who take this money and perform these duties—it makes no provision for any functions whatsoever on the part of the Ordnance Surveyors in Ireland. The Registration Act places in the hands of the magistrates this power of fixing the limits of the polling districts, and there is no mention of any plans to be prepared by the Ordnance Survey. And what did the Government do? The Ordnance Office drew up these schemes and sent them down cut and dried to the magistrates, who were only too anxious to have them, and who, in the twinkling of an eye, passed them without the smallest attempt at examination. In fact, the only place in which, as might be expected, the local Bench sought to improve or amend this scheme was the North of Ireland, where, of course, the magistrates were anxious that the utmost facilities should be given to voters to pursue their political persuasion or political views; and the result was that

Mr. Maurice Healy

while in the North of Ireland this scheme may, to a large extent, have improved and altered so as to meet the exigencies of the case, in the South it was scamped without, as I have said, the least attempt at improving or amending it. Of course, I am aware that the present Administration are not responsible for the preparation of this scheme. I am aware that it was prepared during the period of Office of the late Government; but I respectfully submit to this House that it devolves upon Parliament to see that the large and beneficent enactment which created such an extraordinary change in the political circumstances of Ireland should not be rendered, to a large extent, nugatory and inoperative by the works of unsympathetic officials, who, of course, have no desire that the franchise should be placed within easy reach of the people. I most respectfully ask some undertaking that whenever the Government take in hand the work of improving the condition of the Registration Laws that this important matter will meet with their attention. I would respectfully ask that they should take this matter into their consideration, and put an end to what I think I may, without exaggeration, describe as the great public scandal involved in the condition of things which makes it necessary for a man to travel, as in one case, 50 miles for the purpose of exercising the important political vote conferred on him by the Franchise Act.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN): The question which the hon. and learned Gentleman has raised, with considerable clearness, is one worthy of being brought forward at a more timely hour of the evening, and, if the hon. and learned Member will allow me to say so, in some respects on a text which is more strictly appropriate. This Vote is for the purpose of increased field work which was done by the subordinate officers of the Valuation and Boundary Survey in Ireland in surveying the polling districts. In view of the extreme difficulty, in the present state of Parliament, of calling attention to any subject, however important, I am sure I am not inclined to quarrel with any hon. Member for bringing forward a question on any opportunity which may present itself, no matter how slight the connection it may have with the matter before

the House. But this is a question of paying money to subordinates for carrying out operations in the direction of which they have no control whatever. It is for purely professional and cadastral work of the Valuation and Boundary Survey. Though the hon. and learned Member is in Order in raising the very great and important question that he has raised, I am still inclined to think that he would not be justified in putting any difficulty in the way of our obtaining the Report of this Vote. With regard to the main question which the hon. and learned Member has brought before the House, I can assure him that he meets with very great sympathy in other quarters of the House than that on which he sits. Many of us are not at all satisfied with the manner of appointing polling places in England. I will not give my hon. and learned Friend at this moment, and after what I have said, my reasons for objecting to the present system of appointing polling places either in England or Ireland. I think it extremely defective, and not in any sense in the right hands; but, having said that, I will ask the hon. and learned Member not to press his opposition to the Report on the present occasion. The work for which this money has been voted has been done. I have every reason to believe that it was well done by the men whose services are in question at this moment; and to reject this Report would, I think, in no way further the cause which the hon. and learned Gentleman has urged. It would be doing serious injustice to public servants, or to the men who have been engaged in this duty; and I, therefore, earnestly trust that the hon. and learned Member will be satisfied with the protest that he has made. When the registration comes again before the House, I am inclined to think he will find that there are a great many of his Colleagues and a great many other Members in this House extremely anxious to act in the direction in which he desires to go. I think I may say he will find amongst those most anxious to have this matter examined and set right not a few sitting on this Bench.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolutions 14 to 16 agreed to.

Resolution 17. £7,400, Constabulary Force in Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: In regard to this Vote there is an item I intended to raise a question upon the other night, but was not able to do so in consequence of the prolonged discussion which took place upon another matter. I refer to the item for car hire and extra services, occasioned by the visit of the Prince of Wales to Ireland, and the events which occurred at Mallow when His Royal Highness passed through that place—I refer to the encounter between Inspector Carr and a Member of this House. The then hon. Member for Mallow, now the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. W. O'Brien); the then hon. Member for Westmeath, now Member for Dublin (Mr. T. Harrington), and the hon. Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn), were present on this occasion. Well, I wish to remind the House of what occurred. An action was brought by the hon. Gentleman, at that time Member for Westmeath, against Inspector Carr for the part he had taken in the proceedings. The jury disagreed; but the Government did not pay the Inspector's costs. However, within two or three months this gentleman—District Inspector, County Inspector, or whatever he may have been—was transferred, by way of compensation, to a more lucrative post—that is to say, he was put in charge of the police in Belfast, and in possession of a salary larger than he had previously received by about £200 a-year. Now, if anyone asks in this House whether Inspector Carr's costs were paid on that occasion by the Government, the Government will indignantly reply that such was not the case. But what did they do?—and this is the lesson the Irish people have to draw. They repeated their action in the case of Mr. Olifford Lloyd, who, after being snubbed by the Earl of Carnarvon, was sent out to the Mauritius or the Bahamas, where his salary was doubled. In the case of Inspector Carr, as I have said, he was instantly transferred to Belfast, where he received a salary of £200 more than he had been previously receiving. That is the way the Government, instead of leaving the law to do justice between man and man, deals with its police officials. They will not pay a man's costs, but give him a salary of £200 a-year more. I wish to ask the Government whether they can give any information as to why Inspector Carr was promoted to Belfast? Was it done by

the late Government? I believe it was. We have to-night the advantage of the presence of the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Sir William Hart Dyke); and we shall, I hope, have some explanation from him of this promotion by bludgeon work.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): I have some acquaintance with the circumstances which led to the action to which the hon. and learned Gentleman has referred. I am cognizant of what took place at Mallow; but I am not aware of what subsequently transpired; therefore I am not in a position to afford the hon. and learned Member the information he seeks.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: This is a case in which the head of the Police Force in Ireland is responsible for the action taken. What was done in regard to the transference of Inspector Carr was done under his direction. I say frankly that I am not aware of the circumstances of this special case of the removal of a Police Inspector from one place to another. Should it be the pleasure of the hon. and learned Member to put a Question to me on this subject on some future day, I shall be happy to answer it to the best of my ability.

Resolution agreed to.

LAND REGISTRY BILL [*Lords*].—[Bill 91.]

(*Mr. H. H. Fowler*.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): Perhaps the House will allow me to explain, in a sentence or two, why this Bill has been brought in, and why it is necessary to pass it without delay. The House is aware—or those Members who were in the last Parliament will be aware—that during the past four or five years there have been discussions in this House with reference to the cost of working the Land Registry Act in England. Year after year Members have expressed the strongest disapprobation of the large amount of expenditure the working of the Registry has entailed, although they have not been able to protest successfully against the position of affairs. Last summer, when the Estimates were being passed through the House, the question was raised again,

strong objection being taken to the costs of the Office. I may tell the House that at that time there were in the Office a Registrar receiving a salary of £2,500, and an Assistant Registrar receiving £1,500, and various subordinate officials, the total cost being nearly £6,000. It was explained to the Committee by the then Secretary to the Treasury (Sir Henry Holland) that it was a very difficult thing to deal with an official who had been taken out of the practice of his Profession, and who had filled the Office of Registrar for the long period that Mr. Follett had filled. A pledge was given by the then Secretary to the Treasury, which was supported by the then Home Secretary, that, in the event of the Office of Registrar becoming vacant, the Government would not fill it up without affording the House a previous opportunity of expressing an opinion as to the desirability of continuing the expenditure. I was then sitting on the opposite side of the House. We accepted that pledge; and when a vacancy occurred I believe the right hon. Gentleman, then the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the present Leader of the Opposition (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), stated, in reply to an inquiry addressed to him, that the Government would not fill up the vacancy. But while the pledge was being thus honourably fulfilled a legal difficulty arose with reference to carrying on the business of the Office. The then Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury) found it absolutely necessary that someone should be authorized by Parliament to discharge the duties of Registrar. He then introduced the Bill I am now asking the House to read a second time in the House of Commons, by which it was provided that the Lord Chancellor should empower the Assistant Registrar during the vacancy in the Office to perform all the acts, and discharge all the duties, of the Registrar. That Bill was passed rapidly through all its stages in the other House, and then the change in the Government occurred. The present Lord Chancellor has taken the matter up, and has communicated with me in regard to it. I will read to the House what he says. He says—

"Matters are at a dead-lock, and it is of absolute importance that this Bill should be passed without delay."

The House will see there are certain duties—duties of an almost perfunctory character, or, at all events, of a Minis-

terial character—the very essence of which are the signature or authorization of the Registrar for the time being; and what the Government propose is that the Assistant Registrar should be empowered, without increased remuneration, to discharge those duties until the House has had an opportunity of considering what shall be the future constitution and expenditure of the Office. I have a paper before me which I will not trouble the House with; but I can assure the House, from its contents, that there are a great many matters of great concern which are now at a standstill, and which, if they are not dealt with in some such way as that proposed by the Bill, will lead to a great deal of public as well as private inconvenience. The longer the passing of this Bill is delayed the greater will be the inconvenience. I hope the House will give the measure a second reading. I now beg to move the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(Mr. H. H. Fowler.)

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: As the hon. Gentleman has referred to me, I may, perhaps, say that I heartily join in what he has said as to the importance of agreeing to the second reading of the Bill. After the pledge the hon. Member has referred to was given by me to the Committee, we, of course, set to work at the Treasury to deal with the matter. Sir Henry Thring, Mr. Mowatt and I had a meeting at the Land Registry Office, and made an inquiry into the work of the Department. We went through the books, and I am justified in saying that we thought that a considerable saving might be effected. I desire here to say that Mr. Follett did all the work he was required to do by the Act; but now that a vacancy has occurred the pledge which I gave that the Office should not be filled up has been fulfilled. It is necessary that some of the work Mr. Follett used to do should be performed at once—work such as the signing of certain securities, which can only be done by the Chief Registrar. Cases have been brought under my notice in which business has been entirely suspended owing to there being no one to sign these securities. In these circumstances I trust the House will not object to the second reading of the Bill.

MR. INCE: I am sorry to appear here to say that I cannot concur in the

view taken by my hon. Friend on this side of the House (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and by my right hon. Friend on the other side (Sir Henry Holland). I fail to see that because it is necessary that a particular Office should be carried on that, therefore, public faith with a public servant should be broken—and that is what the Government are proposing in pressing on this Bill. The late Government stood in no such position. They acted honourably with their servants, because the position of matters was then this. When the Marquess of Salisbury was in Office the position was this. The late Lord Chancellor had prepared (ready for bringing in) a Bill for the establishment of a new system of Land Transfer and Registry—I am repeating a public statement publicly made. From that it would appear that that Bill was ready to be brought forward in the House of Lords almost immediately; and pending the bringing forward of that matter, which was a matter almost of days, no one complained—I am quite sure the Assistant Registrar of the Land Registry Office would not complain—of the Assistant Registrar being required to perform the duties of Chief Registrar on the same footing as he was carrying on his own duties. But what does the present Government propose to do? They propose to put it in the power of the Lord Chancellor to require the Assistant Registrar to carry on the business of the Registrar's Office, in addition to what he undertook to do when he was appointed, for the same amount paid him when he originally accepted his Office, and to go on doing for an indefinite time all the duties for which the late Mr. Follett was paid the sum of £2,500 a-year. The hon. Gentleman's statement, I maintain, proves a great deal too much. My hon. Friend, I suppose, like myself, knew Mr. Follett very well. Does he mean to tell us that Mr. Follett was a man who would have taken £2,500 a-year for doing nothing? [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen laugh. I find I am in a hot-bed of economy here. Does the House know what Mr. Follett did, and what the Office has been doing? The Office has been in existence 25 years, and during that period has registered over 3,000 titles. [*Laughter.*] I am afraid, from the laughter of hon. Gentlemen, that they do not know what this implies. If my hon. Friends around me were hon. and learned also, they would know that

it implies a great deal of labour, and the exercise of a great deal of conveyancing skill, and that the man who earns £1,500 a-year in this way would be able to earn a great deal more at the Bar if engaged in a similar vocation. But this is not all. These 3,000 titles are irrespective of a very large number of titles—possibly many more than that—which have been looked into, and which have not been passed on account of irregularities of title. All this work has to be most carefully performed. I have tested the matter in another way, which will, perhaps, come home more to the minds of my hon. and economical Friends. The value of the estates of which the titles have been registered is between £6,000,000 and £7,000,000. And that is not all. In addition to that there have been between £7,000,000 and £8,000,000 of mortgage debentures dealt with in that Office. All this has involved an immense deal of inquiry into titles, and an immense deal of work. When the hon. Gentleman speaks of the staff of the Office—I think he spoke of the various supernumerary officials in the Registration Office—I would inform him that these officials are two clerks and a law stationer; so that, in fact, the whole of the real business of this Office devolves upon the Registrar and Assistant Registrar. The Assistant Registrar took his office 24 years ago, and the salary he was paid then and has been paid since has been £1,500 a-year. He was when appointed—and here I mention a matter which must be within the knowledge of many hon. and learned Members here, as it certainly is within my own—a gentleman of large knowledge and experience of conveyancing. He has been the working spirit of the Office, has drafted all the rules; and, in fact, the Office has mainly rested on his shoulders—of course, under the supervision of Mr. Follett. I say that a gentleman who has sacrificed his career to enter into an Office of that kind should be dealt with fairly; good faith should be kept with him; and if he should be asked to carry on more onerous duties—for the ultimate responsibility rested on Mr. Follett—I maintain it is neither just nor fair that he should be asked to carry them on for an indefinite time at a remuneration that was fixed when he was in the position of a subordinate. I am not going to suggest, though the idea may have crossed hon. Members'

Mr. Ince

minde, that the labourer is worthy of his hire; but I must say that if you agree to pay one salary for one class of work, and you put on the shoulders of the man who receives it another and more onerous class of work, the fact should be taken into consideration in relation to salary. My hon. Friend, I am sure, does not want to do an injustice. As I am anxious to give him an opportunity of avoiding that, and to enable him to further consider the matter I will move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. BAGGALLAY: I beg to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."
—(Mr. Ince.)

Mr. AMBROSE: I rise for the purpose of supporting the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Islington (Mr. Ince), because I concur in the view he has expressed of this matter. I do not agree with the sincere and earnest desire of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Hampstead (Sir Henry Holland) to cut down expenses wherever it can be done—

Mr. SPEAKER: I would point out to the hon. Member that the Question before the House is the adjournment of the debate, and that he cannot enter into a discussion of the Main Question.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL): On the Question of the adjournment I wish to say that my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has put before the House the reasons why this matter is urgent. It comes before the House on the recommendation of the late Lord Chancellor, backed up by the further recommendation of the present Lord Chancellor; and while I do not want to debate the Main Question I may be forgiven for pointing out that my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Islington (Mr. Ince) has not discussed this matter on its merits. He has moved the adjournment, but has suggested no reason why the merits of the measure have not been already sufficiently discussed. He has declared his objection to the Bill with perfect candour—namely, against making the gentleman who has hitherto been the Assistant Registrar responsible for the whole of the work of the Office without an adequate increase of remuneration.

I submit that the question is one the House is fully capable of dealing with at once. It has all the facts before it to enable it to deal with the subject, and I do not think the debate should be adjourned.

Mr. T. H. BOLTON: I hope the hon. and learned Member for Islington (Mr. Ince) is actuated by a desire to promote economy in this matter. He proposes that the Assistant Registrar, whose duties are of such a slight character—

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member; but I would remind him that the debate must now be confined to the Question of adjournment.

THE UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): This is really a very urgent matter, because unless some Bill of this kind is passed it is very doubtful whether there is anyone to pass these titles, which may consequently become invalid.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. AMBROSE: I do not know that I should have risen to support this Bill if it had not been for the statement of the hon. Gentlemen the Secretary to the Treasury that it was intended to transfer the duties of the Registrar to the Assistant Registrar, without making any sort of addition to his salary. I do not mean to contend that it is necessary to proceed to appoint a Registrar at the salary paid to the late Registrar. That is not the view that I am prepared to submit to the House at all. I confess to some disappointment at seeing the way the Government are dealing with that to which the country has so long looked forward for cheapening the transfer of land—namely, a Land Registry. It does not seem to me that the system best calculated to improve the Land Registration is such economization as that now proposed—namely, a reduction of the staff to the lowest possible minimum. It seems to me there is great risk in reposing so much responsibility upon the Assistant Registrar, especially in view of the proposed reform in connection with the Land Transfer, if you look to the system of Registration as a means of perfecting and cheapening the transfer of land. That being so, I do not think

we should run any risks of serious mistakes being made by the Land Registry which would tend to draw discredit on the Registry system. I must say I think the Secretary to the Treasury and the right hon. Baronet the Member for Hampstead (Sir Henry Holland) have underrated the work that will have to be done by the Assistant Registrar if this Bill passes. It has been said that the work of the Registrar is not merely Ministerial, but hardly more than—I do not recollect the exact words used—the work of a clerk, mere work of detail. That is an entire misapprehension. The work that has had to be done by the Registrar, in many instances, has been judicial work requiring legal training and knowledge, and entailing very great responsibility. It involves judicial work as to the effect of titles and putting them on the Register, and it is very onerous work, although it does not bring much public fame. There is not that honour about it which falls to the lot of men when they have to appear in public. Everything is done in the Office. A great deal of painstaking is involved, and a large amount of scientific knowledge is necessary to enable the Registrar to discharge his duties satisfactorily. With regard to the Assistant Registrar, he has been holding office for the last 24 years. I am told, and I have every reason to believe it to be the fact, that when he accepted the office he gave up very lucrative work. I ask, is it right, for the sake of cutting down the Estimates, to do this injustice? Is it fair to put on the shoulders of a man who has been a subordinate these responsible duties without increasing his remuneration? It has been said, and I know there is a curious notion prevailing, that there is nothing to do in connection with the Registry. It is true that, comparatively speaking, there have been very few titles registered; but it must be remembered that the titles registered have been accumulating for 24 years, and that there are now 3,000 on the Register. I would ask any Gentleman with any knowledge at all on the subject whether it is not a fact that when a title is once on the Register subsequent transactions under that title have to come under the supervision of the Registry Office to be dealt with by the gentleman who fills the post of Registrar? There are 3,000 titles registered, and all transactions in regard

to these—transfers, mortgages, and other dealings—have to come under the Registry Office. There are a large number of mortgages which involve a great deal of work. I should not have risen to oppose the second reading of the Bill if it had not been stated that all this work is to be put on the Assistant Registrar without increasing his salary. If the Bill is read a second time, I shall certainly feel it necessary in Committee to move a clause by which it will become the duty of the Lord Chancellor or the Treasury, when they assign these additional duties to the Assistant Registrar, also to assign additional remuneration.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL): I should like to say a word or two on the Main Question. The first Act which bears on this subject of the registration of titles was an Act passed in 1862, and was followed by the Act in question, which was passed in 1875, at the instance of the then Lord Chancellor, the late Earl Cairns. I speak in the hearing of a great many hon. and learned Friends, and I speak the opinion of the Profession, when I say that from beginning to end these two Acts were signal failures—that they have cost this country a great deal more money than they are worth, and that they have done little better than to establish one or two not unimportant sinecures. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for East Islington (Mr. Ince) used an expression which was a strong one to use, and which I think he entirely failed to justify. He accused the Government of a breach of faith, stating that when the late Government were in Office it had been their intention to bring in a general Bill to deal with the whole question of Land Transfer; and, as I understood him, to provide for the Deputy Registrar. That was intended to be a Bill much wider than this; in fact, there is little connection between the two matters; and I know of no pledge or promise as to the Deputy Registrar in relation to it. My hon. and learned Friend says—“Is it to be supposed that Mr. Follett would have taken £2,500 a-year for doing nothing?” In answer to that, I can only say that if the duty of receiving £2,500 a-year for doing little or nothing is cast upon a man, most men will find it a very difficult thing to refuse the burden. There is very little real work to do in the Office; and the advantage the com-

Mr. Ambrose

munity has gained by it has been very slight. The case of the Deputy Registrar is this—that he has been for many years acting in his present capacity at a salary of £1,500; and it is suggested, or implied, that he had a right to look forward to some advancement. Well, I entirely deny the suggestion that his acceptance of the Deputy Registrarship implied that the Office of Registrar was to be kept up for his benefit in case of a vacancy where the needs of the public service did not require it. I deny that any public servant who accepts a position accepts it under any such implied promise. I should be inclined to say that the question now under discussion is not germane to the Bill. The course suggested by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Ambrose) as to inserting a clause in the interest of the Deputy Registrar may or not be regular; but it certainly would be most irregular to attempt to stop the second reading by arguments which in no sense go to the merits of the Bill.

MR. T. H. BOLTON: I do not wish to stand long between the House and a division, if there is to be one; because I am perfectly sure there will be but one result of the division. But I venture to say, as a man having some little knowledge of this Land Registry Office, that if there is one complete failure in connection with legal reform it is in connection with this Office. Several persons were appointed to positions in which they had very good salaries, and very little to do. Now, an opportunity is afforded us of making alterations by which we may reduce a thoroughly useless staff. To talk about 3,000 cases being dealt with in 25 years requiring this staff is absurd—about 120 cases a year, and two and a-half a-week. I undertake to say that any efficient and respectable firm of solicitors would transact the whole of this business for £1,000 a-year, and consider themselves exceedingly well paid. And yet we find the Deputy Registrar suggesting, through an hon. Member of this House, that he should have additional remuneration. The whole thing is absurd. I hope the House will, by a unanimous vote, show they quite appreciate the common sense of the Government in supporting this Bill.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. OSBORNE MORGAN): Year after year we

have been told that this Office is a sinecure, and now it is said it is not. What are the facts? Will the House allow me to quote what was said by Mr. Arthur Arnold last year, who did not overstate the case? That hon. Gentleman said—

“Within the past two half-years the number of new estates registered in this Office had been six—two in one half and four in the other; so that this fact came out—that the taxpayers of this country had to pay £1,000 for each new estate registered in this Office. Hon. Members would see at once what a scandalous, extravagant, and wasteful expenditure of money there was in this Department.”—(3 *Hansard*, [189] 744.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (SIR LYON PLAYFAIR): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Select Committee be appointed—

“To inquire into the operation of ‘The Endowed Schools Act, 1869,’ and the amending Acts, and to consider and report how far it may be expedient to amend the powers exercised under them by the Charity Commissioners.”

I only wish to remark that a Committee sat last year upon Charitable Trusts, and strongly recommended that a Select Committee on “The Endowed Schools Acts” be moved for this year. My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella), on the part of the Government, and my right hon. Friend opposite (Sir Henry Holland), who preceded me in my Office, on behalf of the late Government, recommended the appointment of the Committee. I, therefore, move that a Select Committee be appointed.

Motion agreed to.

Select Committee appointed, “to inquire into the operation of ‘The Endowed Schools Act, 1869,’ and the amending Acts, and to consider and report how far it may be expedient to amend the powers exercised under them by the Charity Commissioners.”—(Sir Lyon Playfair.)

RIVERS PURIFICATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hastings, Bill for the Purification of Rivers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hastings, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Lord

Charles Beresford, Sir W. Guyer Hunter, General Sir William Crossman, and Colonel Sandys.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 101.]

MINES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Conybeare, Bill to amend the Law relating to Mining Leases and Royalties, the payment of Miners' wages, and the Inspection of Mines throughout the United Kingdom, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Burt, Mr. Blake, Mr. Allison, Mr. Abraham (Rhondda Valley), Mr. Mason, and Mr. Saunders.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 102.]

HYDE PARK CORNER (NEW STREETS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Leveson Gower, Bill to provide for the maintenance of the New Streets at Hyde Park Corner, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Leveson Gower, Mr. Fowler, and Mr. Broadhurst.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 103.]

LEASEHOLDS (FACILITIES OF PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lawson, Bill to enable the Leaseholders of Houses and Cottages to purchase the fee simple of their property, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lawson, Mr. Burt, Mr. Puleston, Colonel Hughes, Mr. Holden, and Mr. Arthur Cohen.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 104.]

REMOVAL TERMS (BURGHs) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Edmund Robertson, Bill to amend "The Removal Terms (Burghs) (Scotland) Act, 1881," *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. J. W. Barclay, and Mr. Eugene Wason.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 105.]

CORRUPT PRACTICES (MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Edmund Robertson, Bill for the prevention of corrupt and illegal practices at Municipal Elections in Scotland, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Edmund Robertson and Mr. W. A. Hunter.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 106.]

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS).

Committee appointed, "to control the arrangements of the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, in the department of the Serjeant at Arms attending this House:—Mr. AGGARDNER, Mr. WILLIAM CORNET, Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE, Mr. FLOWER, Mr. GRENFELL, Mr. HERBERT, Viscount LEWISHAM, Mr. LONG, Mr. MARJORIBANKS, Mr. RICHARD POWER, Baron de ROTHSCHILD, Mr. SHELLE, and Mr. JOHN WILSON (Durham)."—(*Mr. Arnold Morley.*)

GLEBE LOANS (IRELAND) ACTS CONTINUANCE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. John Morley, Bill to continue the Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Morley and Mr. Henry Fowler.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 107.]

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT (1872) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Bill to amend "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1872," *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur O'Connor and Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 108.]

REAL ASSETS ADMINISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Bill to facilitate the administration of Deceased Persons' Estates, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. McLaren, and Mr. Molloy.*

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 109.]

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 23rd February, 1886.

NEW PEER.

Sir Edmund Beckett, Baronet, having been created Baron Grimthorpe of Grimthorpe in the East Riding of the county of York—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

NAVY—COAST DEFENCES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he will lay on the Table the reports of Admiral Hamilton on Coast Defences and on the Royal Naval Volunteer Artillery Corps; also reports from any other officer commissioned to inquire into either or both of the above matters? said, the question was a very important one, and he was anxious about it, and thought it most desirable to know what the action of the Admiralty was likely to be in this matter. Their Lordships were no doubt aware that, before the close of last Session, the Admiralty had taken steps to inquire into this matter;

and the late Administration had appointed Admiral Hamilton to inquire into the Coast Defences of the country, and to specially report upon the condition of, and the probable services likely to be rendered by, the Naval Volunteer Corps. Admiral Hamilton, however, shortly after had gone to China to assume the command of the Fleet there; but he (Viscount Sidmouth, believed that his Report was in the hands of the Government. He would, therefore, ask the noble Marquess to give the House some information with respect to it, as soon as he had made himself master of its contents. He would remind the House that the late Government, before leaving Office, announced their intention of granting what was greatly required—namely, a capitation grant to the members of the corps in the same manner as the grant was given to military Volunteers. He desired to know whether the Government were prepared to continue and to extend that practice? He should like to point out to their Lordships that the present condition of the Naval Volunteer Corps was not such, either in numbers or in position, as would be naturally expected from a great naval nation like Britain. He understood that the late First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) had had his attention called to the subject, and he believed that the noble Earl was favourable to the capitation grant which had been subsequently given. From that grant, however, there had been deducted a sum of money for raising an additional corps at Greenock, at the mouth of the Clyde. He could not understand how it was that out of a naval and fishing population around our coasts numbering, he thought, 150,000 men, a Volunteer Force of only 2,000 men had been enrolled for the defence of the coasts, while in the military Volunteer system there was a force of 200,000 men in a very high state of efficiency. He believed, if the truth were known, this was caused by the Admiralty. Some years ago Sir Thomas Brassey said that at least 10,000 to 15,000 men ought to be and would be readily enrolled among the Naval Volunteers. He was very enthusiastic on the subject at that time; but somehow or other after the right hon. Gentleman had got into the Admiralty his ardour cooled, eventually dying away altogether. He wished to

impress upon their Lordships that the gentlemen who were employed in this service at this moment spared neither time nor money to make themselves efficient to discharge those duties which were imposed upon them by Act of Parliament. Those duties were not light, involving as they did training, gun, rifle, and cutlass drill, rowing in boats, splicing, &c., and many gentlemen had done a great deal more than was required of them. He did not know why the Admiralty should wish to throw cold water on this naval corps; but he understood that there was a feeling that there would be some jealousy on the part of the military force. He did not for himself, however, believe that such a feeling existed. At the time the movement was originated, that feeling might have existed; but now, if military men were asked what they thought of the drill and the practice of the Naval Volunteer Corps, he thought they would find that their opinion was that those men and regiments were ready, should the occasion arise, to undertake a leading part in the defence of the country. It was, in his opinion, desirable to foster the naval spirit, and to place the defence of our coasts in the hands of those who were on the spot. All that the Admiralty appeared to have done before the establishment of the capitation grant was to supply a few boats, to give a gun or two, and to give permission to drill, at the same time allowing a ship or so to be used when a suitable vessel happened to be in the neighbourhood of the seaport town where the force existed; but the restrictions which they placed upon those who enrolled themselves and the requirements which they exacted were very severe indeed. He impressed on their Lordships how important it was for our naval interests that those forces should be encouraged, and that our coasts should be defended by trained men. He hoped the noble Marquess would be kind enough to lay the Reports he had referred to on the Table as soon as he possibly could.

Moved, "That there be laid before this House Reports of Admiral Hamilton or of any other officer commissioned to inquire into Coast Defences and the Royal Naval Volunteer Artillery Corps."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth*.)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (The Marquess of Ripon), in reply, said, he would not follow the

noble Viscount into the details which he had brought under the notice of their Lordships. The noble Viscount was, of course, aware that he (the Marquess of Ripon) had been but a very short time at the head of the Admiralty. He entirely admitted the importance of the subject to which attention had been called; but just on account of its importance and of certain complications connected with it, it required much attention and careful examination from the Board of Admiralty before they came to any final decision with respect to it. He was certain that their Lordships would not expect him to offer any opinion on the question before he had had an opportunity of discussing it with his Colleagues at the Board of Admiralty. His noble Friend the late First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) entrusted Admiral Hamilton with the duty of making a careful inquiry into the matters to which the Question of the noble Viscount related. Admiral Hamilton set to work to examine carefully into the subject, and he visited various ports with the object of reporting upon their defences. Not long after he had begun his inquiry Admiral Hamilton was appointed to a command in the China Seas, and had to leave this country. Before he did so, however, he sent into the Admiralty an interim Report, not by any means dealing exhaustively with the subject, but stating the results of his inquiry and the views which he had been led to form so far as he had had time and opportunity. The late Board of Admiralty appointed as his successor Sir Robert Molyneux, and he had been engaged in completing the investigation. Admiral Hamilton's Report was sent in to the Admiralty in the course of last autumn; but it was not complete, and the late Board thought it better to wait for the further Report of Sir Robert Molyneux. He believed that Report was ready; but it had not been printed, and had not yet been before the Board; and in those circumstances he would ask the noble Viscount not at present to press for these Reports. It would be for the public interest that the matter should not come before the public in an incomplete form. The late Board of Admiralty took certain steps in regard to the matter before they left Office, and the present Board had no intention to interfere with them; but they

The Marquess of Ripon

were only of a partial nature, because Lord George Hamilton thought the Board should have the whole question before them before coming to any final decision. He agreed in that opinion, and he should reserve his own judgment until the Reports were complete and had been considered, and then he would lay them on the Table.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked, whether the Government intended to continue the capitation grant?

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON assented.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE— DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE OF 1879.

QUESTIONS. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT ENFIELD, in rising to ask, Whether in the year 1879 a departmental committee was appointed by the then Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire and report as to the constitution and condition of the Metropolitan Police Force; and, if such a report were made, whether there will be any objection to present the same to Parliament? said, that he believed the inquiry to which he referred was conducted by Sir Matthew White Ridley and Mr. Maule, an eminent Queen's counsel, and that their Report was presented to the Home Office. Whether they alluded to the efficiency or non-efficiency of the force he did not know; but, considering the events of the past fortnight, and the excitement existing in the public mind on the subject, it would be satisfactory and acceptable to Parliament and the public generally, when they had reason to believe that there was an exhaustive and very able Report of an inquiry by two gentlemen fully acquainted with the subject in the archives of the Home Office, that it should be presented to Parliament, and he hoped that the Government would see their way to lay it on the Table.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said, he wished to ask whether any and what communication had passed between the chief officers of police and the Home Office in former years, upon the subject of the danger of permitting such demonstrations as took place on Monday, the 8th of February, and on Sunday last, and of the difficulty of controlling

them? It would be a great satisfaction if his noble Friend who represented the Home Office found himself in a position to lay any such Paper upon the Table without injury to the Public Service.

LORD ABERDARE said, it was quite true that a Departmental Inquiry was made in 1879, and he remembered also that another Departmental Inquiry was made in 1868 by his Predecessor (Viscount Cranbrook) into the constitution of the police. Two of the Members of that Committee were Sir Henry Thring and Sir James Fergusson. They made an important Report, and he (Lord Aberdare), having succeeded to the Office of Home Secretary, had great pleasure in adopting some of their recommendations. One of the principal recommendations was that London should be divided into four districts, with a Superintendent for each, one of whom was Colonel Pearson. Shortly after that Report Sir Richard Mayne resigned the office of Chief Commissioner, and it became his (Lord Aberdare's) duty to select a successor, and he selected Sir Edmund Henderson. That being the case, their Lordships might like to hear a few words from him with respect to the manner in which Sir Edmund Henderson had performed his duties. The career of Colonel Henderson had already been a distinguished one, and the circumstances which led to his introduction into the Public Service were rather remarkable. He had been employed as a young officer of Engineers in settling the boundaries between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Having performed that duty with considerable personal risk and severe suffering, he was subsequently employed by the Government in laying out the line between St. John's and Canada. The impression produced by his capacity shown in these tasks upon Earl Grey, the then Colonial Minister, was such that he appointed him to superintend the last of our penal Colonies in Western Australia; and he was there for 13 years, when he returned home. In 1863 a Royal Commission, consisting of some of the ablest men in the country, was appointed to inquire into secondary punishment. It was presided over by Earl Grey. While the Commission was sitting, Sir Joshua Jebb, who was at the head of the Convict Department, died suddenly; and then a step was taken which was, perhaps, unique in our administrative

history. The Members of the Royal Commission sent to Sir George Grey, who was then Home Secretary, a sort of round-robin, in which they mentioned to him the very great impression which Sir Edmund Henderson had produced upon them by the knowledge of the subject, and by the ability, sagacity, and energy he had shown, and by the success he had achieved in the difficult department he had so long managed, and they recommended the serious consideration of his claim to be appointed successor to Sir Joshua Jebb. The recommendation was recognized, and for six years afterwards Sir Edmund Henderson was at the head of the Convict Department. In 1869 he (Lord Aberdare) had to choose a successor to Sir Richard Mayne, and he selected Sir Edmund Henderson, who for 17 years since had been at the head of the police. During that time he (Lord Aberdare) was in Office for upwards of four years as Home Secretary, and in that time very important changes were made, which he should have no difficulty in showing conduced to a speedy diminution of crime in London. These changes were made quietly and without any flourish of trumpets by Sir Edmund Henderson, and with the approval of the Home Office. He would mention one of the changes for the improvement of the efficiency of the police. At the time he had named the number of the detective police employed in the Metropolis was 17; but Colonel Henderson recommended a change, which had led to very important results and to great advantage to the public. To each of the departmental divisions of the police a force of detectives, to about the number of 20, was added. They were selected from the main body of the police, and if they proved efficient they were retained, but if inefficient they were returned to the ordinary police, and so a supply of efficient men was maintained. Now, he (Lord Aberdare) had heard with deep regret of the resignation of Sir Edmund Henderson; and while the Press, on the whole, had been very fair as to the conduct of that gentleman, he observed it had been said that the police had fallen off very much since the days of Sir Richard Mayne in 1868, and that the force was not now, as then, an object of pride and congratulation. Whether that was so or not he thought would be decided by a very few

figures, which he would give. The population of the Metropolitan district in the year Colonel Henderson entered upon his office was over 3,563,000. In 1884 the population was 5,147,000, showing an increase of 1,584,000, which by itself exceeded the population of any three other cities of the Empire. What had been the state of serious crime in those years? In 1869 the number of felonies committed and reported in the Metropolitan police district was 21,529. After the lapse of 15 years, and notwithstanding the increase of the population by 1,500,000, the number of serious crimes committed in London was fewer by 218, the number being 21,311. To attribute that result wholly to the increased vigilance of the police would be ridiculous, for they knew that a good many causes had contributed to bring it about. He would put the question of the efficiency of the police to another test—namely, the number of apprehensions of criminals. The number of apprehensions in 1869 with reference to these 21,500 felonies was 10,088. In 1884 the number of apprehensions on the smaller number of felonies was 12,995, being an increase of 2,907. The proportion of felonies to the population in 1869 was 6·042. In 1884 it was 4·140, or a decrease of about 30 per cent. Not only was this the case, but Sir Edmund Henderson had had the management of a larger population and a larger force. The annual addition from one year to another to the population of this larger Metropolis was about 70,000. The streets added every year were 50 miles in length, and the Police Force had increased from about 9,000 to very nearly 13,000. Judged by any test they pleased, the position of the force at this moment was better and sounder than it had been at any previous time. Whether with regard to the number or the quality of those who offered themselves for employment, the number of punishments for misconduct, or the number of those who retired from causes of dissatisfaction, in every one of these respects there had been a very considerable improvement in the *status* and condition of the police. In 1884 the number of voluntary resignations was only 167, being the smallest number ever known. During the last 17 years, moreover, there had been circumstances of great anxiety. In 1870

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there was a great increase of wages all over the country, and the police naturally looked for a share of the increase. But there was some delay in the matter; for a Public Department could not increase the salaries of its *employés* on the occasion of every increase of wages in the country, for the simple reason that it was impossible to decrease them when wages fell. The consequence of the delay was misconduct, recklessly supported by persons of some position unconnected with the force. The mutiny was, however, suppressed, and a fresh arrangement of salaries was made. A careful inquiry was made at the time, and in consequence of the action then taken there had been no dissatisfaction since. There had also been in these 17 years many great public manifestations under circumstances of considerable anxiety; and, with the one recent exception, none of those great displays of material forces, which were intended, in many cases, to alarm the population, and especially what they termed the aristocratic population, had led to any serious disturbance. In all this time there had been no disturbance of the peace, except in cases so insignificant as not to be worthy of notice. He could fully enter into the feelings of those who objected to have the order of the streets disturbed by such immense crowds; but it was to be remembered that up to the other day no evil consequence had happened. He was not going to ask why, after so signal a success of 17 years, there had been so signal a failure in dealing with the late riotous outbreak. He quite admitted that if it could be shown that the personal safety of individuals or of property had been endangered by any want of vigilance on the part of the police some signal example ought to be made; but what he did ask their Lordships, and through them the public, was to remember that this officer, who was now retiring in circumstances most painful to himself, had, since the year 1850, filled public employments with remarkable success; that under his administration the conduct of the police had been such as to assist other causes in producing an extraordinary reduction of crime; and that, at the same time, increased vigilance and efficiency had been shown by a larger number of apprehensions and of punishments, which were a means of

preventing crime. He awaited with confidence the result of the inquiry, which was being conducted by men of high integrity and intelligence. Whatever that result might be, they must accept it as the final statement as to this most lamentable affair. Whatever it might be, whether it reflected severely or not upon the individual action of Sir Edmund Henderson on that occasion, he did not think it ought to make them insensible to a career of long public utility, which, up to this time, had secured the respect of his fellow-citizens and of the various eminent men who had presided over the Department.

LORD THURLOW, replying for the Home Department, said: My Lords, I have to say, in reply to the Question of the noble Viscount (Viscount Enfield), that he is perfectly accurate in saying that in the year 1879 a Departmental Committee was appointed by the then Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) to inquire into and report as to the situation and condition of the Metropolitan Police Force. That Committee was, however, a purely Departmental Committee; and its Report, as is usual in such cases, partakes very largely of the nature of a confidential document. Under these circumstances, I am instructed to say that it would not be possible for the Home Office to lay the whole of that Report upon the Table of your Lordships' House. I am further instructed to say that, in the opinion of the Home Secretary, pending the extensive inquiry about to be made in the matter, the exact scope of which he will explain very shortly to Parliament, it would not be expedient or in the interests of the Public Service to lay this Report, at the present moment at all events, on your Lordships' Table. With regard to the remarks made by the noble Lord who has just sat down, and who was himself Home Secretary for some time, I trust he will not consider me wanting in respect if I am not able to follow, at the present moment, the current of his observations. But I will confine myself to assuring him that I feel perfectly confident that his observations will receive the very careful consideration of the Home Secretary.

House adjourned at a quarter past
Five o'clock, till To-morrow,
half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 23rd February, 1886.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — Public Accounts, *nominated*.
PUBLIC BILLS—Ordered—Mines Rating.*
Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment [60].

QUESTIONS.

SPEECHES AT POLITICAL MEETINGS —SPEECH OF MR. CHAMBERLAIN AT BIRMINGHAM—"RANSOM."

VISCOUNT GRIMSTON gave Notice that he would, on Thursday, ask the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the following words from the speech delivered by him at Birmingham on January 5, 1885, and published in the authorized edition of his speeches, were correctly reported:—

"But then, I ask, what ransom will properly pay for the security it enjoys, what substitute will it find for the natural rights which have ceased to be recognized? Society is banded together in order to protect itself against the instincts of those of its members who would make very short work of private ownership if left alone;"

and whether, having regard to the utterances of the Social Democratic leaders on the occasion of the recent riots, the right hon. Gentleman still adhered to that opinion?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN): In order to save the time of the House, I beg to say that the extracts now read are perfectly correct, and that I adhere to them.

SPEECHES AT POLITICAL MEETINGS —MR. THOMAS HUGHES.

MR. JOHNS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to the report of a speech, made by His Honour Judge Thomas Hughes at a political meeting held at Chester on the 29th ultimo, in which, as reported by *The Leeds Mercury* of the 30th January last and other newspapers, the following language was used, he spoke as follows:—

"That our Country was in danger, and it was time for them to stand side by side. They

came there Liberals, and he was a Liberal of thirty years standing, and he was just as staunch now. They came there to make the confession that they had not kept their public men up to the mark, to confess that some of their leading men had been making a 'Dutch auction' of infamy of this Irish Question ;"

whether, considering that his honour Judge Thomas Hughes is a Judge of County Courts, the Government have taken his speech into consideration ; and, whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor has been drawn to it ?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR. CHARLES RUSSELL): Sir, I have received a letter from Mr. Hughes, in which he states that the meeting in question was not a political meeting in the ordinary sense of those words—that is, it was not a political meeting of one Party in politics, but that there were a number of gentlemen present belonging to the two great political Parties. I have brought the matter under the notice of the Lord Chancellor, and also the statement of the County Court Judge, and he does not feel called upon to take any further notice of the matter.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, was not the meeting of the so-called Irish Loyal and Patriotic League called for the purpose of resisting such changes in the relations between England and Ireland as had been over and over again foreshadowed by the Prime Minister ?

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL: I am not able to answer that Question, as I have no information ; but I believe it is a fact that the meeting was presided over by a noble Duke, who is, or was, a Member of the Liberal Party.

COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS— LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS.

MR. DONALD SULLIVAN asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in July last, the lighthouse keepers on the Irish Coast sent in to the Commissioners of Irish Lights a petition praying to be placed on the same scale as regards pay as the keepers on the Scotch and English Coasts ; whether a reply has since been returned to the petition ; if not, on what ground ; and, when the Commissioners will be able to make up their minds on the question, and announce the result ?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. MUNDELLA): The Commissioners of Irish Lights last month forwarded to the Board of Trade,

for statutory sanction, a proposal for certain increased allowances being paid to the light keepers in their service. That proposal is under the consideration of the Board of Trade, and the Commissioners have been asked for further details and information, which have not yet come to hand.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND— THE PARCEL POST.

MR. SPENSLEY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is contemplated, at an early date, to extend the facilities of the Parcels Post to Australia and New Zealand ?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER), in reply, said, the matter was under consideration, the Postmaster General having already been in communication with the authorities in Australia and New Zealand. It was hoped an answer would shortly be received, as definite proposals had been made to the Colonial Governments.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE FORCE AT MULLINGAR.

MR. TUIE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there is at present in the town of Mullingar a force of about forty constabulary occupying two separate barracks, and if this force, in proportion to the population of the town, 4787, together with the peacefulness of the locality, is far in excess of what is necessary for the maintenance of order ; whether, in consideration of the absence of serious crime generally throughout the entire county of Westmeath, the extra constabulary force will now be withdrawn from the county, and the second barracks at Mullingar, which was established within the past five years, abolished ; and, whether it is true that the said force at Mullingar is frequently employed by the county inspector and other constabulary officers at Mullingar at other duties than those connected with the constabulary service ?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): The police force at Mullingar consists of 29 men, and it is not considered too large for the requirements of the place. They are temporarily located in two buildings for sanitary

Mr. Johns

reasons; but it is in contemplation to build a new permanent barrack. The extra force of the county at present numbers 36. The question of reducing it is periodically considered, and 50 men have been struck off since August, 1884. It is not considered possible to make a further reduction now. I am assured that there are no grounds to suppose that the men in Mullingar are improperly employed.

**(CRIME AND OUTRAGE IRELAND)—
RIOT AT ARMAGH.**

Mr. ALEXANDER BLAINE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at the foot of Scotch Street, Armagh, on the night of 2nd February 1886, Mr. Hamilton, R.M., permitted a "loyal minority" mob to collect with threats and menaces within four paces of the Royal Irish Constabulary under his command without any attempt at their dispersal; and, whether, in consequence of his neglect of duty, the formation of the Constabulary was broken up by the mob assaulting them with violence, knocking some of them down and kicking their helmets, breaking the teeth of others, &c.; and, if so, whether the Government will cause the removal from office of Mr. Hamilton, R.M., and District Inspector Bailey?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): It appears that a disturbance took place in Armagh on the night of the 2nd instant, consequent on the election excitement; 22 persons have been made amenable, and will appear before a Special Court of Petty Sessions to-morrow. Elaborate precautions were taken to prevent a conflict between the opposing parties, and this was happily effected. Mr. Hamilton, R.M., was not present when the disturbance arose, and the District Inspector was on duty in another part of the city, but arrived on the scene in time to take part in dispersing the crowd.

**CRIME AND OUTRAGE IRELAND)—
MALICIOUS BURNING AT NEW-
CASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK—
COMPENSATION.**

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (*Limerick, West*): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a quantity of hay,

the property of Nicholas Darcy, of Churchtown, Newcastle West, county Limerick, was burned on the 1st of October last, and if it is true that the property of Darcy was under police protection at the time; whether a claim for compensation for the loss of his property, amounting to £540, was made by Darcy to the presentment sessions held at Newcastle West on the 31st of December last, and if the application was rejected in consequence of the sworn testimony of a man employed by Darcy, named John Connors, to the effect that he had set fire to the hay, at the instigation of Rose Darcy, which evidence was corroborated by another witness named Jeremiah McCarthy, also in the employment of Darcy at the time of the burning; whether Connors was subsequently arrested and charged with arson at a special court held in Newcastle West on the 4th of January last, before Colonel Perse, R.M., when McCarthy swore to having seen Rose Darcy supply Connors with oil and matches, and that he then set fire to the hay; whether Colonel Perse adjourned the court to the 11th of January, for the purpose of examining Rose Darcy as a witness, notwithstanding a strong protest made by Connors' solicitor that Rose Darcy was equally amenable, and if it is true that, on the assembling of the said court on the 11th of January, the prisoner Connors was not produced for trial, though Colonel Perse and Rose Darcy were in attendance; if it is also true that, later on the same day, Colonel Perse attended at the county gaol, Limerick, and addressed the prisoner Connors in the following terms, viz.:—

"By some accident you were not forthcoming at Newcastle West to-day, where I went to dispose of your case. On your own admission you have committed a very grave offence, but your admission is contradictory, and you have stated one thing at one time and another at another. Your evidence is therefore more or less worthless. The other who states to having seen you commit that crime I also look upon as another worthless witness. I look upon you both as tools in a conspiracy formed against Darcy; a conspiracy first to destroy his property, afterwards to deprive him of compensation, and, thirdly, to damage his character. I discharge you now for this offence of arson, because, as I said before, there is not sufficient evidence, yours and McCarthy's being worthless; and I only hope that the authorities will see their way to prosecute you for perjury, of which doubtless you have been guilty, and I only hope you will be brought to justice for it."

and, whether he will state the reason why Connors was not produced for trial, and if the course pursued in the whole of this matter by Colonel Perse, R.M., meets with the approval of the Government; and if steps will now be taken to bring the persons implicated in the crime of arson to trial, or otherwise to proceed against Connors and McCarthy for wilful and corrupt perjury, of which crime they have been already pronounced guilty by Colonel Perse, R.M.?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I am informed that the claim of Mr. Daroy for compensation for the burning of his hay is about being brought before the Grand Jury at the Limerick Assizes; and, pending the investigation that may then take place, I think it would be more convenient that I should abstain from entering into the matters involved in this Question.

SOUTH AFRICA—SALE OF SPIRITS IN BECHUANALAND.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that canteens for the sale of spirits have been opened in Bechuanaland with the sanction of the authorities?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. OSBORNE MORGAN): The sale of spirits in Bechuanaland is regulated by the laws and regulations of the Government of that country, issued last year, which permit licensed dealers to sell liquors to Whites at fixed places, but prohibit under heavy penalties the sale of wines and spirituous liquors to Natives. They, however, permit the sale of Caffre beer, beer, or ginger-beer, or like liquor to Natives. A clergyman, the Rev. John Brown, has lately objected to the sale of ginger-beer, as well as other beer; but Sir Hercules Robinson has replied that he allowed such sale under the advice of persons who had had practical experience of the working of prohibitory legislation, and as a mode of averting greater evils. He adds, however, that the practical working of the regulation in question will be carefully watched by Mr. Shipard, the Administrator of the country, as well as by the officers under him; and should further experience prove that modifications are required they will be adopted.

Mr. William Abraham

ARMY (DISCHARGED AND INVALIDED MEN)—CASE OF MICHAEL HERON, 1st ROYAL IRISH.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Michael Heron, late of 1st Battalion, Royal Irish Regiment, who was invalided and sent home from Afghanistan in 1880 in consequence of an injury received during active military service there, has been discharged as unfit for further service; whether all permanent pension has been refused to him; and, whether his case will now be reconsidered?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): The man referred to was discharged with a temporary pension, and on its expiry a permanent pension was refused him. The grant of pensions is made by the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital, who act independently of the Secretary of State and in my experience conduct their business with great care and regard to the interests of the soldier. I propose, however, to refer the case to them for reconsideration.

INLAND REVENUE—CASES OF SMUGGLING IN SCOTCH DEER FORESTS SINCE 1879.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will furnish a Return of the number of smuggling detections made in deer forests since 1879; whether Excise officers in the execution of their duty have a right of entry, of search, and of way over deer forests; and, if not, have they hitherto been exceeding their duty; and, have there been cases of tenants of grouse moors, sheep farmers, and crofters defying Excise officers with impunity?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT), in reply, said, that it was impossible to give an answer quite accurate to the first part of the Question; but he believed the number to be about 14 or 15. Customs officers had the right of search in deer forests when they were armed with civil warrants, but not otherwise, for the detection of smuggling. There had been no case of tenants of grouse moors, sheep farmers, and crofters defying Excise officers with impunity.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON asked whether the Excise officers, when

they made the 15 detections to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded, had such warrants?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I presume so, otherwise their action would have been illegal.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—SCHEME FOR CHRIST'S HOSPITAL.

MR. SPENSLEY asked the Vice President of the Privy Council, When the revised scheme of the Charity Commissioners for the administration of Christ's Hospital is likely to be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (SIR LYON PLAYFAIR): The scheme for Christ's Hospital has not yet been submitted to the Education Department. It is still under the consideration of the Charity Commissioners.

MOROCCO—STATE OF THE PRISONS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has seen the statements in *The Globe* of the 25th, 26th, and 27th January, relative to the shocking state of the prisons in Morocco, and the cruelties inflicted on the prisoners; and, whether he will inquire into the allegations, and, if they turn out to be well founded, whether he will cause representations to be made with a view to mitigating the sufferings of the unfortunate prisoners?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BRYCE): The statements referred to by the hon. Member have been already forwarded to Her Majesty's Minister in Morocco for inquiry and report. Her Majesty's Government have not received any very recent Reports respecting the state of the prisons in Morocco; but in March of last year Her Majesty's Minister at Tangier addressed a strong representation to the Moorish Government on the subject, and at his suggestion the Representatives of France, Germany, and Italy took a similar step. The Sultan, in consequence of these representations, issued an Edict directing reform. It is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to continue to press the matter on the attention of the Moorish Government.

IRELAND—DISTRESS IN WICKLOW.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the labouring classes in the town of Wick-

low are in great distress for want of employment; whether he is aware that in 1796 a benevolent lady, Miss Eaton, left by will a sum of money for establishing a woollen factory in the place, which money is still locked up in the Court of Chancery; and, whether any steps can be taken to apply it for the relief of the existing distress in the manner intended by the testatrix?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): No report has been made to Government as to the existence of distress among the labouring classes in the town of Wicklow. The sum of money to which my hon. Friend refers was left to a family in Cheshire named Gardiner, the testatrix bequeathing the residue of her estate for the establishment of a woollen factory in Wicklow. The particular sum cannot become residue until the rights of the claimants, of whom there are 36, have been disposed of; and the late Attorney General gave directions for the institution of a Chancery suit with that object. I believe there is also a further legal difficulty as to whether the gift for a woollen manufactory can be regarded as a charitable gift in any circumstances.

EVICCTIONS (IRELAND)—CO. MAYO.

MR. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state the number of eviction notices in the Sheriff's hands in the Western Division of the county of Mayo?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I am informed that the number of eviction notices in the hands of the Sheriff for West Mayo is nine.

DISTRESS (IRELAND)—WESTERN ISLANDS.

MR. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What course the Government intend to pursue in order to alleviate the distress and save the people from starvation in the islands off the coast of Mayo?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): My attention was drawn to the state of affairs in some of the islands off the West Coast of Ireland, immediately on my assumption of Office, and I have since given the subject a good deal of consideration. It is unfortunately true that much distress prevails, and the situation needs to be carefully watched; but we have come to the conclusion that

the state of affairs does not indicate any present necessity for the Government to supplement the provisions of the law for the relief of the poor. We shall, of course, at the same time further, by every means in our power, any voluntary effort that may be made to ameliorate the condition of these islanders.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—KNOCKLOW HEAD, GRANGE, CO. SLIGO.

Mr. PETER M'DONALD asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has received any reports or applications in reference to the necessity of the erection of a fishery pier at Knocklow Head, Grange, county Sligo; and, if not, whether he will cause inquiry to be made in the matter, and order a report thereon?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The hon. Member has sent me a Memorial on this subject, which I shall refer to the Fishery Piers and Harbours Commission. I think it right to say, however, that the Commissioners were recently obliged to decline to entertain a similar application from the same locality, owing to want of funds.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN ADMINISTRATION—GUARANTEED CAPITAL OF RAILWAYS.

Mr. LIONEL COHEN asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the system under which money is raised in this Country under the guarantee of the Secretary of State for India in Council, for the service of Indian Railways, will be one of the questions submitted to the proposed Committee on Indian Administration?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): Due notice will be given of the terms of the Reference to the Committee, and it would be premature to give answers upon particular points such as those raised in the Question; but I may remind the hon. Member that there was a full and elaborate inquiry and Report of a Committee of this House upon Indian Railways in the Session before last.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—MANUFACTURE OF SWORDS.

COLONEL SALIS-SCHWABE asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance,

Mr. John Morley

Whether it is the case that only one English contractor is employed by the War Office for the manufacture of swords; what sum was paid to him for the manufacture of the 1884 pattern swords which have already been withdrawn as unserviceable; and, whether this contractor was himself a member of the War Office Committee which designed this sword of unserviceable pattern? He would ask, also, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, as the Secretary of State for War has made considerable purchases of swords in Germany, he will direct the Commercial Attaché to the British Embassies and Legations in Europe to make a full report on the manufacture of such purchases, especially with regard to quality, cost of material, and cost of labour?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL (Mr. WOODALL): It is the case that only one English contractor has been employed to manufacture swords; but practically there is only one firm in England which was at the time in a position to execute very large orders. The unserviceable pattern referred to was that of 1883, not 1884; and the sum paid to the contractor for swords of that pattern was £2,682 1s. The sword in question was not designed by a Committee. It was submitted by the Military Authorities, and, before being adopted, was extensively tried by several Cavalry regiments. Perhaps the hon. and gallant Member will allow me to reply to the next Question which stands in his name. The practice of the War Department has been, in cases where orders for small arms or swords have been entrusted to manufacturers at home or abroad, to have the works inspected by the Superintendent of our Royal Small Arms Factory. In the instance referred to, we have been satisfied with the general conditions under which the contract is being executed, and with the quality produced. Under these circumstances, it does not appear necessary to ask the assistance of the Foreign Office Attachés.

IRELAND—DISTRESS IN ACHILL ISLAND.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in view of the famine in the Island of Achill, the Government propose to remove the technical obstacle to the loan

for the building of the bridge across the Sound, so as to give work to the islanders, in case the Board of Works still think legislation is necessary before the money granted can be advanced?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER), in reply, said, he had made inquiries as to this matter, and found that the technical obstacle referred to had been removed. The £1,500 was not lent by the Board of Works, but was a grant made by the Piers and Harbours Commissioners. The works were being done by contract, and the Government would do its best to push them on. He had written a letter that day on the subject.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POST OFFICE AT TRALEE.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether there has been brought under his notice, or that of the Postmaster General, a Copy of a Memorial addressed by the Tralee Town Commissioners to the late Postmaster General, representing the necessity for the erection of a suitable post office for Tralee, which is the chief town and the assize town of the county of Kerry; and, whether he can promise that anything will be done in the matter?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER), in reply, said, that a Memorial was received in November last. No time would be lost in the matter; but it was not yet practicable to come to a decision as to the most suitable arrangement to provide accommodation in the town referred to.

EVICTIIONS (IRELAND)—CO. TYRONE.

MR. MATTHEW KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If application has been made to the Irish Government for a force of constabulary to aid in the eviction of seventy families on the property of Sir John Stewart, near Carrickmore, in county Tyrone; if he is aware that the landlord, notwithstanding the great agricultural depression, has refused any abatement of rent to these tenants; and, if the Government will be prepared to institute inquiry into the justice of Sir John Stewart's proceedings before allowing the police to be used in carrying them into execution?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): Eviction decrees against 26—not 70—families on this estate have been placed in the hands of the Sheriff, who has applied for, and has been granted, police protection when serving them. I understand the landlord has declined to give a reduction, on the ground that the tenants have judicial leases, and that he believes them to be able to pay. The reduction which the tenants asked was 50 per cent.

ADMIRALTY—SALE OF SURPLUS AND UNSERVICEABLE STORES.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether among the surplus and unserviceable stores to be sold on February 23rd at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, there are 3,000 pairs of new horseshoes and 17 tons of horseshoe nails; why these stores have been condemned; and, whether they are wholly of British manufacture, or wholly or in part produced abroad?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. WOODALL) (who replied) said, that a new pattern horseshoe with appropriate nails had recently been introduced after full trial. It was of greatly improved construction for field service, for which alone horseshoes were issued; but it rendered obsolete the shoes and nails on hand, which had, consequently, to be sold. Those being sold were all of British manufacture.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN ADMINISTRATION—PAY OF NATIVE OFFICIALS.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE asked the Under Secretary of State for India, By what authority and at what date the rule was introduced into India that Native officials, when appointed to posts usually held by Europeans, should draw only two-thirds of the usual pay; whether this rule has not operated, in the case of certain Native members of the Bengal Subordinate Educational Service, promoted for exceptional ability and merit to the Superior Educational Service, in such a way as to inflict a heavy pecuniary fine on them; and, whether this rule will be submitted to the examination of the intended Committee of inquiry into Indian administration?

THE UNDER SECRETARY (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): The rule was first adopted by the Secretary of State in Council in March, 1880, and gazetted in India in June. It was extended to the graded Educational Service in May, 1882. No instance has occurred, so far as we know, in Bengal, but one has occurred in Madras, in which salary on promotion was less than that previously received. The Government of India was requested, some time ago, to consider how such occurrences might be prevented. But there are many benefits besides increased salary attendant on securing a place in the graded list; and no officer need accept promotion unless he considers it to be to his advantage.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—IMPORTS OF BUTTER AND BUTTERINE.

CAPTAIN FIELD asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will consent to lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the relative quantities and values of the butter and butterine, or other substitutes for butter, imported annually into this Country?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD (Mr. MUNDELLA), in reply, said, that the imports of butter and butterine were shown separately, both as regards quantities and values, in the monthly accounts relating to trade and navigation which were presented to Parliament by the Board of Trade, and they would be so shown in the forthcoming annual statement of trade for 1885.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS—FREE EDUCATION.

Mr. COBB asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce in the present Session any measure dealing with the question of free education in elementary schools?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR), in reply, said, that, Her Majesty's Government having issued a Royal Commission on the subject of elementary education in general, it was not the intention to deal with the separate and important question of free education until they knew the result of the labours of that Commission.

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE—GREECE AND TURKEY.

Mr. BERNARD COLERIDGE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, seeing that Her Majesty's Government have thought fit to carry on Lord Salisbury's policy of using the British Fleet as a menace to Greece, Her Majesty's Government have taken, or are prepared to take, any steps to satisfy the claims of Greece to an enlargement of her territory?

THE UNDER SECRETARY (Mr. BRYCE): No, Sir; Her Majesty's Government are not of opinion that this would be a favourable moment to approach the Sultan with a view to obtaining from him a concession of territory to Greece.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN ADMINISTRATION—THE COVENANTED AND UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE.

Mr. JAMES MACLEAN asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If the Committee on Indian Administration will be authorised to inquire into the expediency of abolishing all distinctions between covenanted and uncovenanted servants of the Crown in India, and establishing one Civil Service, with a uniform system of promotion and rates of pay?

THE UNDER SECRETARY (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): Due Notice will be given of the terms of reference to the Committee, and it would be premature to give answers upon particular points such as those raised in the Question.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—DEPRECIATION OF SILVER.

Mr. JAMES MACLEAN asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he will lay upon the Table any recent Despatches from the Government of India on the continued fall in the price of silver, and its effects on Indian trade and revenue?

THE UNDER SECRETARY (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): I am not at present able to say whether Papers can be laid on the Table; but I will consider it.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEER FORCE.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT asked the Secretary of State for War, If Her

Majesty's Government have decided to recommend an increase in the Capitation Grant to the Volunteer Force of Great Britain; and, if provision will be made for the same in this year's Estimates?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN), in reply, said, he had not had time to give that full consideration to this subject which would enable him to come to any conclusion upon it.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT said, that in consequence of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman he would give Notice that he would, on going into Committee of Supply, call the attention of the House to the requirements of the Volunteer Force, and move a Resolution thereon.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—EXTRA POLICE AT CLONES FAIR, CO. MONAGHAN.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that, on 21st January, a force of fifty extra police were drafted into Clones, county Monaghan, to attend the market; and, was this in consequence of a sworn information that there was likely to be a breach of the peace, who swore this information; who will pay for the extra police; has the apprehended disturbance arisen in consequence of the refusal of Sir Thomas Leonard's agent, Mr. Wrench, to weigh pork for every person willing to pay toll, as the Court of Appeal declared was his duty?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I am informed that a force of 50 men was drafted into Clones on the 21st ultimo, in consequence of information having reached the Government that a disturbance of the peace was likely to take place. No charge will be made against the county or district in consequence. It is stated that Mr. Wrench did not refuse to weigh pork for anyone.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND) — RIOT AT CLONES, CO. MONAGHAN.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why none of those who broke the windows of the clergyman and other Catholics in Clones, county Monaghan, on the 18th December, have been apprehended or brought to justice; and, is the sergeant in charge of the police

registered as a Freemason according to law?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I must ask the hon. and learned Member to give me Notice of this Question, which only appeared on the Paper to-day.

STATE OF IRELAND—CHARGE AGAINST EMERGENCY MEN AT CORNAFANE, CO. CAVAN.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Constables Kelly and Clarkin, on protection duty at Cornafane, in county Cavan, on the land of Adam Johnstone, detected two emergency men in charge of the emergency cattle on the same land in the act of setting fire to the house on the night of the 17th-18th instant; and, if so, whether the emergency men have been arrested and will be brought to trial?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The facts are substantially as stated. The two men have been arrested, and are remanded to the 26th instant.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1875—REMOVAL OF DEAD BODIES.

Mr. J. E. JOHNSON-FERGUSON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to a prosecution by the Atherton Local Board before the Leigh, Lancashire, Bench of Magistrates, under the Public Health Act, 1875 (38 and 39 Vic. c. 55, section 126, for the removal in a public conveyance of the dead body of a child who died from an infectious disorder, without previously notifying to the owner or driver that it had died from such a disorder; that the magistrates decided that the offence was not one within the meaning of the Act; that their decision has since been approved in *The Justice of the Peace* of January 30th 1886, in the following terms:—

"Sub-section 2 imposes a penalty on any person who exposes another person in his charge, while the latter is suffering from infectious disease. But a dead body is not a person so suffering. We were at first inclined to think that sub-section 3 might meet the case, but we are of opinion that a dead body is not a thing of such a generic character with bedding, clothing, or rags. The case appears to disclose an omission in the Act."

and, whether he will take steps to have the Act amended?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) said, his attention had been called to the prosecution in question, and he had no doubt whatever that the decision of the magistrates was right, and that the word "person" in the Act did not include a dead body, and that a dead body was not a thing *ejusdem generis* with "bedding, clothing, or rags." Under these circumstances, it was evident that there had been an omission in the Act; and if the Act came up for amendment that point would be noticed.

DISTRESS IN THE METROPOLIS— SOUTH LONDON.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether, in view of the lack of employment in South London, there is any immediate prospect that the new road from Southwark Bridge Road to St. George's Church, for which it appears the Board of Works has obtained powers, will be taken in hand and completed?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, in reply, said, the property required for the improvement referred to had been either cleared away or purchased by the Board; and on the completion of one or two outstanding cases he trusted that in a few weeks from that date the Board would be in a position to remove the remaining buildings. He might, perhaps, be allowed to add that the provisions introduced into the Act authorizing this street, as to re-housing the labouring classes, created a great and, indeed, insuperable difficulty to the progress of the street, and that the difficulty was increased by the grant of powers to the South-Eastern Railway Company in 1882 to take for their line various properties which could otherwise have been appropriated to re-housing the labouring classes.

SPAIN—DIFFERENTIAL DUTIES.

MR. FORWOOD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the answer No. 276, given by Mr. C. M. Kennedy, C.B., head of the Commercial Department of the Foreign Office, before the Royal Commission on Depression of Trade, viz.—

"That all United States goods . . . now enter Cuba and Porto Rico at the same rate of

duty, whatever may be the flag of the vessel in which they are brought,"

is correct; and, if so, what is the date of the Treaty or agreement under which Spain extended to British ships trading from the United States to Cuba and Porto Rico the same privileges as regards the duties on merchandise conveyed by them as were obtained by the Government of the United States, for the vessels bearing their flag, in their Treaty of Reciprocity with Spain signed in 1884?

THE UNDER SECRETARY (Mr. BRYCE): Mr. C. M. Kennedy, in his evidence before the Royal Commission on Trade Depression, in October, was under the impression that the Spanish Government had accepted the interpretation placed by the United States Government, as they informed Her Majesty's Minister at Washington, on Article 1 of the Commercial Convention of 1884—namely, that it applied to goods, the products of and proceeding from the United States, irrespective of the flag under which they might be carried. No report or complaint had then recently been received, and none has been since received on this subject. If the view above expressed is incorrect, and the hon. Member will request parties interested to send in a statement showing whether differential rates are now levied, their representations shall receive immediate attention.

IRELAND—THE CITY OF CORK STEAM PACKET COMPANY—"BOYCOTTING."

LORD ERNEST HAMILTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the attempt of the South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association to ruin, by systematised boycotting, the City of Cork Steam Packet Company, in consequence of the refusal of the latter to commit an illegal act; and, whether the discretionary power which he proposes to exercise as to when the Law should be supported applies only to agrarian illegalities?

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR, with reference to the same subject, asked, Whether the South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association were not exercising their legal right in sending their cattle and goods by other lines than those established by the City of Cork Steam Packet Com-

pany; whether the association having confined their operations to the members of their own body and not having influenced or intimidated any persons outside that body could be said to have infringed upon the rights of others or offended against the law of the land; and, whether it was possible for any Minister of Her Majesty's Government by the exercise of any discretionary or other power to compel people to do what they have a legal right not to do?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY: Notice of the Question put to me by the hon. Member who has just sat down only reached me since I came into the House, and it involves a point of some legal nicety. He will, therefore, excuse my answering it at present. As to the Question of the noble Lord, I have to say yes, Sir; the attention of the Government has been drawn to this affair, and orders have been given that every possible measure should be adopted to prevent persons being molested, hindered, or intimidated in their work. As regards the last paragraph of the Question, which is not very intelligible, the noble Lord appears to be under a misconception. I did not propose to exercise any discretion as to when the law should be supported, but as to how it should be supported in the particular circumstances to which I referred.

HARBOURS OF REFUGE.

MR. CONYBEARE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether a Return might be laid before the House showing the places where harbours of refuge have been either commenced or completed by private enterprise since the Report of the Committee in the year 1859 recommending the outlay of £100,000 on such National works; and, whether such Return can be presented to the House before the Motion of which the honourable Member for East Leeds has given notice on the same subject comes on?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): If the hon. Member will have the goodness to refer to the last Report which has been laid upon the Table of this House, in the year 1883, on the Motion of a right hon. Friend of mine who now holds Office under the Crown, he will find sufficient for his purpose. If it is not, and he will give information to the President of the Board of

Trade, we shall see what can be done as to giving further information.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Comptroller of the Household, Whether his acceptance of Office precluded him from bringing on the Notice of Motion which stood upon the Paper in his name with reference to harbours of refuge?

THE COMPTROLLER (Mr. MARJORIBANKS, in reply, said, he was afraid that the Resolution which stood in his name on harbour accommodation, and which he had proposed before he became Comptroller of the Household to submit to the House, was hardly of such a nature that he could hope the Government would accept it. Therefore, his hon. and gallant Friend would readily understand that he did not wish to set an example of insubordination, and to appear as a Teller on the opposite side to his hon. Colleague the Secretary to the Treasury. If, however, the predictions of hon. Gentlemen opposite were correct as to his probable tenure of Office, his hands would shortly be free again, and he would then take the earliest opportunity of submitting the Resolution. He could only say that he would lose no opportunity in his power of pressing a subject which had been, and still was, of the deepest interest to him.

BURMAH—THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES—MILITARY EXECUTIONS—THE PROVOST MARSHAL.

DR. CAMERON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he can give the House any further information as to Colonel Hooper, the Provost Marshal at Mandalay?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UCHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): Since my answer to my hon. Friend's Question last night, I may tell him that a further communication has reached the Secretary of State from the Viceroy. I am now able to state that the Viceroy's original instructions to General Prendergast of January 23 were, after referring to the facts, as follows:—

"I cannot believe the foregoing statement true. In my opinion, if there is any *prima facie* evidence against the officers in question, they should be at once suspended, and if guilty they should be subject to the severest penalties at your disposal. I hope you will understand the gravity of the circumstances to which I have called your attention."

I may remind the House that the only con-

sequences to the Provost Marshal of Sir Harry Prendergast's action were a censure and the loss of preferment the Provost Marshal would otherwise have received. Lord Dufferin shares Lord Kimberley's dissatisfaction at the results of Sir Harry Prendergast's inquiries. After considering all the circumstances, the Secretary of State has telegraphed to the Viceroy, recommending in the following terms a court martial:—

"I am of opinion that if your Judge Advocate General advises that charges can be framed against Colonel Hooper steps should be taken accordingly."

MOTIONS.

IMPERIAL REVENUE (IRELAND AND GREAT BRITAIN).

RESOLUTION.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA, in rising to call the attention of the House to the inequality of Imperial Taxation on Ireland; and to move for a—

"Return of the Gross Imperial Revenue of Ireland derived from taxation, and of the Population of Ireland for the years 1851, 1861, 1871, and 1881, and a like Return for Great Britain for the same years, being in both cases a continuation, in like form, of Parliamentary Paper, No. 407, of Session 1874."

said, he noticed that the hon. Member (Sir George Campbell) had given Notice to insert "Scotland" instead of "Ireland;" but he begged to say that if the hon. Member made out his case for Scotland against the rest of Great Britain that would only strengthen the Irish case. When he had last addressed the House on the subject of the unequal incidence of Imperial taxation on Ireland as compared with Great Britain the right hon. Gentleman then, as now, at the head of Her Majesty's Government (Mr. Gladstone) had heard what he had to say on the subject—or, at least, heard all he had said, for his (Sir Joseph M'Kenna's) speech was not concluded when it appeared fit to the officials of the Government whose duty it was to "keep a House" or permit "a Count out," to allow the latter alternative to be availed of. There was not so much danger of a similar catastrophe to-night; and yet he would ask hon. Members for English and Scotch constituencies to give some attention to the case he was about to submit, as it was the key to

understanding many things connected with Ireland which at first sight did not appear to be connected with Imperial taxation. It was not his intention to accuse any particular Party or Statesman of intentional injustice to Ireland in the matter of Imperial taxation. He should content himself by exhibiting the case as it stood, showing by Parliamentary Returns how the taxation of Ireland had been increased, and by what proportions, decade by decade, since 1841, in the face of a waning population; whilst in the case of Great Britain, notwithstanding a vast increase of population and wealth, and the natural and consequent increased charge for carrying on the Business of the State, the taxation of Great Britain had been so regulated, and the Revenue so husbanded in her favour, that the pressure of taxation had been continuously lightened, so that as the taxes increased in actual amount their pressure—whether measured by the growing wealth of the country or by their incidence in respect to each head of the population—was less in 1871 than in 1841, 1851, or 1861; and he believed it would be equally shown that the pressure so measured was still less in 1881 for Great Britain. Before he entered on the details of this comparison, he was bound to explain wherein consisted the injustice of the disparity of taxation. Adam Smith laid down in his *Treatise on The Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Book V., Chapter 2) this proposition, which had never been contested—

"The subjects of every State ought to contribute towards the support of the Government, as nearly as possible, in proportion to their respective abilities—that is, in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the State. The expense of government to the individuals of a great nation is like the expense of management to the joint tenants of a great estate, who are all obliged to contribute in proportion to their respective interests in the State. In the observation or neglect of this maxim consists what is called the equality, or inequality, of taxation."

That maxim in the case of Ireland had been for the last 30 years grievously violated. He held in his hand the Parliamentary Return of the 7th of August, 1874, which gave the Revenue derived from taxation of Great Britain and Ireland at the decennial periods 1841, 1851, 1861, and 1871, furnished by the Treasury, by Order of this House, on his

Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth

Sir Joseph M'Kenna's Motion. The year 1841 was included in that Return in order that the House might have, in juxtaposition, the taxation of Ireland, before, as well as after, the Famine of 1846. The gross Imperial taxation of Ireland in 1841, with a population exceeding 8,000,000, was £3,907,238. The Irish people were not lightly taxed, then, but heavily taxed, having regard to actual ability. Nevertheless, 41 years after the Union, measured by population, the taxation was 9s. 6½d. per head, and no more. The Imperial taxation of Ireland in 1851 did not recede as compared to 1841, although the population was reduced from 8,175,124 to 6,552,385. The taxation of Ireland in 1851 was £4,006,711. One should rather have expected a reduction. He founded no complaint on that, however; he merely asked hon. Members to bear in mind that 51 years after the Union the Imperial taxation of Ireland stood at £4,000,000 sterling. Owing to the decrease of population over which this taxation had to be distributed, the incidence measured per head rose from 9s. 6½d. in 1841 to 12s. 2½d. in 1851. The next decade showed more astonishing figures. Between 1851 and 1861 the Imperial taxation of Ireland was raised from £4,006,711 to £6,420,378, an awful load, quite 60 per cent increase of the burden; but a still greater increase when measured by each head of the diminished population which had to bear it, for it showed an advance from 12s. 2½d. to £1 2s. 1½d. per head, being about 75 per cent in the decade. Between 1861 and 1871 the Imperial taxation of Ireland increased from £6,420,000 to £7,086,593, which showed an increase of 75 per cent as compared to the amount at which it stood 20 years before; but this increase, operating on a still diminishing population, raised the incidence for each head of the population from 12s. 2½d. in 1851 to £1 6s. 1d. in 1871, an increase in the 20 years of 120 per cent. And he ventured to say that when they obtained the Return which he now looked for, it would be shown that owing to the diminution of the population—even though the gross taxation had ceased to ascend—that the increase of taxation, as measured per head of the population, had grown still more severe. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) had adverted to the rule laid down by

Adam Smith, that taxation should, as nearly as possible, be levied on the subjects of a State in the ratio of the incomes which they enjoyed under its protection. That principle applied in strongest force to Empires made up of several Nationalities, and where the possessions of an entire people might be measured with approximate accuracy. How that principle had been set at nought in the case of Ireland and Great Britain he expected to make very clear. In 1851 the Imperial taxation of Ireland was, as compared with that of Great Britain, as one to 12. In 1861, owing to the disproportionately increased levy of Imperial taxation in Ireland, the proportion of the Irish contribution was raised to that of one to nine. In 1871, owing to the still further increase of Imperial taxes on Ireland, the proportion was raised to that of one to eight. Since then, so far as Ireland was concerned, there had not been a vestige of relief or amelioration of any kind. A Return obtained by the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren) in 1884, to which he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) should again have occasion to refer, would show that for the year ended March, 1883, the Imperial taxation levied off Ireland only amounted to a sum equal to 1-10th of Great Britain; but no burden had been struck off Ireland in the meantime. That country had simply broken down, and her purchasing powers had fallen away in the ratio of the diminution of the population since 1871. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) should now elucidate the unfairness of the increase of the taxation in Ireland by showing what was the course of things in Great Britain in respect to Imperial taxation within the period 1841 to 1871. The taxation of Great Britain, measured relatively to each head of the population, was—in 1841, £2 9s. 9½d.; in 1851, £2 7s. 4½d.; in 1861, £2 9s. 9½d.; in 1871, £2 4s. 1½d.—showing a decrease of 11 per cent in the incidence, as measured in respect to each head of the population, between 1841 and 1871. When the like test was applied to the taxation of the population of Ireland, it was found that it had been augmented from 9s. 6½d. per head in 1841 to £1 6s. 2½d. in 1871, an increase of 175 per cent, mark, during the very same period when the pressure of taxation was reduced 11 per cent in respect to

each head of the population of Great Britain. But, then, he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) had been told that the taxation for each head of the population of Great Britain still greatly exceeded the taxation in respect of each head of the population of Ireland. Yes, truly; and the taxation in respect to each head of the population of Ireland was five times as great as the taxation in respect to each head of the population of India; but that did not prove that the Indian population was not more heavily taxed than the Irish, for taxation had to be estimated, and ought to be levied, in proportion to wealth, and not in the ratio of numbers. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) had adduced the comparison of the taxation in respect to the populations of Great Britain and Ireland simply to show that in regard to Great Britain it had demonstrated progressive alleviation, and in respect to Ireland an extraordinarily progressive increase of burden. As to the relative powers of Great Britain and Ireland to sustain taxation, he should be more specific presently. There was nothing which he then adduced that had not been within the knowledge of Parliament for more than 10 years; but the legitimate arguments based thereon had been met with every form of evasion. One right hon. Gentleman, a Chancellor of the Exchequer, who now adorned the Upper House, had the temerity to say that Ireland was not taxed at all, but individuals, no doubt, were taxed who happened to reside in Ireland; but their taxation must have been just and fair, because the same tariff was applied in respect to the same articles, whether consumed in Ireland or in Great Britain, and so he disposed of all grievance, ignoring, or affecting to ignore, the fact that unless the habits of the different nations constituting the United Kingdom were identical, and their relative wealth equal, the fact of identity of impost or duty applying to the articles they all more or less consumed afforded no guarantee whatever for the equality of their taxation. Another right hon. Gentleman, who had also been translated to the same convenient haven, whilst admitting the general facts, and that a case of disparity had been made out, raised this phantom of an argument—that he doubted whether it might not be shown that great disparity existed

in the incidence of taxation in one district of England as compared to another; and so he generalized that, because some disparity might exist between one part of England and another, nothing was to be done to mitigate the disparity of taxation between Great Britain as a whole and Ireland as a whole—not even a Commission of Inquiry or a Select Committee was necessary. Not the slightest attempt was made to show why the taxation of Ireland should be increased £3,000,000 a-year contemporaneously with a decrease of 3,000,000 of the population of the unfortunate country; and so things had gone on from bad to worse, redress appearing impossible. All that time there had been great sympathy in England with any foreign Nationality or State which rebelled against its Sovereign or Suzerain. There was slight heed for Ireland calling out in her distress whilst her people were flying from her shores. But the House, as at present constituted, would expect him (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) on this occasion not merely to point out the fiscal results, but to show how the injustice of which he complained had been carried out, and particularly to show how it was possible that a common tariff, applicable with similar duties to Great Britain and Ireland, should favour the former, and work out conspicuous injustice to Ireland. He would explain all this, not exhaustively, but, he hoped, sufficiently. The greatest source of Revenue in the United Kingdom—of the many which existed—was that which might be generalized under the head of "Taxes on Alcoholic Beverages." These were not regulated according to any scientific principle. If it were so, they would, doubtless, be taxed equally, having regard to the quantity of alcohol contained in each. The disparity of duties, however, in respect to alcohol was not of recent origin; but the nature of the disparity had been in our own times altered, and this alteration had been made so as to give England the greatest advantage, and to press with extreme and exhaustive severity on Ireland. From 1840 up to the year 1880, with a slight interval, the Malt Duties—which were, in fact, the duties on brewers' drinks, ale, porter, and beer—had been levied at the rate of 2s. 8½d. a-bushel on the dry malt. There had also been a duty on hops, another ingredient of beer; but he would take

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no further notice of that duty at present, but content himself by saying that the duty was in its result equal to a tax of 2s. a-gallon on the alcoholic equivalent of every gallon of proof spirits contained in the beer. Since that time, in 1880, the Malt Duty had been repealed, and for it was substituted a duty on the brewed liquor computed according to its alcoholic strength. When the right hon. Gentleman now at the head of Her Majesty's Government (Mr. Gladstone) carried the measure for commutation of the Malt Duty into a Liquor Duty, he exposed the fact that the duty on the English national beverage of beer, porter, and ale was only 2s. in respect to the alcoholic equivalent of every gallon of proof spirits contained in the brewed drink. Everyone would agree that in that case there had been an enormous disparity in the tax on alcohol where brewers' drinks constituted the chief popular beverage, as they did in England, contrasted with the duty of 10s. a-gallon on the Irish popular beverage, to which it had been raised from 2s. 8d. a-gallon, the rate of duty in 1853. Now, they had to consider the effect of the increase of the Spirit Duty from 2s. 8d. a-gallon to 10s. a-gallon between 1853 and 1871. The effect of the increase of duty would be illustrated by the following fact, shown by the Return in his hand, if carefully examined. From a population reduced by 1,140,000 souls, and in spite of a reduced consumption of 1,700,000 gallons, there was extracted £2,300,000 more tax on this one article in the year 1871 than in 1851. That was a contemporaneous relief of so much to England. Every additional pound levied off the people of Ireland went as palpably in relief of English taxpayers, or in reduction of the National Debt, as if the amount had been levied off Ireland as a rate in aid or a war ransom. Some people were surprised, or affected to be surprised, for some years past that things had, so to say, broken down in Ireland, and that there had been an uprising against rent. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) was certainly not surprised, except that all that had not occurred in Ireland many years before. In no part of Europe, or of the world, so far as he knew, did so monstrous a system of fiscal injustice prevail as the fiscal system of the United Kingdom in its bearing on Ireland. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna)

attributed no malignant design to anyone; he left it for those who were curious on such matters to determine whether the permanent officials of the Treasury in former years, or the Statesmen who held Her Majesty's Seals of Office, were, or had been, the real authors and inventors of the system. But see in what it had eventuated. In extracting an annual amount of Imperial taxation from Ireland, which, measured by income, would require an Income Tax of 5s. 3d. in the pound to commute it, whilst to commute the whole Imperial taxation of Great Britain into an Income Tax would only require a rating fractionally in excess of 2s. 6d. on identical Schedules to those of Ireland—he could give the precise computations, but that he feared to weary the House, whose indulgence he had already trespassed upon. There had been a Return obtained a few Sessions before by the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren), which purported to give the actual and relative contributions to Revenue by taxation of each of the three countries constituting the United Kingdom. By that Return it appeared that the Revenue raised by taxation in Ireland equalled in amount 1-10th of the sum raised by taxation in Great Britain for the year ending 31st March, 1883. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) assumed that Return to be accurate. But what did it show? That Ireland paid Imperial taxation equal to 1-10th of the amount paid by Great Britain, when, in fact, on former statements of equal authority, her fair proportion would have been 1-18th or 1-20th; and when that very Return showed that for the year it dealt with—to 31st March, 1883—the taxation of Ireland, measured by the Income Tax, should have been only the 1-32nd. The proportion of the relative ability of Ireland to bear taxation, estimated as 1-20th of that of Great Britain, he might shortly state, was taken from a Treasury Return of 24th April, 1882, which showed that each penny Income Tax for Ireland yielded £95,000 only, whilst that of Great Britain was set down in the same Treasury Return as £1,946,000 for each penny, a sum 20 times larger than the penny yielded for Ireland. But whilst revolving all those computations and considerations in his mind, after a series of denials from several Chancellors of the Exchequer

that there was really anything abnormal in the incidence of Imperial taxation, after hearing, *ad nauseam*, that Ireland was a favoured nation, treated with more than sisterly self-sacrificing affection by Great Britain, spared some—albeit trifling—taxes which England paid, but at any rate saved something, he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) read in the columns of a morning paper a letter which he believed to be from the highest official statistical authority in the service of the Government, which letter confessed all that had been hitherto denied. This was from the letter of "Economist" (Mr. Giffen) in *The Daily News* of the 6th of this present month (February, 1886)—

"At present Ireland pays more in taxes than her fair share, comparing her resources with those of Great Britain. The figures are not quite certain; but the Irish taxpayer appears to contribute £6,700,000 a-year to the Imperial Exchequer, whereas his proper contribution ought not to be more than half of that sum."

"Economist" (Mr. Giffen) then went on to say that Ireland had more than her proper proportion spent upon her. These were his words—

"The Imperial Exchequer thus gets out of Ireland, in the first place, about £3,200,000 more than it ought to get, and then spends upon the internal administration of Ireland the whole amount."

And then he fairly went on to say—

"The expenditure does not benefit Ireland as it ought to do; but neither does Great Britain gain."

He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) did not complain of these addenda; but he might remark that the chief expenditure on the Imperial Establishments in Ireland, save for the convenience of Great Britain, might as well be made elsewhere—in Malta or Cyprus—except to the extent of £1,000,000 or £1,500,000 a-year. The feeding and lodging and clothing of the Army, the outlay for ordnance, ships, sailors, and the like, were Imperial business; and the charges for all these things had rightly to be defrayed out of the Imperial Revenue, to which Ireland ought to contribute her full quota, and no more; and the amount which Ireland should contribute to the general Revenue of the Empire should be assessed at precisely the same amount if the outlay had been made at London, Malta, Cyprus, Woolwich, or Southampton, as

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if it had been made at Dublin, Cork, or Athlone. He maintained that England, as the chief member of the Empire, and with the strongest interest in preserving its unity and integrity, had the greatest reason to maintain that view. However, all that was somewhat beside the question, and he should not pursue it; but he might say that all he had contended for in that House and outside for the last 20 years was now practically acknowledged, and might be proclaimed without fear of refutation—namely, that the burden of Imperial taxation had been made to fall on Ireland for the last 30 years with double the weight of its incidence than on the wealthier Island. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) would now make a few observations on a case suggested or attempted to be set up in mitigation of the injustice of the proven disparity. That case might be shortly put in this form—that the extraordinary levy was in some degree compensated for by the outlay in Ireland of a much larger sum annually than what was now admitted or proved to be her fair share of the expenditure. The writer in *The Statist* puts this forward for what it might be worth. Well, it was literally worth nothing. The local taxation of Ireland was £4,000,000 a-year; that also was a greater levy, in proportion to the wealth of the two Islands, than the levy for local taxation of Great Britain. But the case of Ireland which he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) desired to put was this—that in 1841, when her population exceeded 8,000,000, her Imperial taxes were barely £4,000,000 sterling; that in 1851 they were barely £4,000,000, and that the injustice of the increase of £3,000,000 of annual taxation, without the slightest evidence that Ireland had any pecuniary benefit thereby, was manifest and monstrous. It appeared to have been the policy of the Treasury for some years past to make the real state of the accounts between Great Britain and Ireland as obscure as possible. Up to 1862 the Treasury had been in the habit of publishing the expenditure of Irish taxation separately from that of Great Britain. Since then, however, no such course had been pursued, and they were left to grope through the Returns of various Departments to make some approximate calculations. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) should, however, take the latest dissected Return—that for 1862—

and tell the House the account it gave of the expenditure of Irish Revenue. In 1862 the Revenue made up of Irish taxation amounted to £6,736,281, and this was how it was expended:—Army and Ordnance, £3,240,380; interest and management of Debt, £1,240,980; miscellaneous payments (including Constabulary), £1,671,814; Public Works, £208,232; remitted English Exchequer, £374,875. How in the name of all that was rational could any sane person treat the expenditure of £3,250,000 on Army and Ordnance as expenditure for Irish purposes, or the interest and management of the National Debt, another £1,125,000? The miscellaneous payments, £1,671,874, no doubt, included items of Imperial Expenditure for Ireland, and so did "Public Works," £208,000. But if it comported with the general policy of the Empire to keep an Army anywhere, it was quite clear the charge for maintaining that Army and the Ordnance Establishments, unless they were quartered on an enemy, should be defrayed out of Imperial funds, to which, of course, Ireland should contribute, having regard to her actual means, in precisely the same ratio as England or Scotland. As a matter of account between the Imperial Exchequer and Ireland, the locality in which the charge for Imperial objects was expended had nothing to do with the distribution of the burden of the charge. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) freely admitted that the local trade of the district in which Imperial funds were expended benefited somewhat by the expenditure; but that was not the point, and had no earthly connection with the distribution of the charge amongst the taxpayers of Great Britain or Ireland. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE, in second-ing the Motion, said, he desired to make a few remarks on the subject which his hon. Friend had brought forward. In Ireland they considered they were not fairly treated in the matter of taxation. They considered, in the first place, that they were overtaxed, having regard to the amount of the Irish National Debt at the time of the Union; and, in the second place, they considered that they were overtaxed, having regard to the poverty of the people compared with the people of England. Hon. Members in

that House might not be cognizant of the facts regarding the Irish National Debt; and he, therefore, thought it well to say a few words upon it. In the year 1794 the Irish National Debt was £2,400,000, in the year 1797 it was £3,000,000, and in the year 1800, the year in which the Legislative Union was passed, it amounted, according to some authorities, to £28,000,000. It was estimated by Mr. Grattan at £25,000,000; but he (Sir Thomas Esmonde) had made a calculation, and he estimated that the Debt was £24,536,000, but he would take it at the sum of £28,000,000 out of regard to the susceptibilities of Members in that House. He would like to say a word as to how this National Debt was constituted. From 1797 to 1800 it was necessary to maintain a large force of English troops in Ireland. In 1797 the number was 50,000 men; and in 1800 the number reached 170,000 men. The cost of maintaining those troops amounted to £16,000,000. And that was one item in the National Debt. Then there was paid to the owners of Irish boroughs, for the purpose of purchasing their votes and their influence to effect the Legislative Union, a sum of £1,500,000. Then there was paid to a certain class of individuals, who were termed "suffering Loyalists," in satisfaction of their claims £1,500,000. What those claims were must be left to the imagination. There was paid for secret service to informers, who instigated the people to rebellion and then informed upon them, a sum of £53,547. There was given to individuals who were called "deserving men," for suppressing that rebellion and carrying the Act of Union, £1,000,000. There was paid to the Legal Advisers of the Government £500,000; and there was paid to several individuals for compensation for the removal of the Parliament from Dublin, £500,000. To give some idea of the persons who received compensation he might mention that the rat-catcher to the Lord Lieutenant received a certain sum of money. In this way was constituted the Irish National Debt, which he estimated at £24,536,000; but he would be content to take the larger figure. Now, he did not say anything as to the character of that Debt. They would accept it as an accomplished fact. The Legislative Union, he thought it would be admitted, originated for the

benefit of England; but, nevertheless, the people of Ireland had to pay for it. At the time of the Union the National Debt of England was 16 times greater than the National Debt of Ireland; and by the Act of Union solemn promises were made to Ireland that at no time should she be called upon to bear taxes arising from the pre-Union Debt of England. These promises were embodied in the Act of Union, which a short time ago was described in that House as a fundamental law. But, nevertheless, the promises of that Act were abrogated. English Ministers did not find much difficulty in changing fundamental laws when the change was for their own benefit. It was only when fundamental laws affected other people that English Ministers regarded them as unchangeable. The Irish National Debt at the time of the Union was 1-16th of the National Debt of England; and it was provided, he thought by Clause 7, that should the Debt of Ireland at any time reach 12-15ths of the National Debt of England that the two Exchequers should be consolidated. In 1803 the Irish Debt was £43,000,000. In 1804 it was £53,000,000, and in 1816 it was £112,740,000. How this was brought about was easily explained. The Irish Revenues were not sufficient to meet the increase of the Irish National Debt, which was incurred at the time of the Union; and this deficit was made up by loans which the Imperial Government raised, and then charged to the National Debt. Therefore, it was very easy to understand how in 17 years the National Debt of Ireland had increased from £28,000,000 to £112,000,000. It was stipulated by the Act of Union that Ireland should pay 2-15ths of the taxation of the Kingdom; but when the Union was passed it was charged 2-7ths. In 1817 the Irish Debt was £112,000,000, and the English Debt was £734,000,000; and having reached the limit stated in the Act of Union the two Debts were consolidated, and Ireland was charged a proportion of taxes entirely out of proportion to the amount stipulated in the Act of Union. They also objected, secondly, to the proportion of taxation because of the present condition of the country. Ireland was not a country like England, with great manufactures. Ireland had manufactures prior to the Union; but owing to the system that since then pre-

valued, these manufactures had disappeared, and commercial enterprise had completely left the country, and the people were obliged to turn their attention solely to the cultivation of the soil. Then, under the system of law that prevailed the land of Ireland was not administered for the benefit of the people, heavy rents were imposed upon them; and he now asserted that Ireland was better able to bear its present taxation prior to the Union than at the present time. Even deducting all that Ireland received, he submitted that, what with taxes and rent to absentee landlords, the country paid a sum of £8,000,000 or £9,000,000 sterling. If they took the basis of property they would find that the value of property on which Income Tax was paid in England in 1869 was £370,000,000, while in Ireland it was £25,000,000. That showed that property in Ireland was 1-17th that of England. In 1870 Ireland paid in Revenue £7,000,000, while Great Britain paid £78,000,000. That showed that while Ireland had only 1-17th of the wealth of England it had paid 1-9th of the Imperial Revenue. That, he thought, clearly showed that Ireland was overtaxed, and that its just proportion was much lower than £7,000,000 a-year. He thought it was most important that these facts should be known, in view of the alteration that would take place in the relations between the two countries.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That there be laid before this House, a Return of the Gross Imperial Revenue of Ireland derived from taxation, and of the Population of Ireland for the years 1851, 1861, 1871, and 1881, and a like Return for Great Britain for the same years, being in both cases a continuation, in like form, of Parliamentary Paper, No. 407, of Session 1874."—(*Sir Joseph M'Kenna.*)

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL, who had on the Paper an Amendment to leave out the word "Ireland" and insert "Scotland," said, when he intimated his Amendment he did not do so in any unfriendly spirit, his desire simply being that the facts should be brought out. He contended that a Return issued on the Motion of the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. M'Laren) with regard to the Revenue in 1882-3 gave all the information necessary for practical purposes. It appeared to him that the

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hon. Member for South Monaghan (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) was in the position of having aimed at the pigeon and hit the crow; while he had endeavoured to prove his case with regard to Ireland, he had really given material for an incontestible case for Scotland. The Return procured by the hon. Member for Stafford showed that in 1882-3 the population of Ireland was about one-seventh of the United Kingdom; whereas the taxation of Ireland was as nearly as possible one-eleventh part of the taxation of the United Kingdom. He quite admitted that Ireland was a poorer country, and ought to pay a smaller proportion of taxation. He thought there was not a glaring injustice under the present arrangement; but, on the contrary, Ireland paid pretty much what she ought to pay, being a proportion of something more than half what the average inhabitants of England or Scotland paid. On the other hand, Ireland had great advantages, in many ways, over England and Scotland with respect to taxation. The Income Tax was collected much less harshly in Ireland than in Great Britain, and the upper classes in Ireland were exempted from many taxes that were paid in the sister Isle. In Ireland no Land Tax, no House Tax, no assessed taxes, no police or education rates were paid. Ireland also received a large amount by way of local grants; they merely looked at the financial question. He contended that Ireland was not an oppressed country, but, on the contrary, was a specially favoured one. But while Ireland was liberally and even generously dealt with, what were the facts with regard to Scotland? It was a very great hardship that the alcohol consumed by the people of Scotland, and to a great extent by the people of Ireland, paid five times as much per gallon as that imposed on the people of England. The Englishman was enabled to muddle himself with beer five days a-week for the same sum which the Scotsman paid for a glass of whisky on Saturday night, if he was imprudent enough to take it at that time. Scotland paid in regard to taxation of whisky the same as Ireland paid; but Scotland consumed more whisky in proportion than Ireland, and consumed less beer. The consequence was that the taxation of Scotland was really very

much heavier in proportion than the taxation of England, because they had in Scotland their whisky taxed very much heavier than the beer in England. All other taxes were paid equally in Scotland. They had no exemptions from Land Tax, or House Tax, or assessed taxes, or from education and police rates. On the contrary, they paid, he believed, more for their schools than almost any other part of the Kingdom. It was, therefore, undoubtedly the case that Scotland paid more than her fair share of taxation. In 1883 Ireland, with a population of 5,000,000, paid a taxation of £6,654,000; whereas Scotland, with a population of only 3,800,000, paid a taxation of £8,000,000. When they compared the taxation of Scotland with that of the United Kingdom they found in respect of spirits and beer that Scotland paid £4,000,000 out of £27,000,000, or a good deal more than one-seventh of the whole taxation, whereas the population of Scotland was a good deal less than one-ninth of the population of the Kingdom. The total taxation of Scotland, which was £8,000,000 out of £73,000,000, was somewhat larger than the proportion of population; and when they contrasted the enormous wealth of the City of London and the poverty of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland the disparity appeared very much greater. He was in favour of justice, and even generosity to Ireland; but, at the same time, as a Representative of Scottish taxpayers, he was anxious that in any new arrangement they should not impose a heavy additional burden on the over-taxed people of Scotland in order to carry to an excess generosity towards Ireland.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I do not rise to continue the controversy between Scotland and Ireland, which has been initiated by my hon. Friend; but I am anxious to express my sense of the extreme importance of the question which has been brought before the House by the hon. Member opposite. I regret that the matter has not been dealt with by a Committee or otherwise at an earlier stage; because, if there is a case on behalf of Ireland, everyone must be most anxious to examine that case to the very bottom, and those of us who are in favour of maintaining the Legislative Union between England and Ireland do

feel all the more bound to see that in maintaining that Union we are not doing any financial injustice to a country which is in a minority so far as this House is concerned. Therefore, I think every Motion that comes before the House from the Irish quarter, which can substantiate even a *prima facie* case of financial injustice, ought to be examined with the most anxious desire on the part of the House to probe it to the bottom. It seems to me that this matter has obtained additional importance from the circumstance to which the hon. Member who brought the Motion before the House alluded—namely, that a distinguished statistician has made the statement that Ireland is paying too much towards Imperial taxation. This Motion is for a Return carrying forward the figures which have been submitted on previous occasions to this House; but I venture to think that even when those figures are in our hands we shall not be advanced very much further. We require the figures in order to form our judgment; but the Return will not show whether Ireland is paying too much, or her fair share, or too little. It cannot be shown simply by a dry Return, and for this reason, that the question is, what principles are to be applied in determining what each country ought to pay? Every hon. Member would see that according as you take up the principle of population, or of property, or of the various forms of ability to pay, so you will be able to establish whether a country is paying too much or too little. Let me take a case for instance—I do not say whether at this moment it goes for or against me—but I am prepared to contend that the amount of Income Tax which is paid by a country does not in itself form any basis as to the aggregate taxation which that country ought to pay. It simply constitutes one element in that most complicated problem. It might be possible that one country had a very large wealthy class and a very poor class; that, on the other hand, another country might have a very substantial population of artisans, but very few above that line. Then any deduction which would be drawn from the relative amount of the taxable property of the two countries would give a very inadequate standard as to what the classes below the Income Tax would be liable to pay. That is only an illustra-

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tion; but it does not apply to Ireland, because, while the Irish have a very much smaller class of men who contribute Income Tax, when you go below the line where Income Tax is paid they have again a poorer population than we have in England. That, then, is a circumstance to be taken into account upon the other side. Then here is another question. How far is it any compensation, in looking to the taxation of Ireland as a whole, that there are large exemptions in favour of certain classes of the wealthier inhabitants—for instance, that they pay no taxes in respect of servants, and other exceptions of that kind? That is no great advantage to the bulk of the population who, if a certain total is to be raised from Ireland, have to pay so much more. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) made this observation—that if the wealthy classes are paying too little in Ireland, perhaps the poorer classes are paying too much. Well, supposing, on the whole, Ireland is paying its fair share, I can, nevertheless, fancy that the distribution of the burden would not give satisfaction to the bulk of the population in Ireland. Then, again, the hon. Member who seconded this Motion (Sir Thomas Esmonde) spoke of the aggregate rateable property, if I understood him, with regard to the Income Tax, and compared that with the total payments made by the Irish people in regard to taxation. But I would venture to contend that that is not a fair application of the principle at all, because while rateable property is an element of the contributing wealth, neither rateable property, nor personal property, nor any form of wealth, is the only contributor towards taxation. If there are also taxes on consumption a population, of course, ought not to escape its fair share of payment for consumable articles, because the rateable property happens to be less than it is in the Sister Island. I have ventured to put forward these considerations in order to show that I do not think that we shall advance the matter very much simply by the production of figures. What will some time or another be necessary, if it is not done on the present occasion, is that the principles should be grappled with by a Committee, or otherwise, and that then, applying those principles, we should see whether or not we could come to some agreement. I am sure the bulk

of the population of both countries would wish to come to a fair agreement upon this matter. I have thought myself of moving to substitute a Committee on this occasion for a Return; but I have reason to believe that that in the present position of Irish affairs would not be a very convenient arrangement, and I further think it will be wise, and may advance the matter, if the Return should be procured without any delay. But if nothing should come of the presentation of the Return, I trust at some future period that this question may be renewed, and that we may endeavour by such means as may be in our power to probe this very important question to the very bottom to see if a grievance exists, and if a grievance really exists, to set to work to remedy it in a spirit of justice and equity to all parts of the United Kingdom.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he must compliment the hon. Member for South Monaghan (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) on the manner in which he had prepared his case; and though he could not altogether agree with the hon. Baronet who seconded him, still the care with which he had studied the question gave them every reason to hope that he would prove a valuable contributor to their debates. He did not rise to oppose the Motion; but, at the same time, those figures must be accepted with some reservation. For instance, the hon. Member stated the relative wealth of England and Ireland, taking the Income Tax as an absolute proof. But the Irish holders of foreign securities and English funds registered at the Bank of England would appear as English taxpayers. A certain portion of the Beer Duties, though paid in Ireland, fell on English consumers, and this could not be exactly allowed for. The hon. Member very fairly admitted that if Ireland contributed somewhat more than her share, she received also much more than in proportion. It was a salient fact that no tax fell specially on Ireland, while Ireland was exempt from some which fell on England. Again, Irish and Scotch farmers paid at a lower rate than English. On the whole, he doubted whether Ireland or Scotland was unduly taxed; but they only wished for what was fair and just; and he suggested that, instead of omitting Ireland to include Scotland, as suggested by the hon. Member for

Kirkcaldy, the Returns should include both.

MR. DILLON said, he did not desire to take up the time of the House for more than a few minutes. His wish to address the House was chiefly owing to some observations which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen). He must congratulate the House upon the fact that the right hon. Member had now, after a long time, spoken in a fair spirit towards Ireland. The impression on his mind was that the right hon. Gentleman, great financier as he undoubtedly was, was in a state of doubt upon the question whether the Irish people had received fair treatment with respect to taxation. It was a striking fact that, although the right hon. Gentleman had been many years in that House, that doubt had never crossed his mind until now, though the question had been raised both inside and outside the House over and over again. He could easily explain that extraordinary change. He was glad to think that in the minds of those who were intensely anxious to maintain the Union between the two countries there was a growing desire to be just to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the produce of the Income Tax was not a fair test of the comparative ability of the two countries to bear taxation. But in the degree in which it was not a fair test the argument was even stronger in Ireland's favour. The right hon. Gentleman had said that in one of two countries there might be a very wealthy class, while the remainder of the people were miserably poor, and in another there might be a large body of prosperous artisans and lower middle class. But it was a commonplace with respect to Ireland that the prosperous middle class was absent, and that there was a great gulf between the two sections of the population. The wealthy in Ireland, though not so rich as the wealthy class in England, were yet not so much poorer than the corresponding class in England as the poor of Ireland were poorer than the poor of England. Between the very rich and the very poor in England there was a large class of persons coming gradually down who were all just under the Income Tax. When, however, they got out of the ranks of the wealthy in Ireland, they at once dropped into the great

unfathomable gulf of poverty and misery, with no intervening middle class. Whatever was the case during a period of comparative prosperity in the past, the great wave of depression which had passed over England as well as Ireland had notoriously struck the agricultural class more severely than the manufacturing or trading class. As the people of Ireland were only an agricultural class, they had, consequently, suffered infinitely more severely, and the poverty which had always existed became intensified. His hon. Friend, therefore, was really doing less than justice to Ireland in taking the Income Tax as the test. In Ireland the tax produced about £500,000, as against upwards of £10,000,000 in England. Thus, Ireland's wealth ought to be reckoned as 1-20th of that of England alone, whereas she paid 1-10th of the whole Revenue of the United Kingdom. Therefore, he believed his hon. Friend would be inside the truth if he said that on the present basis of taxation Ireland had been paying more than twice her share. Any arguments based on the assumption that a due proportion was spent in Ireland were entirely beside the question. It was a wasteful expenditure, necessitated by ill-government, and was a practical waste of money. It was true that by an imposition of taxes upon the wealthy classes in Ireland something might be done to redress the balance; but the taxes from which the wealthier classes were exempted were very small—as, for instance, the Land Tax, which did not produce much. He did not believe that such a tax would make any appreciable difference in the Revenue. The House was perfectly welcome to put on a Land Tax at once on the wealthier classes if they would redress the grievances of the poor of Ireland. Then it was said that there was a good deal of Irish capital invested in England. But that was far more than compensated by English investments in Ireland. The more this question was examined the more it would be found that it was not a matter of ancient history, but would be found to be one of pressing interest when the relations of the two countries came to be re-adjusted, as they would in the course of a very short time. It would be one of the main points for inquiry, if the whole question were gone into, how Ireland came to be charged with a share of

the Debt of the country altogether different from what was provided for under the provisions of the Act of Union; whether that was done justly; whether at present Ireland was not paying an undue proportion of the general Expenditure; and, further, whether, in the times when the Irish Exchequer was managed separately, those having charge of it did not, in the dark and without any control, practise a wholesale and monstrous robbery, amounting to £100,000,000. His own desire and view as to the issue of this question would be that some arrangement might be come to which would be accepted on all sides as a fair and just arrangement—that they should mutually consent simply to draw a veil over the past and agree to do justice to each other in the future.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER) thanked the hon. Gentleman opposite for the spirit in which he had initiated the present discussion; and to the Motion which had been submitted to the House Her Majesty's Government would offer no opposition. Their desire was to ascertain what were the real facts of the case. He was quite sure that no one in that House wished otherwise than that while Ireland should not enjoy exceptional advantages she should not bear exceptional burdens. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) had imported Scotland into the matter; and the same remark, of course, applied to Scotland. Might he be permitted to apply it to England also?—because such re-adjustments as were proposed for Ireland and for Scotland might possibly tend to press somewhat severely on the English taxpayer. He was quite willing to admit, in the first instance, that we could not exclude from consideration the relative capacity of those upon whom the taxation fell. He himself could not see that we could upon any principle simply take up the sum total of the amount to be raised and divide that by the sum total of population, and then say the taxation should be borne in those proportions. To take one illustration, the entire amount raised in this country on tobacco was in the last year, for which he had the Return before him, £8,800,000, of which Scotland paid £807,000, or one-tenth, whereas the amount contributed by Ireland was £1,200,000, or

Mr. Dillon

about one-seventh of the whole. Now, when the House remembered that when an Irish peasant spent 6d. on tobacco he paid 5d. in taxation, they would remember what a very heavy burden this imposed on, perhaps, the most necessitous class of the community. With reference to the general figures, the taxation borne by Great Britain in 1851 was £49,250,000, of which the sum raised in Ireland was £4,000,000. In 1861 the taxation of Great Britain had sprung up to £57,500,000, of which there was raised in Ireland £6,500,000. In 1871 the figures were practically stationary; but in 1883 the taxation of Great Britain had advanced to £66,500,000, whereas that of Ireland still remained at £6,500,000. Therefore, although there had been a very large—as he thought, a too large—increase in the taxation and Expenditure of the country in that time, yet his hon. Friend would see that the extra burden of the taxation imposed in the period referred to had been borne to a great extent by Great Britain, and not by Ireland. Now, the Revenue of Great Britain, according to the Return he held in his hand, was £66,250,000 in 1883, and the population 30,500,000, making the average taxation per head £2 3s. 5d. In Ireland in the same period, the Revenue being £6,750,000, and the population 8,000,000, the taxation was equal to £1 6s. 4d. per head, showing a very considerable difference per head as between the two countries. Some of the criticisms in reference to this Return he admitted were not inaccurate; but taking the year 1884-5, he would give his hon. Friend the exact amount paid into the Exchequer. In Customs, £1,928,000; Excise, £4,270,000; Stamps, £610,000; Income Tax, £564,000; Total, £7,372,000. But that amount had to be adjusted in two directions; it had to be increased, and it had to be decreased. There was a considerable amount of duty levied in Ireland in the shape of Excise on spirits and beer which were consumed in England, and the duty on which, of course, was paid by the consumer; and, on the other hand, there was a certain quantity of tea and other Customs-bearing articles the duty on which was paid in England, but which were consumed in Ireland. In this and other ways there was considerable difficulty in ascertaining exactly what was the true propor-

tion of taxes levied upon Ireland. He had, with the assistance of the very able officers of the Treasury, given his best attention to this matter; and the result he had arrived at was that the net taxation borne by the people of Ireland in the financial year ending March, 1885, was about £6,500,000. Reverting to the general taxation of the Kingdom, he found that the income from taxes in the financial year 1884-5 was, in round figures, £73,000,000—that was the sum raised in the Three Kingdoms. Of that £73,000,000, £58,340,000 was raised in England and Wales, £8,005,000 in Scotland, and the amount raised in Ireland was the figure he had named. He was not in those figures including the Post Office, for it was not a source of Revenue, but a business carried on by the State. It was, indeed, to be regretted that the national accounts were kept so as to include the Post Office Returns, for it led to wrong ideas on the subject. For instance, people talked about burdens of £80,000,000, £90,000,000, and £100,000,000 on the taxpayers, while, as a matter of fact, the taxation last year was only £73,000,000. To this taxation Ireland contributed £6,500,000, or about 1-11th. It was necessary to consider the local expenditure of that money, though he knew that this was a delicate subject as regarded Ireland. They were, however, confronted with the expenditure in Ireland; and he must consider it, though he expressed no opinion as to whether the expenditure was in all respects wise or not. He, of course, did not fasten upon Ireland any special charge for the military in Ireland. The actual Civil Service Expenditure in Ireland was, exclusive of collection of Revenue expenses, £4,000,000 out of that £6,500,000 which it contributed.

Mr. PARNELL asked if that included the Constabulary?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, it certainly did, and the Constabulary Vote formed a large portion of it. It was last year £1,500,000. In England there was a Constabulary Vote, too, the only difference being that only half the expenses of the English Constabulary were paid from the Consolidated Fund, whereas the whole expense was paid in the case of Ireland.

Mr. SEXTON: Will you give the items of the £4,000,000?

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he was hardly able to do that without reference. Education, he was glad to say, now amounted to nearly £1,000,000 a-year in Ireland. There were law and justice and other items that brought up the expense for what might be termed the local government of Ireland to £4,000,000. The Imperial Charges on the Consolidated Fund might be taken at £31,000,000, and £30,000,000 for the Army and Navy, and that made £61,000,000 for Imperial Charges. To this Ireland's contribution was about £2,500,000, and he would be within the mark if he said that Ireland's contribution was less than 1-20th of these Imperial Charges. It therefore appeared that Ireland, in round figures, contained one-seventh of the population of the United Kingdom, contributed about 1-11th of the gross Revenue, and after deducting the cost of local government less than 1-20th to Imperial Charges. He did not desire to argue about these figures, but to place them before the House for due consideration. Attention had been called to the poverty of Ireland as compared with Scotland. Ireland certainly had not the resources and reservoirs of mineral wealth possessed by Scotland. There was, in fact, an enormous disproportion between the wealth of Scotland and that of Ireland. But he did not think that Ireland was on those retrograde lines that had been described. A good test of wealth—a more accurate test than the payment of taxation or Income Tax—was the amount paid for Legacy and Succession Duty in respect of property in the country. In 1871 the property in Ireland on which Legacy and Succession Duty were assessed was £7,500,000 in value, while in 1884 it was £10,650,000. The Income Tax Returns told the same story. In 1871 the gross amount, without deductions, on which the tax was charged, was £26,000,000; in 1874 it was £36,000,000; and the actual payments were on £27,000,000. Under these circumstances, he did not think they ought to take so very gloomy a view of the financial condition of Ireland as had been presented by some hon. Gentlemen opposite. He had no objection to grant the Return asked for, and, if the Scotch Members desired, to include Scotland within its scope; and he hoped and believed that, whatever course might be

taken, full justice would be done in this matter to the claims of England, Ireland, and Scotland.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN said, he should not pretend to add anything to the information which had already been placed at the disposal of hon. Gentlemen. He was able to do little more than recapitulate the figures and facts to which they had already listened. In 1841 the taxation of Great Britain was £2 9s. 9½d. per head, and in Ireland 9s. 6½d., Ireland's proportion of the gross taxation being about 1-12th. In 1871 the taxation in Great Britain was £2 2s. 1½d., and in Ireland £1 6s. 3½d., certainly a vastly disproportionate arrangement. While the taxation of Great Britain declined moderately, that of Ireland was increased to nearly three times what it was in 1841. In Great Britain the population rapidly increased and the taxation fell, while in Ireland the population diminished and the taxation increased. According to the assessment for Income Tax in 1861, Ireland's wealth—Ireland's capacity to pay taxes—was 1-17th that of Great Britain; and in 1882 it had declined to the proportion of 1 to 21. This, he submitted, was a very fair indication of the relative capacity of the several Kingdoms to contribute to the National Expenditure. It was no answer to the charge that the taxation of Ireland was unfair to say that Ireland was free from certain taxes which were levied in Great Britain. They had no objection at all to the wealthy classes of Ireland being taxed the same as the wealthy classes in England; but what was complained of was that Ireland, as a whole, was overburdened with taxation of a general kind. While Great Britain with its vast wealth paid only 2s. 6d. in the pound on its income, impoverished Ireland paid 5s. 8d. in the pound on her income. The population and wealth of Great Britain increased and taxation declined. While the population and wealth of Ireland declined rapidly, Irish taxation per head almost trebled from 1841 to 1871. When in 1853 it was proposed to increase the taxation of Ireland, the taxation of Great Britain was subjected to a net reduction of £1,040,000, which drew from an English Member of this House—Sir Francis Baring—a protest against the conduct pursued towards Ireland. No one could deny that wrong and in-

justice were thus inflicted upon that country. Dr. Johnson must have known his countrymen very well when he warned the Irish people that if they ever entered into a Legislative Union with England, Ireland would be robbed. Certainly Ireland had been robbed.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): I should be very sorry to disturb in any degree the excellent spirit which has pervaded this debate, and I do not think that anything I have to say will produce that effect. I must admit that the question has been approached from all sides in a considerate spirit, and in that I rejoice, for this reason above all others, that there is no other hope of arriving at a definite settlement of the question. It does not admit demonstrative handling. It has been found extremely difficult on all sides. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen) stated with truth that we could not expect to make great advance by means of this debate, and he expressed the wish that a Committee should be appointed to examine it more thoroughly. That is a most natural wish; but it behoves us to recollect that Committees have been appointed for the purpose of examining this question, and "bolting it to the bran," and that the last of these Committees, at any rate, which I will take as the most important, has not been able to arrive at a definite conclusion. The Committee of 1863-4, which was appointed for the express purpose of determining, if possible, within the Committee Room whether Ireland pays excessively or not in proportion to her means—that Committee arrived at no conclusion, and made no Report upon that subject. But the Committee made a very full Report upon the general subject and upon many points, and evidently gave very great attention and labour to the investigation; but upon the main point I do not think that the most careful examination of the Report will succeed in discovering any distinct utterances on the part of the Committee. The Committee was obliged to give the go-by to the question, for the very simple reason that it could not arrive at any amount of unanimity, even by a majority, on that point. I felt myself obliged, having listened with interest to the whole of the debate, to notice one or two propositions to which I am bound to say I cannot accede, and

by which I cannot be bound, and especially the proposition which appears a favourite one with Irish Members on these occasions—namely, that the yield of the Income Tax affords, upon broad and general grounds, a fair and just test of the ability of Ireland to pay taxes, and, therefore, of the measure in which taxation should be paid by Ireland. I think it is much more true that the yield of the Income Tax is one of the elements necessary in order to enable us to form the best judgment we can upon the matter; but the reasons are distinct why we cannot possibly take it as an absolute measure. [Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA: Hear, hear!] I am glad that the Mover of the Motion, whom I compliment on the manner in which it was moved, admits that proposition. Undoubtedly, it is the fact that so far as Schedule A is concerned—I am not aware that the same observation would apply to Schedule B—and I do not urge it in that case; because there, although an apparent inequality, unquestionably as far as Schedule A is concerned—which in Ireland bears a very important proportion to the whole—the taxpayer in Ireland has considerable advantage, a large advantage, as compared with the taxpayer in England. He pays upon his net income by no means so much, inasmuch as he pays upon valuation, whereas in England and Scotland—in Scotland with one exception, and in England with no exception—the tax is paid upon the gross rental, which includes not only charges of management, but includes charges for repairs, in many cases extremely heavy, the charge in England forming a considerable proportion, sometimes 10, 15, and even 20 per cent of the rental. These repairs, which are absolutely necessary to keep the property going, and enable it to pay taxes at all, are subject to taxes. This is one reason why you cannot take Income Tax as a test. A second reason is that a proportion of Income Tax is paid by Irishmen in England, to which there is nothing to correspond on the other side of the account, and that amount, whatever it may be, swells the proportion of the English Income Tax in comparison with the Income Tax in Ireland. But I must also say that the relative distribution in society affects the Income Tax in Ireland very differently from the manner in which Eng-

land is touched by it. Some Gentlemen have assumed, not like the Mover of the Motion, that absolutely the Income Tax, be what it may, affords a just test. If the Income Tax is to afford the test of ability, the first thing you must do in order to raise the presumption is to apply it to all incomes. If you apply it to all incomes—of course, that is impossible—it would be obviously necessary to do so to get at the taxable ability. There is another subject to which I will refer—namely, the very large expenditure of the Imperial Exchequer for the Civil Service of Ireland. It has been said by some Gentlemen representative of Ireland that Ireland derives no benefit from that expenditure. I will not say whether Ireland derives benefit or not, or how far it ought to be charged against her in an account of this kind; but one thing I will say, in connection with a long experience at the Treasury, that I have always observed when there has been a question of diminishing that expenditure at any point, or in any particular, such proposals have not been received with favour by the Irish Members. I recollect one particular occasion in which it was proposed to introduce a measure for effecting a large and very important, and evidently necessary, economy in certain classes of Irish establishments, that an Irish Member of great ability gave fair Notice to the Government that he would oppose the Bill, not because the reduction was not necessary, but unless the Government gave a pledge that the money to be saved by it should be expended elsewhere in Ireland for Irish purposes. I do not complain of that, although I think it was pushing things rather far. But you cannot, at the same time you hold that language, say that Ireland derives no benefit from this expenditure. If she has no interest in it why show so considerable anxiety that it should not be diminished? I do not give any positive opinion upon the subject; but I am sorry to say, not from the fault of Ireland, but through the operation of complex causes, especially of the financial administration of this country, it has been found during the whole period of my experience very much more difficult to apply principles of sound economy to the details of administration in Ireland than in England or Scotland. I think that is to be ac-

counted for by large considerations, into which I will not enter, and I am not referring to it as a matter of complaint. I make this concession fully to the Mover of the Motion and the Irish Representatives. It was made by the Committee of 1863-4. They did not make it in express terms, but I cannot have any doubt upon the subject. The Committee of 1863-4 referred to various considerations, and said these considerations unquestionably pointed towards the conclusion that the proportion fixed under the Union arrangement—namely, a proportion of 2 to 15 in the expenditure for Ireland—was too high. I make the admission frankly; I think it is too high. The Committee went on to say, with perfect truth, that Ireland had never paid that proportion. That I believe to be unquestionably true. The question whether Ireland has paid too much or not is another matter, which may deserve very careful consideration. I think the question is of great interest. It is worth while to say one word upon the chapter of finance to which my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury referred as exhibiting a probable test of the relative wealth of the three countries, and that is the amount of property upon which Legacy and Succession Duties have been levied. These Legacy and Succession Duties are singularly variable from year to year. I have often been surprised in Treasury administration at the degree in which they vary from year to year, even in a country like England, where the amounts are at all times so vast. I am inclined—I will not dogmatize upon the subject—but I am inclined to put to the House that upon the whole the amount of property over a sufficient number of years chargeable to Legacy and Succession Duties is perhaps the very fairest test that we could get of relative ability to bear taxation. It is certainly not open to the same objections as the Income Tax. Upon the other hand, there are no doubt exemptions in the Legacy and Succession Duties; but these exemptions, especially as they have recently been shaped, are exemptions entirely applicable to the class of such very limited means that no one would wish, if he could avoid it, to make them in any heavy degree subjects of taxation. Now, Sir, the Return which my hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had in his hand does not give us the sum total of these Legacy and Succession

Mr. W. E. Gladstone

Duties for a large number of years. That is to say, the sums are not added up, and I had not time to add up all the figures of a total of 14 or 15 years. But I have taken the three last of these years, and I am bound to say that my strong impression is that that is not at all a mode of proceeding unfavourable to Ireland. But I am bound to observe that in the first of the three years—that is, 1881-2—the amount in Ireland was extremely low, and lower than at any time during the 14 years. It was only £7,142,000; whereas the year before it was £9,000,000; and the year after it was £9,525,000. The next lowest year is 1879, when it was £7,532,000. Ireland, therefore, in my computation, gets the benefit of that excessively low year. Now, Sir, the result of my comparison is this—I take the three last years; I add them together; I find that the property chargeable to Legacy and Succession Duties in Great Britain during these three years was £361,000,000; I find that during the three years the amount chargeable in Ireland was about £28,000,000; and dividing the sums one by the other the result is that the wealth of Ireland as tested by that test is as 1 to 13. My contention is that, upon the whole, the property chargeable to these Duties affords the fairest test that we can get. I give this, not as absolutely accurate, but as very near the mark. I will only say, further, that I agree with Members who have said this subject cannot sleep very long. It is quite evident that there are other relations between England and Ireland besides those of direct taxation which ought to be taken into view, which have been very important in former times, and which may become still more important—I mean the relations which subsist between Ireland as a debtor and England as a creditor. I am sure Gentlemen who sit opposite, in the spirit of candour which they have shown to-night, will admit that Ireland has received very considerable advantages from the use of the Imperial credit in the relation to which I have just referred. Well, Sir, it may be that circumstances, if they should lead to further and more extended attempts to deal with questions profoundly affecting Ireland, such as the question of Irish land, may open up the whole of that subject upon such a scale as to make it absolutely necessary, not only that the Government, but

likewise the House, should form as well as it may a conclusive and a solid judgment upon the proportion of the relative taxability. I beg Members to remember that this is a subject that does not bear being handled by demonstrative evidence. Debate it as long as you will, appoint as many Committees as you will, it will still be in the main a matter of argument. The best security and guarantee that we can have for arriving with tolerable facility at some tolerably fair conclusion is that all Gentlemen shall endeavour to approach the question in a thoroughly considerate spirit and with an abatement of all extreme opinions. If they do that, I believe the matter is perfectly capable of a practical solution; and it is because I think the temper that has been shown to-night affords considerable promise of progress in that direction, should the necessity arise, that I congratulate the hon. Gentleman and the House upon the spirit in which the debate has been conducted.

COLONEL NOLAN said, they must all acknowledge the tone and spirit in which the Prime Minister had approached the consideration of the subject, and the general character of his statement. The Prime Minister appeared to consider that ultimately when the Return was procured it would at least tend to show the relative capacity for taxation of the two countries. He looked upon the Prime Minister as the greatest authority on the subject; but in this instance he was not only judge but advocate, and in his speech he possibly selected three very good years for his argument. Accepting, however, the figures of the right hon. Gentleman for the three years, it was evident that Ireland was taxed 20 per cent more than England. The general gist of the whole statistics on the subject was to put the capacity of Ireland to bear taxation at between 1-16th and 1-17th of the capacity of the United Kingdom; and if that proposition was correct, it followed very naturally that Ireland was over-taxed. The Secretary to the Treasury had stated the total taxation levied from Ireland at about £6,500,000; but they could not allow the figures of that hon. Gentleman in the present case to pass unchallenged. According to the House of Commons Return of 1843, the taxation levied from Ireland he took to be a long way over £7,000,000; and, therefore, unless there had been a great fall-

ing off in the amount since then, he thought the Secretary to the Treasury had under-estimated the sum paid by Ireland. That hon. Gentleman had reckoned the amount of Public Expenditure in Ireland at £4,000,000; but how was that sum made up? Nearly £1,000,000 was paid for education, and the Civil Service absorbed nearly £2,000,000; so that in order to get his total of £4,000,000 the Secretary to the Treasury must include the item for the Constabulary. Now, the Constabulary were a very expensive, although a very useful, force; they were armed men, and could in a very short time be converted into soldiers; and the total of £4,000,000 of local expenditure in Ireland reckoned by the Secretary to the Treasury largely turned on the question of the Constabulary, and whether they were to be considered as a Civil or as a Military force. They were told that half the cost of the police was paid for in England by the ratepayers. He had looked into the matter, and, as far as he could make out, he gathered that in England some counties paid only 1*d.* in the pound and others 2*d.* for the police; whereas in Ireland, although they received all that money for the Constabulary, they had to pay 9*d.* in the pound in some counties for extra police alone. In fact, they paid in Ireland as much, or nearly as much, for extra police as was paid in England by the ratepayers for ordinary police; and therefore it was incorrect to say that they got their police for nothing. The argument of the Secretary to the Treasury was that the difference of £2,500,000 between the £6,500,000 of taxation and the £4,000,000 of local expenditure represented Ireland's contribution towards the Imperial Exchequer, and that that contribution was only 1-20th of the whole taxation of the United Kingdom, and could not be excessive. The Prime Minister had spoken of Ireland as being 1-13th as rich as England; but he rather disputed the accuracy of that notion. He disputed the contention of the Secretary to the Treasury that the Constabulary Force of Ireland was a Civil force; his opinion was that the Constabulary was essentially a Military force, doing police duty occasionally. As to the contention that Scotland was more aggrieved in respect to the inequality of Imperial taxation than Ireland, he admitted that

Scotland contributed a far larger proportion in taxation as compared with the amount returned to it in the shape of local expenditure than Ireland; but then the circumstances of Scotland and Ireland in respect to local expenditure were totally different. There were no great State Military and Naval Establishments maintained in Scotland as in Ireland; and, in point of fact, Scotland was, in respect to local expenditure, as much a part of England as was Yorkshire or Lancashire. Then Scotland was comparatively a rich country as compared with Ireland. Comparing the average individual wealth of the three countries, they were represented by the figures 260, 276, and 110, the latter representing the average individual wealth in Ireland. The wealth of Scotland formed 11 per cent of that of England, and its taxation was also 11 per cent of the taxation of England; so that Scotland could not complain of unfair or disproportionate taxation in comparison with its national wealth. On the other hand, the case for Ireland amounted to this—that while her wealth only amounted to 6 per cent, she paid in taxation 9½ per cent. The question of expenditure in Ireland was not the Question before the House that evening; but he might remark that a more unproductive expenditure could not be imagined. There were £4,500,000 spent in Ireland on soldiers, Constabulary, the Navy, and naval and military pensions. The great military countries in Europe, weighed down as they were with expenditure, only paid 29 per cent of their gross income on military establishments, while Ireland paid at least 50 per cent. What the Irish people desired, therefore, was to see that Ireland paid only in proportion to her wealth. He believed the more the case of Ireland was sifted the more it would be found that she was paying a proportion of taxation largely in excess of her capacity.

Mr. J. WILSON (*Edinburgh*) said, from the length of time to which this debate had extended it was manifest that hon. Members regarded the subject as one of great importance. His object in rising was to make a suggestion so as to render the Return as valuable as possible. The Motion proposed that the Return should apply to Ireland only; but it would be of comparatively small value unless they had similar Returns

Colonel Nolan

from England and Scotland, so that a fair comparison might be made of the Revenues of the respective countries; and that was what he fancied was primarily aimed at by the Motion. He would suggest that the words "Great Britain" be deleted, and that the words "England and Scotland" be introduced. He thought it was also desirable that they should have information down to the latest date; and, as he believed the Secretary to the Treasury was ready to give the figures down to 1885, he would suggest that this Motion should be altered accordingly. During the discussion frequent reference was made to the large amount of money repaid to Ireland for expenditure for local purposes. It was very important to have the amounts repaid in a similar manner to England and Scotland respectively, and he would suggest that the Resolution be amended with that object. He had all the more reason for pressing that, seeing the amount repaid or expended in that manner in Scotland was comparatively small.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. J. WILSON, resuming, moved to amend the Motion by substituting the words "England and Scotland" for "Great Britain," and extending its scope so as to bring the figures down to the latest date, and so as to include the amounts expended in England, Scotland, and Ireland, in aid of local purposes.

Mr. ESSLEMONT seconded the Amendment.

Amendment made, in lines 3 and 4, by leaving out the words "Great Britain," and inserting the words "England and Scotland," instead thereof.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, he had no objection to the alteration.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That there be laid before this House, a Return of the Gross Imperial Revenue of Ireland derived from taxation, and of the population of Ireland for the years 1831, 1861, 1871, and 1881, and a like Return for England and Scotland for the same years, being in both cases a continuation, in like form, of Parliamentary Paper, No. 407, of Session 1874.

APPOINTMENTS UNDER THE CROWN. MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. HANDEL COSHAM, in rising to call attention to the disparity in the salaries and duties of persons holding public offices under the Crown and otherwise appointed; and to move for a Select Committee

"To inquire into the method of appointment and apportionment of salaries and duties under the Crown,"

said, the object which he had in view was to see whether he could be instrumental, in however small a way, in the reduction of the public burdens. That there was room for reduction was evident from the fact that the Civil Expenditure had now reached nearly £18,000,000, and he thought very large reductions could be made in that sum without any injury to the Public Service. It was admitted on both sides that the country stood in need of economy. Hon. Gentlemen opposite acknowledged that taxation was too high, and he hoped he should have their assistance in reducing it. On all hands we heard of the serious depression under which trade and commerce were suffering. He begged the House to recollect the enormous rate at which the Civil Expenditure had been growing, and as he had the honour to represent an industrial community (Bristol) which suffered greatly from the depression of trade he felt bound to try to do something to lighten the burdens of the people. The point he had especially to establish was that the salaries paid were out of proportion to the work done. He did not aim at any reduction in the salaries of the smaller class of public servants; they were underpaid. The class at whom he aimed were high up in the scale, and received very large salaries for little work. The higher they went in the scale the higher the salaries were for little work. The Lord Chancellor received £10,000 a-year—a sum equal to the salary of the President of the United States. He ventured to say that the duty devolving on the Lord Chancellor was much less than that devolving upon the President of the United States, and yet the Lord Chancellor not only received £10,000 a-year while in Office but £5,000 a-year after quitting Office. He did not so much complain of the salary of the Lord Chancellor while in Office as he did of his

pension. Not only did we pay one Lord Chancellor in Office, but at the present moment we paid two ex-Lord Chancellors, the late Lord Chancellor having earned a pension of £5,000 a-year by a service of only seven months. Was there any other country in the world that would suffer this? There was no country in the world with so many highly paid servants out of office, and that fact alone would justify him in asking for a Select Committee to inquire into this state of things, and he appealed to the House to assist him with a Motion, which if carried out would, he believed, result in a considerable reduction in the public burdens, without any loss of efficiency. He had referred to the salary of the Lord Chancellor. He would now pass on to the salaries in the Post Office, the Savings Banks, and the Telegraph Department. He found there that the Controller of the Savings Banks had a salary of £900 a-year, while the men who did the work had salaries of £150. In the Post Office £108,000 was voted for superannuation salaries alone. The engineer of the telegraphs had £1,100 salary, while his assistant had £850, and the men who did the work only £150. Did there not need to be some adjustment there? He was exceedingly surprised to find that the King of Greece got £4,000 from this country, in addition to £20,000 from his own country—as if money was no object. Then in the Education Department the Chief Inspectors got £900 a-year salary, and the Sub-Inspectors £500 each, and so on with the whole army of Inspectors—an amount of remuneration out of all proportion to the work they did. He would not trouble the House with entering at any greater length into the details of this very important subject. It was wholly unnecessary for him to take up the time of the House by doing so, because in order to lay the foundation for his Motion for a Select Committee it was quite sufficient that he should make out a *prima facie* case, and that, he must submit to the House, he had already done. He was aware that the question of public economy was in the most competent hands of his hon. Friend the Member for the borough of Burnley (Mr. Rylands), and he need hardly say that he had not the slightest wish to interfere with his hon. Friend's conduct of a case of which he was so great a

master, and with which he was so thoroughly able to deal. He was aware that his hon. Friend had on the Notice Paper a Motion somewhat to the same effect as that which he was now submitting to the House; but he did not think that the two Motions would interfere with each other. On the contrary, he was inclined to think that it would strengthen the position of his hon. Friend if the House would be good enough to accede to the Motion which he (Mr. Handel Cosham) was then making. He sincerely hoped that the House would be good enough to take that course. If they did he was in a position to pledge himself to lay before a Select Committee an abundant array of facts in support of his Motion, and of the case he was then endeavouring to lay before the House. He had, on that occasion, taken the course of moving for a Select Committee, by whom the subject might be carefully investigated, because that was, he believed, the only Constitutional manner in which they could reach the object—the promotion of economy—which he and those who thought with him on this subject had in view. He had not made a direct Motion in the sense of the opinions he had expressed, because he thought that it would in the long run save the time of the House if he were to submit the facts in his possession to a Select Committee instead of laying them in the first instance before the House. If they were laid before the House they would rest, to a certain extent, upon his statement; whereas they could be sifted and placed beyond dispute by a Select Committee. He would, therefore, not trouble the House by entering further into the details of the subject, but would conclude that short speech by making the Motion which he had already submitted to the House.

Mr. SAUNDERS seconded the Motion. He spoke in the interests of the working classes, and protested against the constant diminution of the salaries of lower class officials who worked very hard, and the constant increase in those of those more highly placed. It was the latter, and not the poor letter-carriers, in whose remuneration a saving ought to be effected. In the Telegraph Department, for instance, the Controller in London received seven times the salary of a first-class telegraphist, whereas in Switzerland the Director

Mr. Handel Cosham

General of the whole of the telegraphs only received twice as much as a first-class telegraphist. In Switzerland the telegraphs were so well managed that with a rate of 10*d.* for 20 words they had been able to repay the whole of the original capital outlay for construction; and at present, on a rate of 5*d.* per 20 words, the profit provided the expense of the necessary apparatus in constructing telephones, whereas a *1*s.** rate in this country had not been remunerative. In Switzerland the Prime Minister received only £700 a-year, and the other Ministers £500 a-year, which was in striking contrast to English official salaries. It was admitted that the Swiss Ministry was composed of very able men. In the United States the same example of economy was seen. The Controller of the National Bank, who had great powers over the whole banking system of the country—the finest system in the world—only received £1,000 a-year. The rate of the higher salaries ought to be diminished, and that of the lower raised; and he had, therefore, great pleasure in seconding the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the method of appointment and appointment of salaries and duties under the Crown.”—(*Mr. Coatham.*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT) said, he could assure his hon. Friend who had brought forward this Motion that proposals in favour of public economy would meet with no opposition from him. At the same time, it was undesirable that there should be any misapprehension among the public with reference to the subject of expenditure on the Civil administration of the country. There was a widespread belief that that expenditure was largely and unduly increasing. In reality it was not doing so. Although the work of all the Civil Departments had increased enormously in the last 30 years, the expenditure had not increased. It was true that the ordinary Parliamentary Estimate showed an increase in the expenditure; but that was owing to the inclusion of a number of items, such as increased educational grants and grants in aid of local taxation which were not strictly covered by the phrase, the Civil administration of

the country. From a Return (No. 338) presented to Parliament, it appeared that in the years 1857-8 the charges for Civil administration properly so called were £5,931,000, and in 1880 £5,930,000, or £1,000 less. That was a fact which reflected credit on those who were responsible for public economy. Speaking from his own experience, he could assure the House that no longer ago than 1859 the work of the Home Office was only one-fifth of its work now. Armies of Inspectors had been created in the last 30 years, and the number of Judges had been largely increased, and yet so great had been the care taken in connection with the Civil Expenditure of the country that, as he had shown, there had been in 1880 an actual diminution. In 1884-5 the sum of the expenditure was £6,233,000, an increase of £300,000 as compared with the year 1857. Therefore, in a period of 30 years there had been no substantial increase of expenditure, although four times as much work was done. The increase of £300,000 in 1884-5 was due to the acceleration of the Ordnance Survey, which accounted for £100,000; to the institution of the Irish Land Commission, which accounted for £110,000; to the purchase of the Blenheim pictures, which accounted for £65,000; to the determination of the House to establish a Memorial to General Gordon; and to grants for the South Kensington Museum and the British Museum, which should rightly be placed under the head of education. These sums put together amounted to nearly £500,000, so that if they deducted these exceptional charges they found that in 1884-5 the general charges of the Civil administration of the country were less than they were 30 years ago. He warned the House not to be led away by illustrations taken from countries whose circumstances were very different from those of the United Kingdom. The standard of public salaries or even ordinary wages in Switzerland was not applicable to this country. There were many occupations in Switzerland which the working men of England would not undertake on similar terms. The Government of the United States, he was assured, made a great mistake by giving low salaries to public officials. It was almost impossible in that country to induce competent men to accept judicial posts, as the acceptance of them in-

volved a great sacrifice of income. There were many men who even refused judicial appointments in the Supreme Court. He trusted that the public would not believe that the subject of the Civil Expenditure of the country had been carelessly treated. A private individual who could say that his expenditure in 30 years had not increased although the work conducted by him had increased four-fold would certainly be held to be a good manager. Now, with reference to inquiry into this matter, it was not only necessary that things should be put right, but that everybody should know the real state of the facts. The question of appointing a Committee had been discussed for a year or two. There was a general opinion that the House should take some more careful cognizance of these matters than could be done in the haphazard condition of Committee of Supply. He himself in the Office that he held felt very strongly; and he might say that it was the intention of the Government to make proposals of that kind. He was not at liberty to anticipate what might be done with reference to the Procedure of the House; but the Government did desire that the Estimates should be in some form or other more fully, more satisfactorily, and more completely discussed. He thought he might, without imprudence, say that they were prepared to embody proposals with that object in the new scheme of Parliamentary Procedure. He hoped that the Proposer of the Resolution would be satisfied with that assurance, and would refrain from pressing for the appointment of a Committee until, at any rate, the suggestions of the Government should have been laid before the House.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM said, he was satisfied with the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, and begged leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (1880)

AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 60.]

(Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Dr. Commins, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Jesse Collings.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir William Harcourt

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the proposals embodied in his Bill were simple and unpretending. The first of the objects of the Bill was to secure for workmen that protection which Parliament, by the Act of 1880, desired to give them, but which many employers had managed by legal chicanery to deprive them of. The fact was that many thousands of workmen had been deprived of the benefits of the Act by being virtually compelled to contract themselves out of it. The first provision of the Bill, then, was to render null and void any such contracts. The next provision was to secure that the *employés* should not be deprived of their right of action by reason merely of the fact that as between them and the chief employer there was introduced another contractor or sub-contractor, with whom there might be privity of contract with the workman, but who being introduced as an intermediary between the chief employer and the workman, prevented the latter from bringing an action for injury sustained by reason of the defective condition of the plant or anything else as to the condition of which the head employer was morally responsible. Another provision was that in those cases in which notice had in effect been given, or in those cases in which it was perfectly clear that notice of a formal kind was not necessary, it should not be incumbent upon the injured party to furnish such a formal notice as was required by the Act of 1880. Further, that it might be in the power of the Court to allow an action to proceed, even though there might be in the notice given to the employer some technical defect which, in the strict construction of law, might be held to vitiate it. He was anxious also that a very great injustice which had been almost unavoidable under the earlier Act in respect of the amount of compensation recoverable by an injured workman should be removed. In the Act of 1880 the amount of compensation payable was limited to the very trifling sum of three years' wages of a person employed in that particular capacity—a provision which operated hardly on a youth on the eve of entering into receipt of a man's wages, and to remedy that injustice in such cases; but he proposed to limit the amount which

could be awarded in certain cases to £150, unless that amount was clearly inadequate. He further proposed that actions brought by workmen for injury sustained should not be removable to Superior Courts unless the amount of compensation claimed exceeded the sum of £200. The next section of his Bill defined the word "workman" and made it include seamen. He understood that the representatives of the shipping interest were arraying themselves against the proposal, and he had tried to find out why this organized opposition was threatened. He was assured that the shipowners were hostile to the proposal not so much because of the compensation they might have to pay on account of injuries to their men in the United Kingdom as on account of the uncertain liability they might incur with regard to the sailors in their vessels in foreign parts. If that were the case he would accept an Amendment exempting shipowners from liability under circumstances in which it could be shown that their liability was unreasonable in respect of injuries sustained abroad; though before doing so he should like to ascertain the sense of the House on this subject. The Bill also altered the definition of the term "person having superintendence intrusted to him," as at present, if a superintendent were engaged more or less in manual labour a sub-*employé* was debarred from obtaining any compensation from the chief employer for injuries sustained. This was in his judgment a grievous blot in the Act of 1860. Finally, the Bill provided for the continuance of the Act of 1880 as amended, and repealed the section which said that the Statute should last only to the end of the year 1887. In conclusion, the hon. Member moved the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL) said, he would indicate what the Government suggested for consideration by the House as the proper course to adopt in reference to this measure. In the first place, he might remark that the Government had complete sympathy with the main object which the hon. Member had in view. In saying that, however, he wished to

guard himself against being supposed to commit the Government on several important points. There was also a Bill standing for a second reading under the charge of his hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), which dealt with the same subject-matter as the present measure. It was much shorter and not so far-reaching as the Bill of the hon. Member opposite. The Act of 1880 was a new departure in legislation, and to a great extent a tentative measure, and its principle was at the time much debated in that House. He did not mean to suggest that the Government intended to withdraw from the principle embodied in the Act, far from it; but the fact that it was then treated as a new departure in legislation and as a tentative measure suggested that probably the time had been reached when it would be very convenient that the whole subject should be referred to the consideration of a Select Committee of the House. The Government suggested, therefore, that the subject-matter of this Bill and of that of the hon. Member for Morpeth, should be referred to a Select Committee. With regard to a large class of *employés*, he thought there would be a disposition on the part of the House to make it impossible for them to contract themselves out of the Act; but he said that in relation to the narrower definition of the Act of 1880, and not to the wider clause of this Bill, which would include clerks and managers of businesses, or persons engaged in supervision. This might be right; but it was necessary to consider the matter before making so great a change. He agreed with the hon. Member that seamen were entitled to full protection; but it was clear that different considerations applied to that subject-matter than those which were applicable to the cases meant to be dealt with by the Act of 1860. It was obvious that to fix liability on an employer for the result of accident when he could not by any exercise of his control or discretion prevent the accident presented a very different case from that when an employer was or might be on the spot. While he the Attorney General, desired to see the fullest practicable protection for so important a class as seamen, it might be necessary in their case to have special provisions as to notice to employers and so forth. He wished to guard the Government against any announcement of a positive

opinion on any of the topics he had referred to; but the course which the Government suggested was that this debate should be adjourned, and that a Select Committee of the House should be appointed to inquire into and report upon the subject-matter of the two Bills in question.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he did not understand exactly what course the Government recommended—whether it was that they should assent to the second reading and then refer the Bill as proposed, or whether it was that they should adjourn the debate on this Bill, as well as upon the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth, for the purpose of having the principle involved discussed fully and fairly before a Select Committee. [THE ATTORNEY GENERAL assented.] The latter would certainly be the more convenient course. He must, however, call the attention of the House to the fact that in the Act of 1880 there was a clause providing that it should only be tentative and remain in force until the year 1887, in order that the country might see how its provisions worked. Having a great deal to do with employers and employed in the great manufacturing constituency which he had the honour to represent, he was quite certain that the great object of the House ought to be to promote good feeling between employers and employed. Great objection had been taken to the Act of 1880, because some employers had contracted themselves out of it, and therefore that the employed did not get the full benefit of the Act. On the other hand, there were other questions to be considered, such as the habit of employers in Northern counties insuring themselves against accident. He would not, however, now discuss the question at length, for he thought the Government, if he understood the hon. and learned Gentleman rightly, had taken a very proper course. Before the Act of 1880 was made perpetual or an addition made to it, he thought that both employers and employed had a right to have the question fully discussed, in order to see how the Act had worked, and how the proposed extension of it would be likely to work. As he understood it, the proposal of the Government was that the whole subject of the Act of 1880 should be referred to a Select Committee, and that the debate

on this Bill and on the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth should be adjourned until that Committee had reported. As the Session was still so young, there would be ample time to discuss these Bills at a later period without running the risk of not coming to a conclusion upon them.

MR. LOCKWOOD said, he thought that the observations of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down distinctly showed that he did not mean anything like the same as the Attorney General, because, as he understood the hon. and learned Gentleman, he proposed that the question of these two Bills should be referred to a Committee. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had informed the House that nothing was further from his purpose than to sow dissension between employers and employed; but in reality he inferred that he was not in favour of referring these two Bills to a Committee, but of referring the general principle involved in the abortive Act they were endeavouring to amend. That, he hoped, hon. Members would do all in their power to prevent. The Bill which it was sought to amend had seen perilous times in the House, and what was the result? It was a result of which, speaking as a lawyer, perhaps, he ought not to complain, because he should think it had created more litigation than any Act passed for many years past. But he thought that was the very thing which hon. Members who sought to amend the Bill wished to prevent. The object was to simplify the provisions of the Bill of 1880, and to do away with litigation. The Attorney General had alluded to another Bill, likely shortly to come before the House, which was in charge of the hon. Member for Morpeth; but he (Mr. Lockwood) was not aware that that Bill was a better one than the Bill introduced that night. He believed it agreed in the main with the present Bill. He took it that those who were interested in amending the Act of 1880 wished, if they could, to prevent the employer from contracting himself out of the Act. That was the first great principle to be fought for in the amended Bill. It was said by those who opposed that Bill that this principle would interfere with freedom of contract. That was not the first time they had heard about this bogey of "freedom of con-

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tract." It was all very well to talk about freedom of contract; but he knew something about these matters, and he would ask what was the freedom of contract in the well-known case of the Earl of Dudley? It was held that the placing of placards up in a colliery bound the workpeople to the contract contained in those placards. He contended that when working men came to the House and said they wanted protection, the House was bound to protect them. There were many cases in which, with regard to the testing of machinery and the limitation of the hours of labour, freedom of contract was already interfered with, and if the working men expressed a wish to be protected there could be no further discussion of the principle of the Bill, and the law must be amended in that respect. Another question of principle was involved in the provision with respect to notice of action. In ordinary cases persons were not entitled to notice of action; but only certain corporations and official persons like magistrates were entitled by Statute to notice of action. He could see no reason why employers should have notice of action given to them in respect of injuries sustained by their workmen, which in 99 cases out of 100 occurred on the masters' own premises. Then with regard to leaving the matter to the discretion of the Court. He spoke with all due respect of the Court and its discretion; but he contended that all words with reference to discretion had better be left out of the Bill, for discretion really implied litigation. For his own part, he believed that many hon. Members would be quite willing at once to go to a division on the principle involved in this Bill and the Bill introduced by the hon. Member for Morpeth, and that if they did so they would be in a better position than if they referred the Bill to a Select Committee.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that he had been invited to state explicitly the views of Her Majesty's Government as to the course to be taken in respect to this Bill. Her Majesty's Government thought that the subject-matter of the Act of 1880 and the subject-matter of this Bill and of the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), should be referred to one Select Committee. For that purpose he

should suggest that this Bill should be adjourned for a reasonable time, until the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth could be brought forward and read a second time. In that way all questions would be placed before the Select Committee for their consideration. It was not possible to refer both Bills to a Select Committee at once; that course could only be taken when the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth had been read a second time. It would be much better, therefore, to refer all questions to a Select Committee, which, it was probable, might be appointed within the next month or six weeks, by which time the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth might be reached. He might say that he made this proposal in no spirit of hostility to the present Bill; but it appeared to him that the Select Committee ought to have the whole subject before it. If it was necessary now to decide the question, he should express himself in favour of the principle of this Bill. The Act of 1880 required amendment in several matters, including the power to contract out of it and as to the limitation of the amount which employers might be compelled to pay. He would, therefore, ask the House to allow an inquiry to be instituted into the whole subject, with the assurance on the part of Her Majesty's Government that they agreed with the general principle of this Bill. He would remind the House that before the end of this Session a Bill ought to be passed dealing with the Act of 1880, and it would be better for the Select Committee to have the whole matter before them than a Bill dealing with only one part of the question. Before 1887 an Act must be passed renewing or continuing or otherwise dealing with the Act of 1880; and it would be much more convenient, therefore, that the Select Committee should deal with all questions. He trusted that the House would adopt the plan proposed by the Attorney General, with the assurance that the Government would appoint a Committee to deal with the whole subject.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS rose to a point of Order. He wished to know whether, if this Bill were read a second time, it would be possible immediately afterwards to read the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth, on the ground that the smaller would be included in

the less? [*Loud laughter.*] He meant that the less would be included in the great. He also wished to know whether it would be possible for the right hon. Gentleman to give a guarantee to the House that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee before it had passed the second reading?

MR. SPEAKER said, that the second question put to him by the hon. Member was not one for him to decide. With respect to his first question, he could only state that it would not be possible to anticipate the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth.

MR. F. S. POWELL: This is a question which, beyond any other, ought to be discussed in a spirit of good temper and moderation by both sides of the House. There is one important class—namely, the colliers employed in our coal mines, whom we are bound to take into our consideration. No class of men is more worthy of consideration than the working collier who pursues his calling, day after day, contending with the forces of nature and mechanical science under circumstances of the utmost danger and difficulty. It must be remembered, in discussing questions of this kind, that it is essential to the welfare of the working man that the capitalist should be secure of the capital he advances, and that he should be encouraged to invest his fortune in dangerous occupations rather than invest it in Consols and Railway Debentures. ["Question!"] This is the Question; and I beg to tell those hon. Members who cry "Question!" that the sooner they devote themselves to the subject before the House the better. In the constituency which I represent (Wigan) there exists a large insurance fund, consisting of contributions both from the masters and men. In consequence of the existence of this fund the men are able to contract themselves out of the Act, and the masters are not forced to come under its provisions. The contract consists in this—that the masters contribute 25 per cent of the fund; and the advantages which the collier gains under this condition of things is, that when an accident happens, involving loss of life or injury, there is no uncertainty, delay, or legal cost involved, but the injured man, or, in the case of a death, his representatives, come upon the insurance fund the very next day. There is a

certainly that advantage may be taken of the fund without any deduction whatever for the heavy cost which always attends the initiation of legal proceedings. I appear here to-day on behalf of the colliery proprietors; and I wish to remind the House that in many cases when an accident happens in a colliery all evidence of carelessness or negligence is swept away by the accident itself. I believe it would be found in many cases that if this insurance fund were altogether done away with, and if the sole reliance of the working collier was to be upon this Act, when a grievous misfortune happened, he would by the act of this House in passing the present Bill be entirely deprived of all remedy in the hour of his greatest misfortune and his deepest need. We ought not to allow ourselves to be carried away by fervid appeals to our sympathy; but we are bound to have regard to all the circumstances of the case, and to bear in mind that the working collier himself gains great and signal advantage by being able to contract himself out of the Act as now allowed by law. Not only is he allowed to do so, but he is almost encouraged to enter into a contract. As regards the Bill of the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor), I do not wish to discuss it at any length. I was certainly surprised to hear the opening speech of the hon. Member who introduced the Bill. He said at the beginning of his speech, if I rightly understood him, that the subject had not been well discussed hitherto; and towards the end of his observations he informed us that the matter was thoroughly debated in 1880, and that little more was to be said upon it on the present occasion. The fact is, that although the period of the Session was somewhat advanced the Committee stage of the Bill occupied a considerable time, and the Bill was debated carefully clause by clause, nay, almost word by word. There are only one or two points which I think it is necessary I should mention before I sit down. The first is a matter alluded to by the hon. Member—namely, that most difficult question of responsibility. It is clearly out of the question that every employer should be rendered liable under this Act for the misconduct of every one of his work-people. I know no subject of greater difficulty, or one more worthy of being investigated by a Select Com-

Mr. Thorold Rogers

mittee. Then comes a vexed question, which the hon. Member has also mentioned—namely, the extension of the principle of the Bill to other classes, including sailors. That is a subject of large dimensions; and not only is it a large, but it is also a very difficult subject to handle, and will require careful searching out. I am unable to say whether the hon. Member behind me, the Member for Ormakirk (Mr. Forwood), wishes sailors to be included in the Bill; but he will probably address the House upon that part of the question, as I have no title to speak on their behalf. I do hope that, whatever change may be made in the law, the Statute will be such that it will not, and cannot, break down in practice. I trust that it will be so clear in its terms that no intelligent working man in this country will have the slightest difficulty in ascertaining the meaning of the Statute under which he pursues his calling. Then, again, supposing the law, after our deliberations are concluded, leaves any freedom in the matter, I trust that it will be a real and true freedom, so that if any man contracts himself out of the Act he will do so of his own free will for his own liberty. ["No!"] I do not understand these interruptions from the other side of the House. I am speaking in favour of the freedom of the working man; and if hon. Members challenge my observations I would ask what is the kind of liberty they desire to give to the working man? Another point is that the notice, if notice is to be given, should be of a simple character, and not fenced about by technicalities or the institution of artificial machinery; nor should it contain any of those snares which are so prejudicial in daily practice to the artizan class of our population. I was reluctant to rise; but I felt it my duty to take part in the debate, and I certainly do hope that a temperate discussion, which I have no doubt will take place upon this Bill in the course of the present Session, will result in placing the law in a satisfactory position—that the capitalist may be encouraged to invest his capital, and that the working man may feel secure from loss in pursuit of a hazardous and dangerous occupation.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): I wish to make a suggestion to the House which I think would meet the views of

both sides of this question. I think that all agree with the observations of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary that it is desirable, in some form or other, that the whole Act of 1880, and not merely the part of the subject included in this Bill, should be reported upon by the Committee. It would be a most convenient course that the Committee should inquire into the whole subject. On the other hand, Gentlemen who are in favour of this Bill, being, as I think, a large majority of the House, desire that the course may be taken in this case which is sometimes taken by the House—namely, that the Bill should be read a second time; and then, since it is only a short time before the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) will come up for discussion, and, as I think, no one would desire that a Bill proposed by my hon. Friend should be excluded from the consideration of the Committee, it would only delay the decision of the Committee a short time if we were to wait until we read that Bill also a second time, and referred it as well to the Select Committee. I would suggest, further, that it should be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire into the operation of the whole of the Act of 1880, and thus enlarge the power of the Committee, so that they may be able to deal with the whole subject, as well as with both Bills. I think that would be a satisfactory way of bringing the whole topic under the consideration of the Committee. If this course is acceptable to the House, I think we should read this Bill a second time, on the understanding that within a short time the whole subject will be brought under the consideration of the Committee.

MR. BURT: I have for many years taken a very keen interest in the subject now under discussion, both before I became a Member and since I became a Member of the House. Together with my hon. Friend the late Mr. Macdonald, I took an active part in advocating the measure which is now the Act of 1880. I believe that that Act has produced great benefits to the working people. Those who advocated it did so not merely as a means of getting compensation for widows and orphans, but generally for securing the safety of the workmen themselves; and the universal testimony of Inspectors of Factories, In-

spectors of Mines, and those who are connected with Benefit Societies and Trade Unions among the workpeople, is that the Act has been invaluable as a means of protecting life and limb in connection with industrial occupations. Well, Sir, the main difficulty or cause of dissatisfaction which has arisen in connection with the Act is that a certain number of employers have compelled their workmen to contract themselves out of the benefits of the Act. As a body, the employers have accepted the Act loyally, and those who have contracted themselves out of it are quite the exception. As far as the working men and the Trade Unions are concerned, their desire is to have the Act made compulsory. As the House knows, in the last Parliament as well as in this I introduced a measure to deal with the subject. It went to a division in the late Parliament, and I was defeated by a very large majority. With regard to the Bill which is now before the House, and which has been introduced by the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor), I may say that I entirely approve of it, and I can say that with the less hesitation, because the hon. Member has really appropriated the provisions of my Bill and embodied them in his, although his Bill deals also with some other matters which, in my opinion, it is desirable to deal with, but which I had omitted. As far as I am concerned, I am quite prepared to accept the proposal which has been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—namely, to read this Bill a second time, because it is very important that we should affirm the principle of the measure by assenting to the second reading. With regard, however, to my own Bill, I must make an appeal to the Government. I beg to thank hon. Members who have spoken approvingly of the provisions of that Bill; but I would point out to them that the position in which the measure now stands is not a very advantageous one, and therefore I hope the Government will afford me facilities for having it read a second time. I do not think it will be necessary to press the matter at any length; but I hope that Her Majesty's Ministers will endeavour—and I think they can do it if they like—to give facilities for having the Bill read a second time, after which I think it would be of advantage to the complete and satisfactory settlement of the whole question that the subject

Mr. Burt

should be remitted, as has been suggested, to the Select Committee that will sit upon the present Bill.

MR. STAVELEY HILL: I have listened with great pleasure to the remarks which have fallen from the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), and I think it would be most satisfactory that the Bill of the hon. Member should also be submitted to the consideration of the Select Committee, because at the last Election it was that Bill which was before the constituencies, and to which the attention of candidates was directed. Indeed, I am sorry to find that the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth has been postponed for that of the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor); but I am glad to hear from the hon. Member that he does not object to the Bill of the hon. Member for Donegal, and that it practically coincides with the provisions of his own measure. That being so, I freely accept what has fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and I hope that, as the right hon. Gentleman has suggested, the two Bills will be referred to a Select Committee, so that the same Committee may deal with them, and with the Act of 1880, and present a Report to the House on the whole subject. I have always been averse to power being given to any persons to contract themselves out of an Act of Parliament. If we pass an Act of Parliament we pass it for the whole of the Realm, and not as a voluntary or permissive Act for any persons to contract themselves out of. That was the view which I took in regard to the Agricultural Holdings Act, and other measures of a similar nature. At the same time, I should be extremely sorry to put unadvisedly any compulsion on those masters who, as the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) has just pointed out, have acted so well towards their workmen in the contracts they have made with them, and from whom the workmen have got more than they could have obtained under the Act. I refer to such cases as that of the London and North-Western Railway Company and certain large brewers, who have provided for their workmen in a much better way than they are provided for under the Act of Parliament. We must take care that, in preventing workmen and masters from contracting themselves out of the Act, we do not put an end to those salutary contracts which now exist, in many

cases, between masters and workmen. It is on this ground that I think the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. Like the hon. Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell), I may say that many of my constituents are affected by the Bill; and it is one of those matters to which my attention was frequently called during the General Election. Questions were put to me in reference to the propriety of amending the Act in the direction proposed by the Bill introduced last year by the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt). There is one other point to which allusion was made by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for York (Mr. Lockwood)—namely, the question of notice. I agree with my hon. and learned Friend that there is no reason why, in actions of this sort, there should be notice any more than in any other action. The notice should be the same as is required under Lord Campbell's Act in the case of compensation, and there should be no further limitation than there is in actions generally. With regard to the other details of the Bill, it is not necessary that I should detain the House by any criticism; because, as the whole matter is going before a Select Committee—not only this Bill, but the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth—together with the Act of 1880, there is every hope that there may be produced by that Committee and laid before the House a measure which will place the whole question upon a satisfactory basis.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: I must confess that in this matter Her Majesty's Government appear to have no very definite idea of the course which should be adopted. Ten minutes ago the promise made on their behalf in regard to this Bill and the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) was that they should be referred to a Select Committee, and that pending that reference there should be an adjournment of the present debate. But, for some reason which is still concealed by Her Majesty's Ministers, that proposal to adjourn the debate has now been abandoned; and we understand that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, unable to divest himself of the instincts which possessed him when at the Home Office, now intervenes and overrides the decision of his Colleague the Home Secretary; and we are told that the Bill should now be read a second time.

[“No!”] I am in the recollection of the House; and I am prepared to maintain, in the presence of hon. Members who heard what passed, that there was a distinct understanding come to, at the instance of the Home Secretary, that there should be an adjournment of the debate. But, however that may be, the effect will be slight so far as the merits of the Bill itself are concerned. Those who are friendly to the principle of the Employers' Liability Act, and those who desire an extension of the provisions of that Act, know that the time must shortly arrive when it will be necessary to decide whether that Act shall be made perpetual or be allowed to lapse; and along with this consideration will have to be considered the question of its extension, or whether it shall be made more restrictive in its character. Whether the Bill is now read a second time or not, the object of those on behalf of whom the late Home Secretary has spoken is that the Committee to whom it is referred should get to work at once, and that hereafter the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), who is, I should say, the real patentee and person with a true right to ask the House to consider the subject, should also be referred to the same Committee. The Select Committee will then be in a position to consider and take evidence on the whole subject, including the question of the actual operation of the Act of 1880, which has now been working for five years. There seems to me to be really very little difference between the two proposals; and I do not see why Her Majesty's Government should have had so much difficulty in making up their minds in the matter. We are perfectly willing that the Bill should be now read a second time on the understanding that hereafter the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth, which stands on the Paper, but not in a very favourable position, for to-morrow fortnight, should be referred to the same Committee.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. CHILDERS): I can only say a few words with the indulgence of the House; but if hon. Members will allow me I will explain how the matter stands. We propose that the present Bill should be deferred after it has been read a second time—[“No!”]—that in the meanwhile a Select Committee shall be appointed, and that the two Bills—the one now

before the House, and that of my hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt)—be referred to the Committee. There can be very little difference in reading this Bill a second time on the understanding that the Bill of my hon. Friend is also read a second time, and that, in the meantime, a Select Committee be appointed to consider both Bills. When the Bill shall have been read a second time, I shall move to refer it to a Select Committee, and that it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to call witnesses, and to inquire not only into the two Bills submitted to them, but also into the Employers' Liability Act. The Committee will be at once appointed, and when the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) has been read a second time I shall move to refer that Bill also to the same Committee.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: This being the first occasion on which I have had the honour to address the House, I desire to make only a few remarks, the more especially because several hon. Members who sit near me on this side of the House do not approve of the course proposed by Her Majesty's Government. Notwithstanding the explanation which has been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, there cannot be a doubt that the Government have executed a serious change of front as to the course to be taken on this Bill. They began by agreeing to the suggestion that the debate should be adjourned for the purpose of having both measures referred to a Select Committee. That, I think, was a proposal which was made by two Members of the Government—namely, by the Attorney General and by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. At that moment in comes the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and then we find that the whole thing is to be reversed. It is very hard for us to know what the reason of this change of front is. I can only conceive that the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department must have used his influence with the right hon. Gentleman who is now, in the absence of the Prime Minister, occupying the position of Leader of the House, in order to induce the right hon. Gentleman to make that change of front. But if we cannot approve of the action of the Government, neither can we—and I say it with due humility—approve of

the course taken by the Leaders of the Opposition. We had reason to believe that the proposal to adjourn the debate was welcomed by the Front Bench below. It was our desire that the difficult questions involved in the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, and therefore I approved of the suggestion to refer this Bill to a Select Committee; but I did not approve of the proposal to first read the Bill a second time, for that would pledge the House to its principle, of which I and others on these Benches disapprove. That principle involves the very common Radical nostrum of compulsion. Compulsion, in my opinion, is a principle which is noxious, except where it is unnecessary. Let me remind the House that in speaking on the question of compulsion the hon. Member who introduced the Bill spoke of the Ground Game Act, passed in the last Parliament. The reason why that Act is not more noxious than it has been is because it was entirely unnecessary, the condition of agriculture having been such that tenants could exact what terms they liked from landlords without the intervention of the Act. With regard to the present Bill, it is by no means in the interest of the employers that I am speaking. I believe that to pass a Bill of this kind would be directly against the interests of the workmen. I was talking the other day to a colliery owner in Lancashire, and he told me that when the Employers' Liability Act was passed, in the last Parliament, he called his men together, and said to them—"I do not wish in any way to defraud you, and therefore I would suggest that we should try this Act." And, consequently, they tried the Act of Parliament for a year, and at the end of the year the men all went to my friend and asked him to be allowed to contract themselves out of the Act. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members may laugh—in fact, they do laugh—but, as a matter of fact, it was a very reasonable ground on which the men objected to the Employers' Liability Act. The point is this—although, on a matter of this kind, I speak with the greatest humility—on the occurrence of an accident to one of the men he is obliged, in nearly every case, to bring an action at law in order to recover the compensation due to him under the Act. If he cannot prove negligence—which I am

Mr. Childers

told it is very difficult thing indeed to do—he has not only to bear all the injury which the accident may have inflicted on him, but to pay the costs as well. Consequently, the man thinks twice, or even thrice, before he goes into a Court of Law to exact compensation. The men prefer very much the voluntary method of getting compensation for an accident through the action of a mutual Insurance Company. Some hon. Gentlemen seem to think they may have the benefit of both systems. But they ought to remember that an Act of a compulsory kind is very unpopular indeed with the masters, and that the tendency of it will be to prevent the masters from giving the assistance they now give to the insurance funds. If that is the case the men would have to fall back on the Compulsory Act, and, if so, I wish them joy of it. I think I have said enough to show that there are very good reasons why many Members on this side of the House should object to the passing of this Bill. But I think that is a question which may justly be referred to a Select Committee, provided the House does not bind itself to the principle of the measure before the Committee has sat; and, therefore, I have the honour to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That the Debate be now adjourned."
 —(*Accout Cranborne*.)

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I think that the action which has been taken by Her Majesty's Government places us in a very considerable difficulty in regard to this matter. I am unfortunate enough not to have been present in the House in the early stage of the debate, so that I did not hear what fell from the Attorney General, and I only heard part of what fell from the Home Secretary; but I understand that what passed was this—The original policy of the Government was precisely that which has just been suggested by my noble Friend behind me—namely, that the whole policy of the Employers' Liability Act should be considered formally and completely by a Select Committee, and for that reason they proposed the adjournment of the debate on this Bill, and further proposed that, at a later stage, the Bill and the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr.

Burt) should be referred to the consideration of that Select Committee. That proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was, I understand, accepted as a fair and proper mode of dealing with the question. Subsequently, however, it was objected to by some Members sitting on the other side of the House, and also by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill). It was objected to first by the hon. and learned Member for York (Mr. Lockwood), who spoke with considerable force against the principle of freedom of contract, although I am not quite sure that the hon. and learned Member would support interference with freedom of contract if applied to his own Profession. It was also objected to by other hon. Members who addressed themselves to the subject. The result of that was that the Home Secretary said he approved of the principle of the Bill now before the House; but, at the same time, he approved of an adjournment. That was a certain step in advance. There was further debate, and then the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose and said he approved of the principle of the Bill, which led him to support the second reading on the present occasion, thereby entirely departing from the understanding arrived at with my right hon. Friend. I confess that I was not a little puzzled by what had passed up to that stage; but I was still more puzzled when my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) accepted that proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It does appear to me that, by agreeing to the second reading of the Bill, the House commits itself to the principle of that Bill—that being an old and well understood rule. Now, what are the principles of the Bill? I must not debate them on this Motion; but they are principles which, to my mind, are of vital importance in the settlement of the question; they are principles which, if carried into effect, would fatally interfere with those advantages which my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill) has told the House have been given to the employed by many employers of labour, and which he expressed his great desire to maintain. If that be so, the House is asked this evening to assent to a principle of no little importance when it as-

cepts the second reading of this Bill. It seems to me to be a matter of real necessity that this question should be thoroughly sifted and investigated. Next year it must be dealt with by Parliament, and it is so difficult a matter that no inquiry can be too thorough or too searching—I was almost going to say too long—[“No!”]—if you can secure its final and satisfactory settlement. But if that inquiry is to be undertaken, surely it should be approached, so to speak, with an open mind. Surely it should be approached without the preliminary acceptance of any principle as to a change in the law, especially a change of such great importance as would be effected by the Bill which is now before the House. I must say, for myself, it does appear to me that the suggestion of a Select Committee is a very proper and necessary suggestion; but that the Committee should be appointed without reference to this or any other Bill—in point of fact, that it should go into the inquiry—

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman is now discussing the Main Question, which is irregular upon a Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I beg pardon. I will only say, in conclusion, that it appears to me, the adjournment of the debate having been at first suggested by Her Majesty's Government, as the mode in which they proposed to deal with the subject, it would be wise for the House to adhere to that proposition. By doing so they would leave the whole question open, as it ought to be left open, for the consideration of the Committee.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): The Government do not defend the literal consistency of the course which has been taken either on this or that Bench. If it were desirable—which I have no wish to do—to enter into recrimination on this subject, I should say that the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Asheton Cross) took one view, that the late Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) took another, and that then the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) reverted to the old position. With regard to the Government, there is no doubt that my right hon. Friend suggested that the

whole subject should be referred to a Committee. As the debate went on our views underwent a modification. I am not in the least ashamed to confess it, and it is frequently the case in debates in this House that as they go on opinions become modified. What is the use of debate in this House unless it is to modify views? The Government, however, stand in a very different position with reference to the substance of this question from right hon. Gentlemen opposite. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has affirmed that we agree with the principle of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman opposite does not agree with the principle of the Bill; at all events, he has not yet made up his mind. As regards the Government, the only question affecting them is one of procedure with reference to a matter upon which we are agreed in principle. I quite admit that it would be a different question if we were agreed upon the principle. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary suggested that it would be consistent with the opinions of the promoters of this Bill and the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) that a particular course should be taken. The supporters of the principle of the present Bill demurred to that course being taken. I think it was perfectly reasonable that we should consider that objection, seeing that we agree with them in the main substance of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman opposite and some of his Friends, including the noble Lord the Member for Darwen (Viscount Cranborne), whom we heard with satisfaction, expressed opinions that were altogether different, and opinions with which we do not concur. But there are further stages of the Bill after it leaves the Select Committee on which it will be possible to raise any question as to principle; and, indeed, in the Select Committee itself it will be quite possible to do so. Therefore, hon. Gentlemen opposite are not precluded by any means from further opposition to the principle of the Bill. Under these circumstances, and after the concurrence of my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), the late Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, I do not think that hon. Gentlemen sitting on that side of the House have any right to complain of the course we have taken.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach

My right hon. Friend said the difference between us was so infinitesimal that it was not worth discussing. There is no intention of acting in any way unfairly to hon. Gentlemen opposite, or on this side of the House, who demur to the principle of the Bill, seeing that they will be able to discuss that principle hereafter. And therefore I hope, on the whole, that without any warmth of feeling on the subject the course which I have suggested will be adopted.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: The right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken does not often succeed in throwing oil upon the troubled waters, and he has certainly not succeeded in doing so to-night. He has not only thrown overboard the Secretary of State for the Home Department, but he has also thrown over a former Colleague of his—Lord Monk Bretton—because, when Mr. Dodson (now Lord Monk Bretton) had charge of the Employers' Liability Bill in 1880, he brought it forward as a tentative measure, for the express purpose of having it reconsidered after it had been in operation for a few years. The object which I had in view in assenting to the Motion for Adjournment, and the object of the adjournment itself, was to provide that the inquiry of the Committee should be deferred until it could have the opportunity of considering that which Lord Monk Bretton said in 1880 ought to be considered—namely, how far the Act had answered its purpose before it was made final, or its provisions extended. The whole object of the adjournment, which is the Question upon which I am at the present moment speaking, was in order to afford a proper opportunity for having the whole matter discussed. I suggested that the debate should be adjourned for the purpose of securing the appointment of a Committee, and that the Committee should sit without the principle of this measure having been affirmed by the House in the first instance. ["Order!"] If I am out of Order the Speaker will correct me. I say that the object with which the adjournment of the debate was suggested in the early part of the evening was this—that before we assented to the principle of the Bill by reading it a second time we might have the experience of the Select Committee, together with the evidence adduced before them,

and the conclusion they may arrive at, whether the principle of the Employers' Liability Act ought to be extended or not. That was the sole object I had in proposing the adjournment of the debate; it is the reason why I shall support it now; and it was the reason why the suggestion was accepted by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department. It is simply because other hon. Members have made other suggestions that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has proposed a different course, although he did not hear a word of what was stated in the earlier part of the discussion.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. He is mistaken. I have been present throughout the debate, and I heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I am glad that I was mistaken. I am only sorry that my remarks had no effect upon him, and I am still more sorry that the arrangement proposed by the present Home Secretary had so little effect upon him that he was induced to get up half an-hour afterwards and make a different proposal altogether.

COLONEL BLUNDELL: As a new Member addressing the House for the first time, I would claim its indulgence. As an employer of labour who has loyally accepted the Act, I rise for the purpose of expressing my conviction that it is for the interest of the working man himself that he should have the power of contracting himself out of the Employers' Liability Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Member is not addressing himself to the Question before the House, which is that the debate be now adjourned, and not the Main Question.

SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN: I have listened with the greatest attention to the remarks which have been made by the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross); but I am bound to say that they failed to carry any conviction to my mind. I understand him to say that there is a difference of opinion between two right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Front Bench, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has thrown overboard the Secretary of State for the Home Department; but I am bound to say that, so far as I caught the remarks

of both of those right hon. Gentlemen, I cannot find the smallest possible difference in their action. The question dealt with by the Bill has the greatest interest for many of the constituents I have the honour to represent.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. and gallant Gentleman is travelling from the Question.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Original Question again proposed.

COLONEL BLUNDELL: Under the Employers' Liability Act, as it now stands, the workmen are able to contract themselves out of it. Now, I think that that is a very proper thing; and the system of insurance which has been established, and to which the employers contribute, is of the utmost advantage to the workman. It provides for him when he is sick, and also for his widow and orphans if he has the misfortune to be killed. I see no objection to a provision in the Act rendering it illegal to make it a condition of employment that a workman should contract himself out of the Act, provided he may do so if he thinks it his interest; but I would point out that in dangerous occupations, such as that of coal-mining, the injuries inflicted upon the workmen which can by any possibility be imputed to the negligence of the employer are infinitesimal—probably not more than 5 or 10 per cent. But many accidents occur in which the injured workmen suppose that negligence can be so imputed, and the consequence is that there is an enormous amount of litigation. So much is that the case that in 1884 the claims made were four times as great as the compensation obtained by the workmen. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that upon the Select Committee which will have to consider the provisions of this Bill this vital question should be carefully sifted to the bottom, because I do not disguise from myself that many workmen suppose that the question of safety is involved. But in dangerous occupations like coal-mining there are Acts of Parliament passed, like the Mines Regulation Act, which are intended to protect the workmen; and if they fail to give them protection they should at once be amended. I have dwelt strictly upon this single point, because I feel that it is the very essence of the Bill now before us.

Sir Henry Heclock-Allan

CAPTAIN VERNEY: I have only one remark to address to the House. I am anxious to say a word on behalf of a class of workmen who are entirely unrepresented in this House—the class of seamen. I understand that when the Bill passes a second reading it is understood that the principle of it has been thereby affirmed; and I hope that, in this case, it will be also understood that part of the principle of the Bill which we are about to affirm to-night is that seamen shall be brought under the protection of the measure.

Mr. FORWOOD: I hope the House will extend to me the indulgence which is usually afforded to a Member who rises to address it for the first time. I may say that I appear here in a dual capacity, seeing that I have the honour to represent a large body of men who are engaged in coal-mining, and that I have also the further privilege of representing another large body of men who are interested in the provisions of this Bill—I mean the shipping interest. With regard to the colliers, I must admit that I originally took the view that they were better off by entering into an arrangement with the mine owners by which an insurance fund was provided, under which a collier, in the case of an accident which, whether it came within the Employers' Liability Act or not, would receive compensation. But upon discussing the matter with the workmen themselves I found—and I honour them for it—that they put in the forefront their anxiety to make compulsory the necessity of protecting life and limb, and that it is not with them a mere question of compensation. They desire to come under the Act in order that they may best protect the mines in which they work and their own lives from accident. Therefore, I feel that as regards the principle of the Bill, as far as it applies to that class of workmen, it is desirable that it should be affirmed, and distinctly affirmed. But there is another point in the Bill which is quite novel, and which has not been considered, I believe, in this House before—namely, the reference to seamen. Now, I would venture to suggest to the House that the position of the seamen and that of other workmen employed in general trade, their work in mines or buildings is carried on under the eye and under the

inspection of their own master or a foreman. But with regard to a ship, the vessel is sent to sea with all that is necessary to equip her and render her seaworthy. The owner provides the best officer and master he can command to control that ship; but once it has left the port and gone away from his sight, he has no further opportunity of exercising that vigilance and constant control over her which the owner of a factory or of a coal mine has, whose works are conducted under his own immediate inspection. As the great national shipping industry has not been alluded to to-night, perhaps I may be allowed for a moment or two to place before the House the exact position of the shipowner, and the difference which exists between his position and that of the manufacturer and colliery proprietor. The manufacturer proceeds with his work under little, if any, inspection; but the case is vastly different with the shipowner. The law recognizes that there are great dangers attending the voyages of a ship; and from the day that a man makes up his mind that he will build a ship until the day that ship leaves her port the shipowner positively hands himself over body and soul to the inspectorship of the Board of Trade. He draws his plans and makes out his specifications, and he has to submit those plans and specifications for the approval of the Board of Trade. I am speaking now of the steam shipowner. Then he has to obtain from a Government Department a certificate that the vessel has been built, prepared, and equipped in a manner sufficiently strong to insure her safe navigation. Even then the shipowner has not a free choice as to whom he shall employ in the conduct and navigation of the ship; but he is bound to employ a master or engineer officer, who must have submitted himself to an examination by an inspecting officer of the Board of Trade and received a certificate as to his qualification. A ship sent to sea is thus, from first to last, under the control of a Government Department. When the vessel goes to sea under the direction of a duly certificated master, she passes absolutely away from the control of the owner; but if this Bill passes, in the shape in which it is now before the House, the owner will become responsible for every act and deed of the officers he employs which

may be construed to have been in any degree an act arising from negligence on the part of the master or other certificated officer so approved by the Board of Trade. Now, Sir, it is very difficult to determine what is negligence and what is an error of judgment on the part of the master or officer navigating the ship. We have hundreds of cases investigated year by year before the Wreck Commissioners, whose duty it is to ascertain whether the master has navigated his ship in a seamanlike manner, or whether the accident or loss arose from some cause not under the control of the owner, or master, or officers. It is one of the most difficult points the Wreck Commissioners has to decide where comes in the question whether the master was guilty of negligence in navigation, or whether he was only guilty of an error of judgment. In order to show the House how difficult and how intricate that question is, I may say that it may turn upon a point whether the master has cast his lead every hour or every two hours, or upon other matters perfectly out of the control and altogether beyond the cognizance of the owner. If the Court holds that the master ought to have taken a cast of his lead every hour, and that he only did it every two hours, he is held to have been guilty of negligence; and it is proposed, under this Bill, even if the ship may have gone to the bottom, that for such an act of technical negligence the owner of the ship shall be liable for three years' wages in the case of every man who was on board that vessel. That means, in the case of some of our large Atlantic liners, something like £30,000. I think, therefore, that the House will consider that it is a subject of deep importance and great moment, and one that is not to be decided hastily or without careful consideration. There is another point in the Bill to which I must also call attention. It makes the owner responsible, under Section 3, for the negligence of every person who may have been entrusted by him with the duty of seeing that the ways, means, works, machinery, and plant are in a proper condition. Now, large employment is found by the owners of vessels—and I may say at once it is the only profitable employment for owners at the present day, in trading abroad, visiting the home port seldom, but making

voyages inter-colonial, or from port to port abroad. Under this Bill the master abroad will select probably the best engineer and the best workpeople he can find to effect any repairs that may have to be done in a foreign country, but of whom the owner at home has never heard before. If such workpeople do their work negligently or inefficiently, under this Bill the owner at home is made responsible for acts over which it is impossible that he can exercise any control whatever. Now, Sir, the Employers' Liability Act, to which this is to be a supplement, clearly and distinctly sets out that by reason of the negligence of any person in the service of the owner certain penalties shall be incurred. One effect of this drastic legislation will be to increase what, I think, is a very unwholesome practice for the purpose of defeating the Act, and I will point it out to the House in this way. The Limited Liability Act is frequently adopted in regard to the ownership of a vessel. The owners of a vessel constitute themselves into a single Company with fully paid-up shares. If that vessel goes to the bottom the whole of the capital comprised in the shares goes with it, and there is nothing left to represent anybody against whom a claim for compensation under the Act can be made. The effect will be to do away with the private ownership of vessels, which still very largely prevails in this country, and to force every owner to take advantage of the unwholesome provisions of the Limited Liability Act in regard to the ownership of vessels. The result would be that instead of giving protection to the sailors the owners would absolutely escape scot-free, owing to the desire which would spring up to evade the provisions of the Bill. I have pointed out these practical points—I hope the House will consider them practical points—for the purpose of directing the attention of the Select Committee, which I hope will be appointed to consider this measure, to the important fact that it involves a new departure as regards the question of seamen, and requires very careful attention at the hands of any Committee which may be appointed. In regard to the general principles of the Employers' Liability Act, so far as it affects the pocket interest, in forcing manufacturers and others who employ

labour to provide good machinery and appliances, I cordially sympathize with the object of the Bill. All I hope is, that the House will not allow their sentiment to run away with their reason, and induce them to strain a point against the general interests of the country.

MR. MACINNES: The hon. Member opposite has called attention to the case of seamen. May I, with the permission of the House, say a few words in regard to another class who have not been referred to to-night—I mean the railway *employés*, because no body of workmen will be more largely affected by the provisions of the Bill than those with whom I happen to be connected—I mean the London and North-Western Railway Company. I desire to say a few words as to the position of the men under that Company, and under private firms who have made similar arrangements. I came down to this House entirely prepared to support the second reading of the Bill. Like hon. Gentlemen opposite, I found, on facing my constituents, that there was no question regarded by them as of more general interest. Over and over again my attention was called to the principles of the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt); and I have always claimed to myself the right in Committee, after the Bill should have passed a second reading, to bring forward the case of the railway servants, with regard to which I have special knowledge. The hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor), who moved the second reading of the Bill, said that practically the railway servants in this country were morally compelled to contract themselves out of the Employers' Liability Act. Now, I wish to tell the House that in regard to the very large body of men employed by the London and North-Western Railway that accusation does not hold good.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The hon. Member must excuse me. I do not think I committed myself to the statement that the great body of railway servants were compelled to contract themselves out of the Act; but what I said was that hundreds of thousands of workmen in the country were compelled to contract themselves out of it.

MR. MACINNES: I beg the hon. Member's pardon if I have misrepresented him. I was quite aware that he had not alluded specially to railway work-

Mr. Forwood

men; but as they are a large body, and will undoubtedly be affected, I concluded that his observations applied to them. Now, the position of the railway servants, with whom I have the honour to be connected, is this. When the Act of 1880 became law, the London and North-Western Railway Company called their men together by delegates from all parts of the country, and placed a scheme before them for their consideration. They were not asked to adopt it hastily. (On the contrary, they were requested to go back to the country and consider it carefully through their delegates. Some weeks were spent by the men in so considering the scheme. At the end of that time they returned, and accepted the proposition placed before them by an enormous majority of no less than 32,000 in favour of accepting it, against 59 individuals who were unwilling or indisposed to accept the terms of the Company. The proposal was by no means framed with any idea that the Company would benefit their pockets. On the contrary, in the proposals made by the Company the shareholders were required to make a large grant from their resources. Indeed, the proposal was of such a character that instead of spending a matter of some £3,000 a-year, which was the utmost that could have been possibly claimed under the Act, a very much larger sum was voluntarily contributed by the shareholders of the Company. Although I entirely agree with the principle of this Bill, and think that we ought not in this House to pass permissive Acts—that if an Act of Parliament is good we ought to pass it, and if it is bad that we ought to repeal it, but that we ought not to allow permissive legislation—I think that the interests of men who in large numbers have accepted the terms offered to them, both in this and in similar cases, should be fairly considered when the Bill goes before the Committee. A suggestion has been made in some quarters which seems to me to be worthy of consideration—namely, that in cases where insurance funds exist the firms which have created such insurance funds should have public inspection applied to them. Freedom to contract themselves out of the Act should only be conceded when a satisfactory certificate was obtained to prove that no compulsion was being used towards the workpeople. It may

be said that such a proposal is in the nature of a compromise; but I would point out that it is offered in the interests of the men themselves, who, in the case of the servants of the London and North-Western Railway Company, in such a large proportion as 32,000 against 59, after full consideration, expressed themselves satisfied with the arrangement proposed for their acceptance. It appears to me that in affirming the principle of the Bill we ought to reserve to ourselves the right in Committee to consider and deal with this point in the way I have suggested. Even if the clause were introduced, I have said that the arrangement made by the London and North-Western Railway Company is such that the shareholders contribute under it a larger sum than they can be called upon to pay under the Act. The arrangement has been in existence for five years, and with that experience the Directors are ready to refer to their books and accounts, which will establish the correctness of what I have stated.

SIR JOHN COMMERE: If it were not for the speech of the hon. Member for Ormakirk (Mr. Forwood) I should not have risen to address the House on this subject; but having some experience as a sailor I trust I may be allowed to occupy a few minutes in stating my views upon the question of bringing seamen within the scope of the Bill. If I believed that it would be for the benefit of the seamen themselves that they should be brought under the Act I should at once agree to the principle; but I believe, having regard to the vicissitudes of a sailor's life, that it would not be so. What the hon. Member for Ormakirk said is perfectly true; I quite agree with him that it is manifestly impossible for a shipowner in England to have any knowledge of what is going on in connection with his ship in a foreign port. Supposing, for instance, the engineer is invalidated, or dies, the captain of the ship gets the best engineer who can be found in the port to do the work; but bad may be the best. Instances may occur of a man losing his arm or his leg; but is it right that the shipowner should be taxed to the extent of three years' pay for an accident over which he has no control? It is just the same in the case of sailing ships. Upon the ocean, thousands of miles away

from England, with only one officer on deck in charge of the vessel, what may not happen. How can the owners tell, if a man falls off a yard, whether it is caused by a rotten brace or by a shift of wind? I can assure the House that these matters are not easily dealt with at sea, nor can they be easily judged of afterwards. Sailors are, as a class, not partial to lawyers. There is, I believe, a good understanding between owners and seamen at the present time, and I trust that the harmony which exists between them may not be disturbed; but I believe that the result of bringing shipowners under this law would be that this harmony would be very much interfered with. Sir, there are many of my brother officers here, more than ever there were before; and I say that we arrogate to ourselves, notwithstanding the remark of one hon. Member who has spoken, that we represent in this House sailors just as much as officers and shipowners, and as long as we remain here we shall continue to do so. For these reasons I object to shipowners being brought under the Bill.

SIR JOHN GORST: Sir, I can assure my hon. Friends below the Gangway that my speech shall be very short. I apologize for my temerity in speaking on this subject, and as one of a class said by the gallant Admiral who has just spoken to be peculiarly obnoxious to sailors. I venture to make some observations to the House on behalf of seamen. I should not do so if I were sure that the gallant Admiral the Member for Southampton (Sir John Commerell) was an adequate Representative of seamen. I have an idea that there is a difference with regard to this matter in the Navy as compared with the Merchant Service, and that ordinary seamen do not look at it in the same light as the hon. and gallant Gentleman. I have been a supporter of the Employers' Liability Act since the time when it was first brought into this House; and I remember, when I had the honour of a seat below the Gangway on the opposite side, that it was supported at the time by some Gentlemen opposite who are now most eloquent in the denunciation of its principles. I should also like to say that those who have been ardent and consistent supporters of the Employers' Liability Act have never been able to understand why seamen have

been excluded from its provisions. Arguments have been adduced by the Attorney General (Mr. Charles Russell), my hon. Friend the Member for Ormskirk, and the gallant Admiral who has just sat down, against the Bill, which are just as applicable to the case of miners who worked below ground as to seamen. In answer to the Attorney General's statement, I should like to ask what control the representative of a Mining Company in London has over miners working underground in Northumberland? If a shareholder in a mine is to be made liable for the negligence of managers and overlookers under these circumstances, I say that you should apply the same principle as you apply to him to owners of ships. If the law is good in one case it is good in the other. But, Sir, I happen to know that the exclusion of seamen from the benefit of the Act of 1880, which astonished us so much at the time it was originally proposed by a Liberal Government, was no matter of principle at all. I know how it came about, and I will tell the House how it came about. The right hon. Gentleman now President of the Local Government Board, who at that time was President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain), had two Bills before the House—one the Employers' Liability Bill, and the other a Bill making certain regulations with reference to the shipment of grain cargoes for the better preservation of life at sea. The Grain Cargoes Bill, which passed into law in 1880, was opposed by a large number of shipowners, who represent always an important interest in this House; and it was desired to buy off those shipowners, if it could be done, that seamen were excluded from the Employers' Liability Act. They said—"If you exclude us from the Employers' Liability Bill we will withdraw our opposition to the Grain Cargoes Bill." Well, Sir, the bargain was made, and the opposition of the shipowners to the Grain Cargoes Bill was withdrawn, and a clause was introduced into the Employers' Liability Bill that it should not apply to seamen. That is the reason why that extraordinary anomaly was introduced. I should be glad if this Bill were to do away with that anomaly, for which, in my opinion, no justification can be found. I trust the House will excuse me for

Sir John Commerell

having stood for a few minutes between them and a division; but after the speeches made by the hon. Gentlemen to whom I have referred I think it right to say that there are some Members on this side of the House who are not in favour of continuing this anomaly.

MR. STORY-MASKELYNE: I have listened attentively to hon. Gentlemen on these Benches representing a very important body in this country—namely, the Railway Directors, and through them the railway shareholders. He has expressed the opinion that Railway Directors hold on this question. I beg, Sir, to ask the attention of the House to another body of men who are connected with the railway industry of the country, neither Directors nor shareholders—I mean the *employés*. I have the honour to represent a very large number of that class of persons; and I venture to think that, when inquiry is made amongst them and if they are represented on the proposed Committee, it will be found that there is another side of the question than that which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northumberland (Mr. MacInnes) has put forward. I know that what I am saying will find its echo when that Committee is called together; and therefore I ask that when that takes place the Committee will be so carefully constituted as to include not only those who represent capital and Railway Directors, but that there will be upon it persons who can speak the voice, language, and feelings of persons employed in mines, as well as that very important class, the railway *employés*, in whom this House will recognize some of the most valuable and reliable of those who administer to the wants of the public.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Sir, I thought, for reasons I ventured to submit to the House, that the wisest and safest course which the House could adopt with reference to this question was the adjournment of the debate, as originally suggested by Her Majesty's Government. But when I found that the strong opinion of the House was against that proposal, I recommended my hon. Friend not to press his Motion to a division; and, Sir, although I still hold strongly the opinion that it would be better, in the interest of a fair and adequate solution of this great ques-

tion, that we should not pledge ourselves to anything before the inquiry of the Committee which Her Majesty's Government have undertaken to appoint, and, therefore, am still opposed to the second reading of the Bill, yet I shall content myself, as I trust my hon. Friends behind me will also content themselves, by saying "No" to the Question, without putting the House to the trouble of dividing.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE: Sir, representing, as I do, a nautical as well as a shipowning community, I desire to say why I intend to abstain from voting to-night on this question. I shall abstain from doing so because of the proposed inclusion of seamen in the Bill for which a second reading is asked. I will yield to none in my anxiety to promote the welfare of seamen, no less than of shipowners; and, therefore, I intend to withhold my judgment until the Bill is considered in Committee. In the meantime, I protest, Sir, against the inclusion of seamen within the scope of the Bill, after the very short debate which we have had upon the question to-night.

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, and that it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire into the operation of 'The Employers' Liability Act, 1880.'"

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Sir, I have no objection to urge to the appointment of a Select Committee to consider this Bill, because I am more than gratified by the support of the principle of the Bill which I have obtained from Her Majesty's Government. But I wish to point out that it is further proposed to refer to the Select Committee not merely the Act of 1880 and the Bill which has just been read a second time, but also the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt). We should remember that the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth cannot be referred to the Select Committee until it has been read a second time, and that there is no reasonable prospect of its being so read on the day for which it is put down. It is, therefore, clear that a second reading cannot be secured for it at any very early date; and I wish to ask the right

hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) whether he proposes that the Select Committee should, so to speak, rest upon its oars, practically doing nothing, until the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth has been read a second time, or proceed to business as soon as possible? I should also be glad to hear that Her Majesty's Government will be prepared, if the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth is not read a second time on the 10th of March, to afford some facility for its early reading, so that there may be no delay.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, with regard to the last question of the hon. Member for East Donegal, I could not undertake to give any facilities respecting the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt). It is proposed to refer the Act of 1880, as well as the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth when it has passed the second reading, to the Select Committee; but I do not propose that there should be any delay in the matter whatever.

Motion agreed to.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire into the operation of "The Employers' Liability Act, 1880:"—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

MINES RATING BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Warrington, Bill to render owners of Mining Royalties and Dues liable to Local Rates, and to amend the Rating Act, 1874, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Warrington, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Cobb.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

The Select Committee on Public Accounts was nominated of,—Sir WALTER BARTHELOT, Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER, Sir JOHN GORST, Mr. JACKSON, Mr. LANE, Sir JOHN LUBBOCK, Mr. MAGNIAC, Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, Mr. RITCHIE, Mr. RYLANDS, and Mr. SEELY.—(Mr. Henry H. Fowler.)

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

Mr. Arthur O'Connor

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 24th February, 1886.

Their Lordships met for Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at a quarter before Twelve o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 24th February, 1886.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—For the Battersea Division of the Borough of Battersea and Clapham, v. Octavius Vaughan Morgan, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Married Women (Maintenance in Case of Desertion)* [111]; Payment of Members* [112]; Land Tax Commissioners' Names* [113]; School Fees of Non-Paupers* [114]; Income Tax Administration Amendment* [115]; Merchandise Marks Act (1862) Amendment* [116].

First Reading—Mines Rating* [110].
Second Reading — Copyhold Enfranchisement [26]; Metropolitan Board of Works (Water Supply, &c.) [34], *debate adjourned*; Lunacy (Vacating of Seats)* [85].
Withdrawn — Metropolitan Board of Works (Keeping of Firewood)* [81]; Tenure of Town Houses (Ireland) [11].

MR. OCTAVIUS VAUGHAN MORGAN.

Ordered, That the Order [19th February], appointing a Select Committee to consider whether Mr. Octavius Vaughan Morgan is disqualified from sitting and voting as a Member of this House, be read and *discharged*.—(Sir John Lubbock.)

QUESTION.

EXTRA PARLIAMENTARY UTTERANCES—SPEECH OF LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL AT BELFAST.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the reply the right hon. Gentleman made to his (Mr. Sexton's) Question on Friday last, Whether the Government have provided themselves with an official report of the speech delivered at Belfast on Monday night by Lord Randolph Churchill?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I gave the suggestion of my hon. Friend the consideration which I thought it deserved. The result was that, on the whole, we might trust to the importance of any utterances of the noble Lord in Belfast to justify us in being confident that they would be reported in the ordinary way.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

TENURE OF TOWN HOUSES (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 11.]

(*Mr. Crilly, Mr. Small, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Peter McDonald, Sir Thomas Remondé.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CRILLY, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he would ask the indulgence of the House for a very brief period, while he tried to explain, as well as he could, the provisions and principles of the very simple measure, the second reading of which he asked the House to pass. It was a measure that affected the well-being and the prosperity of a large section of the community of Ireland. There was no doubt existing in the minds of those who had followed the development of events in Ireland that there had grown up, and was growing up still in that country, a firm belief that the law affecting and regulating the tenure of houses in towns required alterations of a radical and sweeping character. A few years ago the demand was put forward with not very much strength, nor in a very earnest manner; but that day the demand for reform in the law relating to house property in towns in Ireland was made by a very large number of the people of Ireland, and by a very large number of powerful organizations in many of the chief towns of that country. This was not, however, exclusively an Irish question, or an Irish grievance, as was proved by the fact that, almost in every Session during the last four or five years, a Bill, dealing in one way or another with the question of house tenure, in so far as it affected England, had been introduced into the House either by the hon. Gentleman who was at present Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst), or by the noble Lord who, a short time ago,

was rather favourably known as Secretary of State for India, but who was now less favourably known as the Chief Apostle of Light and Leading to the ditch-liners of Ulster (Lord Randolph Churchill). The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department being now a Member of the Government, they might trust that the interests of the urban population in England would be adequately looked after and served. Therefore, the Irish Party need only turn their attention to Ireland. This question included several matters in connection with the subject which a very great many people in Ireland would like to see grappled with. They only asked the House, however, to affirm the principle that tenants of houses in towns should, like tenants in agricultural holdings in Ireland, be entitled to compensation for any improvement that they might make. If they desired to go outside the question affected by the measure before the House, they might deal with very great and pressing questions relating to the tenancy and rentals in towns; because it was quite clear to those who were familiar with the social life of the Irish people that the same causes which had been operating in Ireland amongst the agricultural classes to make them complain of the burden put upon them in the shape of excessive rents had also been operating, to a large extent, amongst the urban population. The depression of trade, the absence of employment, want of capital, and the insistence of large landlords in obtaining excessive and oppressive rents in many parts of the country had induced in Ireland a strong feeling that, on this question, a very radical change should be effected. The Party to which he had the honour to belong did not desire, in dealing with this question of house tenure, to prevent a legitimate return for honest outlay. If a man thought well of sinking his capital in house property they had certainly no objection to his getting a return, in the shape of fair interest, on his invested capital; but what they maintained was this—that calculating and heartless speculators in house property in Ireland should be compelled to seek for their coveted profits and excessive gains in directions other than in the tills of struggling shopkeepers, or the pockets of hard-pressed artisans. In deal-

hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) whether he proposes that the Select Committee should, so to speak, rest upon its oars, practically doing nothing, until the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth has been read a second time, or proceed to business as soon as possible? I should also be glad to hear that Her Majesty's Government will be prepared, if the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth is not read a second time on the 10th of March, to afford some facility for its early reading, so that there may be no delay.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, with regard to the last question of the hon. Member for East Donegal, I could not undertake to give any facilities respecting the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt). It is proposed to refer the Act of 1880, as well as the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth when it has passed the second reading, to the Select Committee; but I do not propose that there should be any delay in the matter whatever.

Motion agreed to.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire into the operation of "The Employers' Liability Act, 1880:"—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

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House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

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MR. OCTAVIUS VAUGHAN MORGAN.

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QUESTION.

EXTRA PARLIAMENTARY UTTERANCES—SPEECH OF LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL AT BELFAST.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the reply the right hon. Gentleman made to his (Mr. Sexton's) Question on Friday last, Whether the Government have provided themselves with an official report of the speech delivered at Belfast on Monday night by Lord Randolph Churchill?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I gave the suggestion of my hon. Friend the consideration which I thought it deserved. The result was that, on the whole, we might trust to the importance of any utterances of the noble Lord in Belfast to justify us in being confident that they would be reported in the ordinary way.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

TENURE OF TOWN HOUSES (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 11.]

Mr. Crilly, Mr. Small, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Sir Thomas Esmonde.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CRILLY, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he would ask the indulgence of the House for a very brief period, while he tried to explain, as well as he could, the provisions and principles of the very simple measure, the second reading of which he asked the House to pass. It was a measure that affected the well-being and the prosperity of a large section of the community of Ireland. There was no doubt existing in the minds of those who had followed the development of events in Ireland that there had grown up, and was growing up still in that country, a firm belief that the law affecting and regulating the tenure of houses in towns required alterations of a radical and sweeping character. A few years ago the demand was put forward with not very much strength, nor in a very earnest manner; but that day the demand for reform in the law relating to house property in towns in Ireland was made by a very large number of the people of Ireland, and by a very large number of powerful organizations in many of the chief towns of that country. This was not, however, exclusively an Irish question, or an Irish grievance, as was proved by the fact that, almost in every Session during the last four or five years, a Bill, dealing in one way or another with the question of house tenure, in so far as it affected England, had been introduced into the House either by the hon. Gentleman who was at present Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst), or by the noble Lord who, a short time ago,

was rather favourably known as Secretary of State for India, but who was now less favourably known as the Chief Apostle of Light and Leading to the ditch-liners of Ulster (Lord Randolph Churchill). The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department being now a Member of the Government, they might trust that the interests of the urban population in England would be adequately looked after and served. Therefore, the Irish Party need only turn their attention to Ireland. This question included several matters in connection with the subject which a very great many people in Ireland would like to see grappled with. They only asked the House, however, to affirm the principle that tenants of houses in towns should, like tenants in agricultural holdings in Ireland, be entitled to compensation for any improvement that they might make. If they desired to go outside the question affected by the measure before the House, they might deal with very great and pressing questions relating to the tenancy and rentals in towns; because it was quite clear to those who were familiar with the social life of the Irish people that the same causes which had been operating in Ireland amongst the agricultural classes to make them complain of the burden put upon them in the shape of excessive rents had also been operating, to a large extent, amongst the urban population. The depression of trade, the absence of employment, want of capital, and the insistence of large landlords in obtaining excessive and oppressive rents in many parts of the country had induced in Ireland a strong feeling that, on this question, a very radical change should be effected. The Party to which he had the honour to belong did not desire, in dealing with this question of house tenure, to prevent a legitimate return for honest outlay. If a man thought well of sinking his capital in house property they had certainly no objection to his getting a return, in the shape of fair interest, on his invested capital; but what they maintained was this—that calculating and heartless speculators in house property in Ireland should be compelled to seek for their coveted profits and excessive gains in directions other than in the till of struggling shopkeepers, or the pockets of hard-pressed artisans. In deal-

ing with this question; they might also refer to the question of leaseholders, and it seemed to them to be a monster injustice that in many of the towns in Ireland, as in many of the towns in England, a man might own plots of land in certain localities, and by letting them for terms of 50, or, perhaps, 90 years, should be entitled, after the lapse of that term, to absolute possession of the property which had been erected on those plots of land by the industry and labour of another man, and that he should thus acquire an interest in a property to the making of which he had contributed nothing at all himself. They might also deal with the question of taxation of vacant houses; but they did not in that Bill desire to touch on these large reforms. They did not seek to deal with these important phases of that very important question; but he asked them to accept this small and trifling measure, which, however small and trifling, had as its bases right and justice. They were convinced, in introducing the measure and in supporting it, that until the duties of those landlords were defined by some legislative means or another—because they believed that household property, as well as landed property, had its duties as well as its rights—that they could not deal satisfactorily or finally with the great problem of the housing of the poor, or of the providing of better accommodation for the labouring and artizan classes. Therefore, he submitted this measure, the second reading of which he now asked the House to pass, with the hope that the Government would see their way to accept it from his hands. As he had said, it was only a small measure. They simply asked that they might assure the tenants in towns in Ireland who had made improvements that they should be entitled, at the expiration of their tenancies, to compensation for their improvements. The House had already affirmed the principle of the Bill over and over again; and they now only asked to have extended to houses in towns in Ireland the same principle and the same rule which had already been recognized by the Irish Land Act of 1870. There was no reason why the breathing of a rural atmosphere should confer privileges not enjoyed by an urban population. They asked to solve the question by the simple method of

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extending to the houses in towns in Ireland the Compensation Clauses of the Land Act of 1870, and of every Act amending or affecting it that had been passed since 1870. The feeling in Ireland was very strong upon the matter. They all knew of the hundreds and thousands of dilapidated dwellings in towns that were to be seen by anyone who took sufficient interest in the subject to investigate their condition. They also knew that that state of things was due, in a great measure, to the fact that the landlords of these houses and of these towns—who were very frequently absentee landlords—would not effect any improvements in these residences of the tenants; and, on the other hand, they knew very well that the tenants themselves would not—nay, dare not—effect any improvements, for the simple and wise reason that if they effected any improvement in their houses, the landlords, with the rapacity for which Irish landlords were notorious—[“No, no!”]—to those who said “No!” the records of the Land Commission amply proved the accuracy of his statement—the landlords, with that rapacity for which they were notorious, would at once step in and confiscate those improvements which had been made by the tenants. The Land Act of 1870 provided compensation for disturbance as well as improvements; but that Bill only sought compensation for improvements. He thought that was a moderate and fair proposal—some might think too moderate. In the unreformed Parliament, the Bill, when in the charge of his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan), was defeated by only eight votes, and a Motion for a Committee of Inquiry into the subject was lost last year by only one vote. He trusted that reformed House would recognize the fact that all that was sought for by the shopkeepers and artizans and labourers in towns in Ireland, who laboured that day under so many disadvantages, was a simple act of justice, and that it would not go forth to Ireland that this measure of justice was refused. It was an historical fact that when the Land Question was first introduced, many years ago, the only principle affirmed in that introductory measure was that of compensation for disturbance. The measure was, like other beneficial measures for Ireland, rejected in the Upper House; and they had to wait until the ring-

ing of the chapel bell compelled them to pass the Act of 1881, and thereby give a measure of justice to the long-suffering tenant farmers of Ireland. Therefore, he trusted he would not, in submitting this measure to the House, meet with a refusal. He submitted it to the House with confidence that the principles of justice it contained would commend themselves to hon. Gentlemen opposite; and he trusted that it would be told in the records of that House that when the second reading of this just measure was moved it was accepted willingly by the Government, and passed by a majority of the House. He would conclude by moving the second reading.

Mr. PETER McDONALD, in seconding the Motion, said, that the Bill was a short and simple one, and dealt with only one of the items which it might embody—namely, that the tenant and leaseholder should be entitled to compensation for any improvements effected by him; but he, for one, wished it had been made fuller and more comprehensive. The condition of town leaseholders in Ireland was one that called for redress. It was a question second only to the great agrarian question. He had a pretty extensive knowledge of Ireland, and had been in almost every town in that country. Consequently, he spoke with full knowledge and authority of the condition of all these towns. He could, to begin, speak with a special knowledge as to Kingstown, the place where he resided, which was known to some people as the Brighton of Ireland. It was originally but an unimportant fishing village. Few speculative gentlemen thought it would be a good place to build upon with a view of profit. Subsequently, the lords of the soil, when the importance of the place developed, exacted exorbitant ground rents, and enforced hard terms from those who built on the plots. As the leases fell in the property and capital of the builders which had been invested would be confiscated by the lords of the soil—Lord De Vesey and Lord Longford. He hoped Lord De Vesey would send another communication to the Prime Minister, setting out the state of things on his own property in Kingstown. He had reason to believe that Lord De Vesey and Lord Longford were not likely to deal very liberally with matters that appertained to themselves. He knew

one case in which a professional man, a solicitor, living close to himself in Clarinda Park, who spent £1,000 on a house, and who had, 15 years before the expiry of his lease, applied for a renewal, and was told, in reply, that he would get his renewal, but on very different terms from those under which he then held—that he would have to pay an increased rent for the remaining 15 years, and at the expiration of the lease would have to pay a further increase of rent, so that a premium was put upon the man's expenditure by the landlord. He could say something about Queenstown as well as Kingstown; but he would leave that town to be dealt with by his hon. Friend (Mr. Fox), who was intimately acquainted with it. He would refer, however, to some other cases. Take Killarney, for instance. Killarney was famed all the world over for its magnificent, its unequalled scenery; but what appearance did the town itself present—the centre of this fairyland? It presented an appearance of dilapidation, squalor, and misery. Why was that? Simply because the lord of the soil would not give renewals of leases to the present holders except on such terms as Lord De Vesey exacted; and the holders, therefore, were not foolish enough to expend money on improvements which might afterwards be confiscated by the landlord. They, therefore, abstained from expending money in the improvement of the premises, or in keeping them in a tolerable state of repair, through fear of being evicted. The proprietor of the town was Lord Kenmare, who held a position in Her Majesty's Government—a model of what an Irish landlord was. He (Mr. McDonald) had no hesitation in saying that the state of things in Killarney was a discredit and a disgrace to Irish landlordism, and it was only typical of the state of things in Ireland all over. When a member of the Local Board in Kingstown, he initiated a movement for the purpose of gathering information in reference to this question of town leases. A series of printed questions were sent to the Town Clerks, the Clerks of Unions, and the Clerks of Petty Sessions in Ireland, and such men as would be likely to give correct information, and several hundred replies were received. He did not think that this question would come on so soon, and, therefore,

he did not prepare an analysis of these replies; but he applied to the Town Clerk of Kingstown for that information, and this morning he received a reply from him. He would now read that reply to the House, and some of the extracts from his analysis. He would take first a case in which there was perfect security for house tenants, and show the effect of that security upon the town. Take the case of Lisburn. The reply was—

"DEAR MR. M'DONALD—I send you a few extracts which I have selected at random from the replies sent me some time ago by different Town Clerks and Clerks of Unions regarding the tenure of property in towns. You will be able to perceive that, in the very few cases in which the tenants are sure of being allowed to enjoy the fruits of their outlay, the towns are in a flourishing condition, as, for instance, the town of Lurgan. On the other hand, those towns in which the tenants have no such security are in almost all cases in a state of dilapidation. In the town of Lisburn the usual tenure of building leases is fee-farm grants. Renewals are granted on reasonable terms. The consequence is that the town is in a prosperous condition."

Now, he desired to say that the town of Lisburn was solely owned by Sir Richard Wallace; and he should say that where honesty and justice, as between landlord and tenant, had come under his notice it was mainly confined to the North of Ireland. He was only too happy to bear testimony to that fact. Now, take another instance—the case of Wicklow. The reply was—

"In the town of Wicklow the leases vary from 31 to 99 years. Renewals of leases are not granted; the property being brought into the market and given to the highest bidder on the expiry of the original lease. The result is that the tenants abstain from making any improvements except such as are absolutely indispensable to their present requirements, the property is deteriorated, and the town in a state of ruin and decay; or, at least, all progress is effectually prevented, the natural effect of which is a stagnation of business."

He would take now a Western town; and, considering the state of that town, he was not surprised that the hon. and gallant Member for the Division (Colonel Nolan) in which it was situated took such an interest in this subject. The reply was—

"In the town of Tuam no leases are granted, and consequently no renewals. The result is dilapidated houses, lack of trade, want of comfort, the rain coming down in some shops owing to the neglect of the landlords to keep the roof in repair. Persons having no leases are, of

course, afraid to improve their houses lest their rent should be raised."

The reply from Dalkey was—

"In the town of Dalkey the leases are for 99 years. Renewals are granted on the following conditions:—The landlord (Earl Caryfort) sends his own valuator, who values the premises. He deducts one-third of the valuation, and the remaining two-thirds are then settled as head rent, to be paid by the tenant for 99 years."

He would now take the town of Ballymena; and he was sorry to say that Ballymena was not in as good a condition as the other Northern town to which he referred. The reply was—

"In the town of Ballymena—Lord Waveney, landlord—the leases are for 91 years, and renewals for 61 years. The landlord when making renewals makes the terms, having no fixed rule, but decides each case, with the assistance of the agent, to his own advantage. The tenant is always obliged to surrender his right and title. The result is that in a great number of cases the tenants are allowing the houses to wear their leases out by mouldering into ruin; and some of the best business thoroughfares are disgraced by old thatched ruins of houses running out of leases, which would have been rebuilt long since if the tenants had not considered the landlord's demands exorbitant."

He would only trouble the House with one or two further illustrations. Another reply was—

"In the towns of Ballyconnell, Bawnboy, and Ballinmore, in the Bawnboy Union, the leases are from 60 to 99 years. In the town of Newtowngorm, in the same Union, there are none but yearly tenancies. No renewals are granted; and the result is most injurious to the interests of the tenants."

He could bear personal testimony to the facts regarding the Southern town, in which he was born, that no leases were granted, and that in consequence suitable houses were not built, as the tenants could only hold them from year to year. Such a state of things, he maintained, was a disgrace to civilization, and a disgrace to Irish landlordism. Take another Northern town, the reply from which was—

"In the town of Belturbet, in the county of Cavan, the leases are generally 21 years. Renewals are granted in very few cases, the result being that, in many cases, the property goes to ruin, the tenant leaves, and the business interests of the town are damaged."

Another reply was—

"In the town of Mallow the leases are from 20 to 100 years. No renewals of leases are granted. The result is that the tenant loses all that he and his predecessors in title have spent on the premises, and that for several

Mr. Peter M'Donald

years before the expiration of the lease the tenant allows the premises to fall into decay, expending only so much on them as will keep them together. The town wears, in consequence, a ruinous appearance, caused by the tenements not being repaired. Tradesmen are not employed."

Take, now, the case of Lurgan, and he was happy again to bear testimony to the justice done in this matter in the North of Ireland. The reply was—

"In the town of Lurgan the usual tenure of building leases is 999 years—instances of renewal are, of course, rare, simply because they are not wanted. Instead of any cases of hardship the town has increased at the following rate:—1841, population, 6,000; valuation, £4,760; in 1881, population, 11,000; valuation, £20,000.

They would find no such state of things existing anywhere else in Ireland; and he was pleased to say that walking through Lurgan he saw with pleasure that it presented the appearance of the best-kept and best-managed English towns, and that was because there was a landlord there who desired to do justice as between man and man. Considering all these circumstances, he would follow the example of the hon. Member for North Mayo (Mr. Crilly), and appeal, in conclusion, to hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House who had sympathy with the people who expended, in many instances, their all in the erection of these buildings, to assist the Irish Member in redressing the wrongs which the present system imposed upon the leaseholders in Ireland, and from which they now grievously suffered.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—*Mr. Crilly.*)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) said, that everyone must have expected that that subject would be brought before the newly-reformed Parliament almost at the earliest possible moment after its meeting; because in the last Parliament, as the hon. Member for North Mayo (Mr. Crilly) had reminded them, there were 32 out of 34 Irish Members who voted for the inquiry moved for by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan). It was, therefore, not at all surprising that in a House which, as they all said, was still more democratic, the subject should again be brought forward. But he thought the hon. Member was scarcely justified in

describing this as a very simple, or a very small and trifling measure. Whatever else they might think of it, it was a measure which involved an appeal to very important principles, and contained a great many intricate details. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. McDonald) had made an extremely interesting and instructive speech. He (Mr. John Morley) thought, however, that a part of the hon. Gentleman's argument was not entirely good; because the melancholy state of things which he described, and of which he (Mr. John Morley) himself had been a witness in some of the smaller towns of Ireland, was not, and could not be, wholly due to the state of the tenure of house property. Where they had, as they unfortunately had in Ireland, a declining population, it was inevitable that some towns, at all events, should present the dilapidated appearance that had been described by the hon. Gentleman. When they had a population that had declined, as had that of Ireland, from 8,000,000 in 1841 to 5,000,000 in 1881, it was inevitable that there should be many places, urban as well as rural, exhibiting squalor and decay. Referring to the speech of the hon. Member, he was not at all inclined to trespass on the time of the House by an appeal to political economy, because political economy, as they knew, was now banished to another sphere. But, though political economy might be in exile, temporary or permanent, common sense still survived; and he must remind hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on both sides of the House, in dealing with that Bill, that houses were not like land, because no limit was fixed by nature for houses. The extent of house accommodation was, to use the hated words of political economy, simply a matter of supply and demand. Another thing was that houses were not like land in this respect—that under no circumstances could it be said, in relation to house property, that the occupier or tenant had created the subject-matter in the sense in which all admitted that the Irish tenant, in a great portion of Ireland, at any rate, had created the subject-matter of his holding. When the tenant took a piece of bog, and reclaimed it, and got his potatoes or other produce out of it, he practically created the subject-matter of

the holding; and that analogy did not apply to house property. He was not, however, going to press that point. The hon. Member had spoken of the Bill as resting on the analogy between urban and rural holdings, and as springing from the legislation of 1870. Now, the manifest reason why contracts not to claim for improvements were declared void under the Act of 1870 was because the tenant was supposed, and justly supposed, to have no real freedom. Although that was true of agricultural holdings, it was only true, if true at all, in a very modified degree in the case of a house in a town; because if a man was turned out of a house in a town he would still have a fair chance of getting some other house. ["No, no!"] That was a question of fact. He was told that in Dublin, for example, there were only too many houses. He was not himself a Member of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, but he had read the Blue Book pretty carefully, and he thought it did appear from the evidence that although the condition of house property in many of the towns of Ireland was appalling and disgraceful, and called for immediate legislative remedy, yet, in arguing that Bill, the analogy between urban and rural holdings could not be said to apply. Surely a man had a freedom and a means in the case of a town house, which he had not in the case of a rural holding, of supplying himself with what he wanted elsewhere. He should like to come to one or two details in which he considered the scheme of the Bill was not well conceived. It advanced a number of provisions framed for the case of agricultural land, and extended them in bulk to the towns. Such cases, for example, as were covered by ordinary building leases were cases which he submitted were not within the equity which dictated the improvements section of the Act of 1870. There was another particular as to which he thought the Bill was not well considered. Where it departed from the law as enacted in the Land Act of 1870 it went wrong. The Bill said in the 3rd clause that—

"The time during which any tenant might have enjoyed the advantage of his improvements or the rent at which any holding had been held should not be taken into consideration upon any claim for a revision of the rent in respect of such improvement."

Mr. John Morley

But he asked hon. Members to consider the case of an ordinary building lease. In a building lease a long term and a low rent were the very considerations which made the terms of the lease what they were, and without which a lease would not have been granted. These were details; but they were details of great importance, which would be well worthy of the attention of the House and of hon. Members, perhaps, when they were re-framing that Bill, as he hoped they would do. He would now give the obvious reason why it was impossible for the Government to assent to the second reading of the Bill. A well-considered Bill, dealing with fixtures in buildings and with reasonable improvements made in buildings during the tenancy, might deserve, and he thought would deserve, their approbation and support. But the hon. Member who moved the second reading made a remark as to the interests of the urban population of England being confidently expected to receive the attention of the new Parliament, and especially as long as the present Government were in Office. Now, he (Mr. John Morley) wanted to point out that it was impossible for them, with that question in front of them, to assent to the partial treatment of it in relation to Ireland only. They could only deal with what was really one of the most important subjects for that Parliament—they could only deal with it on general principles, which, in spite of the economic and social differences which existed between England and Ireland, must be identical for England and Ireland. He thought the hon. Member was the subject of some mental confusion in supposing that the Bill of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department was identical with his own. It was, no doubt, identical in spirit and aim. Whether as to this Bill, or the Bill formerly brought forward by his hon. Friend, he believed the Government were second to no section in that House in desiring to see the question approached in a businesslike spirit, and dealt with fully and fairly. But they could not assent to that Bill—first, because they demurred to the analogy on which the Bill rested; second, because they could not assent to a partial treatment of a question which was sure to

come up for general consideration; and, thirdly, because, from the wording of the Bill, although neither of the hon. Members referred to the subject, it applied not merely, as the title said, to houses in towns, but to all holdings in Ireland. It, therefore, raised the question, for instance—and a very fair question it was to raise—of town parks. But these subsidiary points which were raised by the Bill would naturally come within the purview of the legislation to which the Premier had referred on more than one occasion—namely, that the Government were considering whether the Land Question as a whole might not be now conveniently revised, and measures in accordance with the result of the revision brought before the House. He was extremely sorry to have to appear not to sympathize with the objects of this Bill. It was, however, only an appearance, because no man in the House felt more strongly than he did that nothing was more urgently needed for the happiness of the great majority of the people of England, Scotland, and Ireland than that they should have an opportunity of having what they used to have in the old days—a home. To that proposition he did not believe there was any dissent in any quarter of the House. Therefore, while Her Majesty's Government were unable to give consent to the second reading of the Bill, and while they could not, he might say in advance, hold out much hope as to a Select Committee for inquiring into it, for reasons which might be more conveniently stated another day, they would have the subject, both as regarded Ireland and as regarded England and Scotland, under their most full and careful examination.

Mr. SEXTON said, although the debate had only proceeded a short way it was, from one point of view, extremely instructive. They had heard in the speeches of his hon. Friends—the Mover and Second of the Bill—in the instructive facts that were cited in the course of the speeches, that Lords Longford, De Vesci, and Carysfort, the Apostles of the "Loyal and Patriotic Union," and Gentlemen well known in Ireland as the opponents of every reform, were precisely the persons whose relations with their tenants in towns proved them to be most unreasonable. These Noblemen, who acted as kinds of figureheads for that organization, were personally re-

sponsible for much of the dilapidation which existed in the broken-down tenements in Ireland. He would also acknowledge that he had been both pleased and greatly interested by the admission of his hon. Friend (Mr. M'Donald) that the towns in the North of Ireland would come least under the operation of such a Bill as this. The towns of Lurgan and Lisbon had been particularly praised; and he had been glad to hear the compliment paid to one Gentleman (Sir Richard Wallace) for the spirit which actuated him in one of these towns, and which formed such a contrast to the manner in which the tenants in towns in other parts of Ireland were treated. He was not surprised that the attitude of the Ulster landlords was more reasonable than in other parts of Ireland, as the social life between the two classes there had been historically pervaded with a somewhat different spirit to that elsewhere manifested. The relations existing between the landlords and the tenants in Ulster had been most remarkable for a spirit of sympathy and oneness that was conspicuous by its absence in other parts of Ireland. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant as to the dilapidated condition of the houses in many of the towns and villages in Ireland, and that it could not be altogether accounted for by the nature of the tenure. There could be no doubt depopulation had a very close bearing upon this dilapidation in villages and towns. In a country where, in 40 years, the population had fallen from 8,000,000 to 5,000,000, it was obvious that the result must be a reduction to one-half of the customers of shopkeepers and artisans, a lowering of wages, and the consequent dilapidation of the houses. It was, indeed, the fact that the districts from which most emigration had taken place were most remarkable for retrogression and its visible signs. He had known districts where he had been informed that flourishing villages existed 40 years ago, where, at present, nothing was to be seen but the remains of a few crumbling walls. But, allowing for all those extenuating circumstances, such cases as these showed the evil and paralyzing operation of the existing laws of tenure upon the whole community. In dealing with the question of dwelling-houses in towns, he would

refer to the condition of the leaseholder in the town, and the condition of the tenant from year to year. In many cases the whole district around the town was owned by one man, and sometimes a number of men combined together and formed a syndicate to arrange all matters connected with it. In such cases the condition of the leaseholder was bad enough; because, no matter how extensive was his improvement to his premises or holding, it was liable to confiscation by the landlord, beside which the tenant must actually prepare himself to pay an increased rent proportioned to the amount of value generally of the improvements which he himself had made. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he did not see the germ of an equitable way of dealing with such a state of things, after the manner adopted with regard to rural holdings in Ireland? If the tenant did not comply with the hard terms imposed upon him, he was remorselessly put out without a penny compensation. He did not blame the right hon. Gentleman for falling into error as to the want of analogy between certain holdings in Irish towns and those in rural districts. He (Mr. Sexton) thought there was a complete analogy in the case of town houses and country holdings; because, as one landlord or a syndicate of landlords owned the whole of the town and the district about, it would be impossible for the tenant to secure another house. There was not free action. There might be no limit in this case defining the two classes by nature; but there was a limit fixed by art as unalterable, as inflexible, and as supreme as any ever imposed by nature. They had heard of the town of Killarney, the whole of which was owned by Lord Kenmare; and he could point out numerous other towns owned by single landlords or syndicates, where the tenants were treated with great injustice. In the case of a farm, the holder was protected by law from having his improvements confiscated; but if he was the owner of a dwelling-house or shop, and executed improvements, he would ask was not the analogy between the two classes perfect? If there was no necessity in the first case for interference, why was the Land Act passed at all? If there was a necessity in the first case, why was there no necessity in the second? If a

Mr. Sexton

man was turned out of his farm, it was said that his means of living were gone, as he could not get another. In the towns he maintained that the same thing applied; for whether the tenant held a dwelling-house or a shop in a town he could not get another, and neither was there any building ground available. If he was a shopkeeper, he would not have the least prospect of establishing another business in the town where he was known to his customers, for the landlord of the town or the syndicate controlled everything. That was particularly the case where the landlord was a territorial magnate, who not only owned the land on which the house stood, but also that all around it. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman was not entitled to demur to the analogy. There was a perfect analogy between the shopkeeper and the tenant in the country. He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had raised objections to the wording of the Bill; but he thought they were such as might, perhaps, be very properly urged in Committee. The right hon. Gentleman thought that the wording of certain clauses would have the effect of extending the operation of the Bill to all holdings of houses and to town parks. But the object of the Bill might be understood from its title, which was the tenure of town houses, and there would be no difficulty in dealing with these matters on the Committee stage of the Bill. Then they were told that this would be a partial treatment of the question. But if there was any maxim which Government admitted, it was that questions ought to be treated according to their urgency; and though grievances in relation to the question might exist in England and Scotland, he took leave to doubt whether cases existed in England and Scotland in which single persons owned towns in so striking a way as they did in Ireland. But if that was the case, then the urgency of the question was all the greater, and he would be glad to see the provisions of such a Bill extended to England and Scotland, where he had no doubt such a measure was urgently needed. In England, however, he would point out that they had a social power in public opinion, which usually moderated the action of the landlord; but such a power did not exist in Ireland. A landlord in that country generally proved his patriotism as an

Irishman by the degree of scorn and contempt which he threw upon the public opinion of his own country. His income might be derived from Ireland; but his soul was in Great Britain. It was by the public opinion of Great Britain that he regulated his conduct; and if the public opinion of England seldom troubled itself about Ireland—*“Opposition cries of ‘Oh, oh!’”*—well, not systematically then; but he knew it did by spasms. The Irish landlord, therefore, mostly did what he pleased, and this constituted a vital difference between the condition of the two countries. In conclusion, he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was long enough in Office to entitle him (Mr. Sexton) to establish a difference between what the right hon. Gentleman conceived and what he expressed. But, although he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman did not see his way to support the second reading, he was glad that he approved of the spirit and aim of the Bill; and he was very hopeful that he would approach this subject with that keen perception, courage, and moral elevation of character which distinguished him. He hoped he would be able, on a very early day, to announce that the Government saw their way to introduce a measure on the subject; and he would be glad if it should include England and Scotland. He thought, however, that his hon. Friends were entitled to go into the Lobby in support of the second reading. It was a question of great importance to the three countries; and the Irish Party, who had always been prepared to aid the working classes of Great Britain in everything that would improve their condition, would afford them every help in obtaining the benefits they sought for themselves.

MR. F. R. RUSSELL said, he would like to state, in a few words, the reasons why he intended to vote against the Government. There was a strong opinion in the country, and in that part of the House below the Gangway, that they were entitled to extend the analogy that had been referred to—he meant the analogy of the Irish Land Acts—and that they were entitled to extend these in two directions; that they were entitled to extend them from agriculture to other industries, and that they were entitled to extend them from Ireland

to other parts of the United Kingdom. There were great sufferings in England also from the tenure on which houses were held in towns. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would excuse him for saying that they all sympathized with him in his somewhat difficult position. Indeed, probably there never had been such an outgoing of feeling and expression of sympathy with a Minister entering on a new and important Office under circumstances of great difficulty. At the same time, he regretted very much that in stating the purely official reasons, which should have been adequate enough for the course the Government were taking, his right hon. Friend had thought it necessary to go into a little argument on the principle of the Bill. That argument, he thought, was hardly sufficient to warrant resistance to the measure. The right hon. Gentleman said there was a great difference between the freedom of an occupier of town property and the freedom of an occupier of agricultural property. He (Mr. Russell) apprehended that there were few circumstances where there was less freedom of contract, in which the lack of freedom of contract was so acute in its results, as where a man having occupied town property, and having gradually worked up a business in it, and in so doing had made valuable additions to the property, found that he had to pay an extravagant fine for the privilege of continuing his business, or to accept the alternative of handing the premises over to his landlord, who had done literally nothing to assist him in his endeavours to create the industry from which he was to derive his future proceeds. That showed that when the difficulty arose it took a very acute form; and until it did arise there was no force in the argument that there was a want of analogy between town property and rural property. Even in its chronic state, as had been observed on the other side, the evil was nearly as bad; for, in the chronic state, the results were that the tenant was paralyzed and prevented from increasing his business, deprived not only of all incentive to increase it, but deprived also of all hope that he would be allowed to reap the fruits of his exertions in consequence of this system. The effect of such a state of things must necessarily be the engrafting in certain characters among

the people of habits of hopelessness, indifference, and idleness; and then we turned round on the very classes whom our institutions had degraded and accused those very people of being idle and unthrifty. If a man had attained by his industry a good position, he was entitled to hope that he would be allowed to enjoy it. On these grounds, the hope of many of them below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House was that they might, by inserting the thin end of the wedge on this occasion, do something towards extending the sound and just principles of the Irish Land Act from agricultural holdings to urban property, and also towards extending them from Ireland, which they admitted had a grievance, to the whole of Great Britain, where the existing system likewise worked injuriously.

Mr. HOLMES said, that although the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had said that political economy had been banished to another sphere, he (Mr. Holmes) was glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman was still to some extent controlled by the principles of political economy, and still more glad that he had acknowledged the necessity of being guided by common sense. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the House ought not to accept the Bill, and fully concurred with him in the grounds on which he based the refusal of the Government to assent to the measure. His (Mr. Holmes's) objection was not to any change in the tenure of the houses in towns in Ireland, but to the form of the particular measure before the House. Indeed, he specially wished to guard himself against the supposition that he was entirely satisfied with the tenure of house property at the present time. He felt, as strongly as anyone could do, that many beneficial changes might be introduced into house tenure, both in England and Ireland; but here they had to deal with a particular Bill which had been circulated for the first time that morning, and of which he supposed a good many hon. Members below the Gangway were hardly able to understand the full significance. The principle underlying the Bill was to transfer the compensation for improvements provisions, incorporated in the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881 in regard to agricultural and pastoral holdings, to every building in Ireland—

Mr. E. R. Russell

not merely in the smaller towns and villages, but to all the large towns like Dublin, Belfast, Cork, and Londonderry. Not only would the Bill apply to dwelling-houses, but to every factory, warehouse, theatre, or other place of amusement; and, in point of fact, to every building throughout the country. When the Acts of 1870 and 1881 were passed, great care was taken, in the enactment of the Compensation Clauses, to restrict them to the subject-matter to which they applied—namely, to agricultural and pastoral holdings. The main principle of those clauses was one on which there was little divergence of opinion. It was that when land was let it was to the interest both of landlord and tenant that it should be improved; and it appeared to be a fair and reasonable principle that if the tenant expended his capital on improvements, some compensation should be given him for the outlay. But in the case of house property, if the tenant expended money so as to increase the letting value, it did not equally follow that he should be entitled to compensation. He certainly would not be so in all cases, and this Bill extended to all houses. Take the ordinary case of a man with £1,000. He built a house and let it to a tenant for £60 or £70 a-year. For his own purposes and requirements the tenant might add two more stories, costing, perhaps, another £1,000. The whole character of the house was altered; no doubt, its rental value might be improved. After years the tenant chose to leave; was the landlord to pay him the £1,000 he had spent, when the landlord had spent his whole capital? He used the word "landlord," but it was hardly applicable. The man simply put his money into an ordinary commercial undertaking. In Ireland they had large manufacturing towns, and the case he had put was by no means an improbable one. The provisions affecting agricultural holdings would not equitably apply to the bulk of the house property in Ireland. The hon. Member, whom they had always heard with so much pleasure in that House—he believed that he was still the Member for Sligo—(Mr. Sexton) had referred to cases in which single landlords had practical control of whole villages. He (Mr. Holmes) would, however, point out that those cases were exceptional; and

it should be remembered that this Bill, if passed, would apply to large manufacturing towns like Belfast and Londonderry, which were not all similarly situated, and would be applicable to all houses, warehouses, and factories alike. On these grounds he thought the House ought not to assent to the Bill. As to the analogy that had been put forward as between town and rural holdings, although he did not admit that such an analogy had been established, he maintained that there was a perfect analogy between town houses in Ireland and Great Britain. When the Acts of 1870 and 1881 were passed they were told they could not deal with agricultural tenancies in Ireland on the same principle as with similar tenancies in England and Scotland, the strong argument for those Acts being the exceptional circumstances of Ireland. But if there were this difference as to agricultural holdings, no one could say the same or any difference existed between house properties in the different parts of the Kingdom. In his opinion, therefore, it would certainly be an anomalous thing, at the commencement of a new Parliament like the present, that only one portion, and that a small one, of a large question which really affected the Three Kingdoms should be dealt with, and dealt with in a manner that was anything but satisfactory, in a Bill of this nature. He by no means desired to oppose real practical reforms; but he believed that they would require strong additional arguments to induce the House to adopt such a Bill as that now before them.

MR. GOSCHEN: Sir, I do not propose to argue this matter for one moment from the point of view of the rights of property, or from the point of view of the principles of political economy, to which my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary alluded. From both points of view a great deal might be said on the present occasion; but it is not with a view of urging any argument derived from these principles that I wish to submit a very few observations to the House. I have been led to intervene for a moment in this debate by the arguments that have fallen from one or two hon. Gentlemen—namely, the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) and the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. E. R. Russell)—in regard to what seems to be

in the main the object of the Bill—namely, to give not only security for improvements which the tenant may have effected, but indirectly to prevent altogether the ejection of the tenant from the house which he occupies. I do not know whether I have made myself clear; but the House will remember that the argument has been raised to a great extent upon the injustice to tenants occupying houses, of being turned away from these houses, or having their rents raised upon them, when they have built up laboriously their business, and may find themselves ruined by being deprived of their residence in the house. Therefore, one of the main arguments upon which I see that hon. Members are likely to vote in favour of the Bill is the wish to take a step in the direction of what I think we may call security of tenure. Now, what I wish to point out is that, even if this Bill were passed, I do not know that a real step would have been taken towards the object which hon. Members have at heart in this matter. Because it appears to me that, unless you at the same time introduce enactments with regard to fair rents and fixity of tenure, the landlords, though they have to pay compensation for improvements under this Bill, may, nevertheless, deprive the tenants of the opportunity of continuing in their business. If that is so—and I think my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow will almost admit it, so far as regards his argument—you will have gone a very little way in the direction of the objects he has at heart if you were to pass this Bill. I would, in passing, just make one allusion to the argument in regard to annual tenants. Annual tenants, surely, would scarcely be authorized, if only holding from year to year, to make large improvements of any kind; and in such case, clearly, it would be necessary to give the landlords considerable power in regard to stopping those improvements made by the tenant-at-will. But that is not the part of the subject to which I was addressing myself. I wish to suggest that if this Bill is argued from the point of view of the analogy between lands and houses, that we have arrived, I think, at a very considerable difficulty in dealing with the Land Question, by having strengthened and confirmed a double ownership in the land. We shall have tied together the

landlord and the tenant in such a way that all difficulties between the two seem to be almost insuperable; and I want to suggest respectfully to the House whether it would be wise to commence that legislation which so many people think is necessary with regard to house property, by taking steps which will begin to create a double ownership practically in house property? The House is aware of the Bills that have been introduced by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst)—Bills which have for their object that tenants should become absolute owners of their holdings—and I am bound to say that, in the legislation which we may have to embark upon with regard to house property, I think it would be far wiser to keep in view, as far as we can, that it is desirable that men should be able to own their own houses, rather than to start upon reforms which will create a double ownership, which afterwards we may find to be extremely inconvenient. Hon. Members opposite will, I trust, see that in this I am not opposing the object which has excited much sympathy in the House generally. I am as convinced as most Members of the House that the more we can induce men to own their own houses the better it will be. I am bound to say that the experience I acquired on the Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes did reveal that there were a certain number of evils, though not so many as were attributed to it, which resulted from the leasehold system. But, at the same time, everyone will admit that the leasehold system would not be introduced into any country on the lines on which it prevails in Great Britain and Ireland unless it had grown up with time. Doubtless the House will set itself to deal with this most difficult and most complicated subject in a spirit of equity, and keeping in view the desire which was expressed by my right hon. Friend—that there should be as large a number of the population as possible able to acquire their own holdings. Holding that view, I think it would not be wise to press partial reforms in the direction of the Bill, which seems to me to create fresh obligations and fresh entanglements, of which we have had ample examples in the legislation in respect to land. It would be rather a

Mr. Goschen

strange result if, while we are endeavouring to cut the knot between the landlords and tenants as regards land in Ireland, we should begin to go through the same process by giving the tenants of houses partial proprietary rights in their houses. I venture respectfully to submit these considerations as bearing upon the matter, and as having close reference to the Bill, though they go somewhat beyond its scope. I trust the majority will follow the advice of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary in voting against the Bill upon this occasion.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, he did not rise to prolong the debate, as he thought the subject had been almost sufficiently discussed; but he could not allow some of the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to pass without notice. That right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the prospect of remedial legislation with regard to the tenure of land not only in Ireland, but in England; and he intimated his fear that hon. Members in that quarter of the House might not receive such legislation in the most favourable manner. But, speaking for himself, and, he might say, for those who sat near him, and who represented the North of Ireland, he (Mr. Macartney) desired to say that they would be quite ready to receive cordially, to carefully examine, and to assist in passing any remedial legislation that might be based on sound economic principles. He was not, however, able to agree to certain alleged facts brought before the House, either by the hon. Second Lord (Mr. McDonald), or by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). His own experience of the Province of Ulster did not lead him (Mr. Macartney) to believe that there was any great difficulty in finding facilities for building houses. He did not believe that there existed in that Province any combination amongst the owners of land to prevent the provision of sufficient accommodation for house holders, either in the large towns or in the small villages; and he must, therefore, say that it was with great surprise that he heard the hon. Member for Sligo refer to such a combination. He was the more surprised, because he was not previously aware that either that hon. Member, or any of the hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway generally, had any great objection to

combination; and, moreover, looking to the actual progress of the towns in the Province of Ulster, with which he was himself much better acquainted than he was with the towns in the other Provinces, and taking towns which represented the extreme poles of urban population, such as Belfast, Derry, Lisburn, and Larne, it was, he thought, an undeniable fact that the population of these towns had greatly increased. He believed, for instance, that it would be admitted that the population of the thriving town of Larne had actually doubled itself within the space of the last few years; that building in that town had greatly increased; and that there was no difficulty in the way, either of those who wished to invest capital in building operations, or of those who wished to become householders in this rising place. In the somewhat bitter speech made by the hon. Mover of the second reading (Mr. Crilly)—a speech, the tone of which had not, he was happy to say, been imitated by other Gentlemen who had since spoken from below the Gangway on that side of the House—the great point made was that there was not, at the present time, sufficient protection for the improvements of the tenants of Ireland. But his (Mr. Macartney's) local experience, speaking as he did of the one Province with which he was intimately acquainted, did not agree with the experience of the Gentlemen who had addressed the House that afternoon from below the Gangway. The hon. Gentleman who had seconded the Motion for the second reading of the Bill was indeed, he noticed, obliged to admit that in the Province of Ulster the towns were all of them prosperous, and that in those towns the occupiers had no cause to complain, and did not complain of any hardship entailed upon them by the tenure of their houses. There must, therefore, he thought, be some other reason connected with the condition of the small towns and villages in the other three Provinces of Ireland to account for the dilapidated condition in which they were now said by hon. Members to be. And he thought that it would not be difficult to say what this was. He recollected that, not many years ago, a Special Commissioner—as it was now the fashion to call such a person—was sent either by *The Times*, or by some other leading English paper,

to report on the condition not only of the rural, but also of the urban districts of Ireland. Well, according to his letters, the general impression which this Special Commissioner seemed to have formed of the South and West of Ireland was that there was one universal landlord who had impaired the commercial activity of the South and West, and that that landlord was well known to the world under the name of John Jamieson. It seemed to him impossible to deny that, in the towns of the North, there was a condition of commercial activity which did not prevail in the other three Provinces; and it was extremely doubtful whether any alteration, even of the most arbitrary nature, in the tenure of houses would produce such an amelioration in the condition of the tenants in those Provinces as would bring them up to the level of the tenants in the North of Ireland. He entirely agreed with what his right hon. and learned Friend the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) had said in the course of the debate as to the imperfections of the present system of leasehold tenure. A great proportion of the owners of houses in Ulster were not large landowners. They did not belong to the class who had been, almost by universal consent, considered rapacious and animated by the worst principles of human nature. In the small towns the owners of houses were men who had laid by money, either in agricultural operations, or been successful small commercial operators. If the Bill, therefore, were applied to the tenure of houses in Ireland, it would deal a very severe blow at a large amount of capital invested in houses, and would injuriously affect a large class of people whom it was not the interest of the State to injure—that was, the middle class—who had, to a great extent, invested their savings in the class of property with which this measure would deal. The Government had indicated the course they intended to take—and he (Mr. Macartney) thought it a very wise course—with regard to this Bill, nor did he wish to detain the House further than to assure the Government that if they proposed to deal with this subject as it should be dealt with, not in the way of exceptional legislation, affecting Ireland alone, but by a general measure embracing both Eng-

land and Scotland—for, after all, it was to a very great extent a question affecting capital equally throughout all the three countries—he and his hon. Friends from the North of Ireland would not look with disfavour upon any such measure as might be introduced to remedy such grievances as the tenants of Ireland had just right to complain of. Indeed, they would be prepared to welcome such a measure; and when it was introduced he earnestly hoped that they might be able to extend to it every possible support.

Mr. OROMPTON said, he had great sympathy with the Bill and its proposals, as he thought it a Bill of so moderate a character that any Liberal might support it; but he had great difficulty in making up his mind to support the second reading of the Bill after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; because, from his speech, he understood the right hon. Gentleman agreed with the principle of the Bill, and practically promised that the Government would take up the question. In his (Mr. Orompton's) opinion, the Bill did not, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen) had said, create a double ownership in land, but simply gave justice where justice was needed. It proposed to give to the tenant the property which belonged to him, instead of allowing the landlord to confiscate it. He could not either see any injustice in the proposal that the landlord should compensate the tenant in the circumstances contemplated in the measure, which would not introduce a much greater change than was effected in England by the Agricultural Holdings Act, which vested the right to a building in the tenant who had erected it, and gave him the right to remove it, if the landlord was unwilling to buy it. He was surprised to find how easily the provisions of the Act of 1870 could be adapted to the present case. The only point in which he agreed with the late Attorney General for Ireland was that the present Bill ought not to be applicable to yearly tenancies; and it might be argued with some fairness that the Bill ought not to be applicable to the case of town holdings occupied for less than a certain term, say five years. He was strongly in favour of the principle of the Bill; but he hoped that the Motion for

the second reading would not be pressed; because he thought that the Government ought not to be hampered in the course which they proposed to take with reference to the subject-matter of the measure and cognate questions. Believing, therefore, that the very best measure possible in the direction of the Bill would be carried out by the Government, he felt he could not desert his Party; and therefore he should support the Government.

Mr. TUIE said, that in the town of Mullingar, which was owned by one landlord, when the old leases fell in, rents were raised as much as 35 per cent. The process by which rents were extracted was this. When a lease lapsed, the tenant was asked to make an offer to the landlord or his agent. That offer, in the first instance, did not come up to the agent's wishes, and he therefore compelled the tenant to make a further offer, and so it went on until the tenant was by force of necessity obliged to bid up to what the landlord considered the proper amount; in consequence of that the prosperity of the town of Mullingar was much retarded, and though not mentioned in the list of towns by the hon. Member for North Sligo, it was, he could assure the House, one of the worst treated towns in Ireland under the cruel system that at present prevailed. He would give them an illustration. A short time ago the lease of a tenant in Mullingar fell in. The rent was £29 a-year, and the tenant expended some £400 on the property. Upon the expiration of the lease the tenant was called upon to make an offer, and all offers were refused until they reached £40; and after the new lease was drawn the Poor Law Valuator under the Poor Law Commission visited the town, and the valuation, which was £16, was only raised to £18, which, however, was a strange contrast to the rent put on by the landlord. To show the generosity of the town landlords in Ireland, he would mention what occurred in his own town a short time ago. The Town Commissioners required a place to hold their meetings, and they applied for the use of the Market House. Consent was given on the understanding that politics would be excluded; and he need hardly inform the House that the Commissioners rejected the offer immediately. Now, while he agreed with the Bill before the House, he considered it fell

Mr. Macartney

far short of what he would like to see, as he would like it to deal with the revision of rents, and to embrace a clause for the appointment of a Commission, similar to the Land Commission, for the purpose of fixing fair rents, and, if possible, to abolish the leases which had been obtained through fraudulent means. He had stated he had hoped that the Chief Secretary would have offered them as an alternative a reference to a Select Committee on the question, or have announced the intention of the Government to bring forward a measure themselves; but now that he had refused to consent to that arrangement he sincerely hoped that those hon. Gentlemen who represented Scotch and English constituencies, which were as badly treated as Ireland, would support the measure of his hon. Friend the Member for West Mayo.

Mr. FENWICK said, the only reason he had for thus presenting himself before the House at this early stage of his Parliamentary history was the great interest felt in the question by the constituency he had the honour of representing. A considerable number of men amongst the class he had the honour to be connected with—namely, the Northumberland miners—had long cherished the laudable desire which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary mentioned—that of becoming owners of their homes. To achieve this end they were strict in their adherence to the principles of sobriety and self-denial. Having saved sufficient money, many of the men whom he had in view had built houses for their own use; but, unfortunately, they had been unable to acquire the freehold of the ground upon which their homes stood, and their leasehold tenure of the ground would expire in some cases in 40 years, and in others in 60 or 65. When the leases of these people terminated they found their rents raised, in consequence of the increased valuation of their holdings, due to their own industry, and to no effort of the landlord.

COLONEL BROOKFIELD asked, as a point of Order, whether the observations of the hon. Member were in Order when they were discussing a measure relative to Ireland?

Mr. SPEAKER: I see nothing out of order in the remarks of the hon. Member.

Mr. FENWICK said, he was fully sensible the Bill was an Irish Bill; and

he was only sorry the provisions of the Bill were so exclusively confined as they were. He should have been glad if its scope could have been made more far-reaching than it was, and that it had embraced England and Scotland as well as Ireland. He could not part from his mind the fact that in dealing with such a measure as this they were only tinkering with a kind of legislation which must shortly come before Parliament in a more comprehensive shape. The whole question of land tenure, owing to the oppression of the people of this country, must shortly come up for the consideration of Parliament. Believing, however, that the foundation of this Bill was to be found in principles of justice and equity, he would be violating pledges given to his constituents if he did not declare his intention to go into the Lobby in support of it, and thereby show by his vote that they desired to accentuate the principles contained in the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. FOX said, he would not at this stage of the debate discuss the general principles of the Bill; but would address himself more directly to the necessity there was for some such legislation as was proposed by the Bill. The town of Queenstown was built upon property owned by two landlords. One of these landlords was or had been very prominently before the country as a very energetic member of the so-called Loyal and Patriotic Union; but he had acknowledged that property had its obligations, for he granted a considerable piece of land for a graveyard, so that his tenants might have the questionable consolation that when they had been starved to death they should, at least, lay their bones in their native soil. The other landlord was connected with the Rushbrook family. The leases in the principal business part of the town would expire before very long. He altogether dissented from the opinion of the Chief Secretary when he said that tenants of property in towns could not create or enhance the value of their holdings as did the tenants of the agricultural holdings. In Queenstown it might be urged that as a lease ran out the tenant had no further claim, and that when he took the lease he took it on an undertaking that his interest was to cease with its term; but there was an implied condition that the tenant should have the first claim to

a renewal of the lease. As the leases fell out the tenants had to apply to the Estate Office; and the agent of the estate had invariably put on a considerable increase on the ground rent, varying from 300 to 3,000 per cent, and also saddled certain very ponderous conditions on the tenants. Cases were known where the old ground rents of £2 10s. were increased to £15, and houses that used to be rented at £40, and were in very good condition, good enough to last for 20 years, became the property of the estate; and should the tenant complain or urge a claim, an architect visited the house, and if there was the slightest excuse for it, an order was given that the tenant, should he continue, must undertake a very large outlay, and an exorbitant increase of rent was demanded. The tenant had not even the right to build in accordance with the requirements of his business. A uniform plan was fixed upon by the architect of the estate, and the tenant must follow it blindly. Then the tenant must insure the premises; and the agent of the Insurance Company was the agent of the estate. Should the place be burned down the tenant could not claim the money, for the latter was spent by the estate to rebuild the house, and any deficiency must be made up by the tenant. In all these leases the tenant undertook not to question the title of the landlord to the estate; and that had a significance in this case, for the majority of the tenants knew that the houses to which they had a just claim were built by their fathers and grandfathers at a time when it was never imagined that the name of Rushbrook would be associated with the ownership of property there. When such a state of affairs existed as this, he thought there was urgent necessity for some such legislation as that contemplated by the promoters of the Bill under discussion. Some hon. Members opposed to the Bill might argue that the town had increased in value and wealth, and therefore the ground rents should increase also. In the case of Queenstown it was a notorious fact that the value of property and that of business had depreciated fully 1,000 per cent within the past 20 years. Queenstown depended nearly altogether on the shipping. In the old time there were wooden sailing ships, when long voyages were made, the result being that upon the arrival of

the vessel new clothes had to be purchased by the crew and passengers, and also ship materials. At that time, also, invalids used to frequent Queenstown, and were a source of profit to the town; but the tide of emigration put an end to that. As steam vessels superseded the wooden sailing ships, emigration, he was proud to say, had almost ceased; but the invalids had not gone back to Queenstown, so that on a moderate calculation they could see that the business of the town had depreciated by at least 1,000 per cent; and yet in face of that fact the rents were being increased from 300 to 3,000 per cent. As many leases would expire in a few months he hoped they would pass the Bill, for it was but poor consolation to the leaseholders of Queenstown to have very soothing and unctuous expressions of sympathy, whilst the redress that they needed and demanded was denied them.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, that because there had been a paucity of English Members in this discussion, and because he represented a constituency in which the evils so generally complained of existed with perhaps greater acuteness than in any other part of the Kingdom, he thought it right to make a few observations upon this Bill, which sought to remedy evils existing in Ireland. He did not desire to go into voluminous details, nor to discuss any deficiencies in the drafting of the Bill, for the Committee stage was the proper time when that should be done. On behalf of his constituents he supported the principle embodied in the Bill, and which was of importance to Cornwall no less than to other parts of England and Scotland. The principle was a plain and simple one, and he did not suppose that anyone would for a moment doubt the justice of that principle. The principle was simply this—that those who spent their money and invested their labour and made improvements on the land in English towns should, at any rate, have the benefit of their labour, investment, and improvements. The justice of the principle had been admitted by the Government. It was not only in the great towns, but in the small towns, such as those comprised in his own particular division of Cornwall, that the operation of such a Bill as this was required. Whilst admitting the principle of the measure, the Chief

Mr. For

Secretary for Ireland had declined to support the second reading. It would greatly relieve him (Mr. Conybeare) and many of his hon. Friends who, like himself, sat below the Gangway, if the Government could see their way to consent to the second reading, with a view to the matter being subsequently referred for consideration by a Select Committee. This was only one branch of a great and important question, and he was happy to think that Members on both sides of the House had expressed themselves confident of dealing in a comprehensive manner with the Land Question as it affected the Three Kingdoms. It was certainly not with pleasure that those who sat in his part of the House found themselves on numerous occasions going into the opposite Lobby from that in which the Government voted; but they could not consistently vote against a principle which, as in the case of the present Bill, they believed to be right and just; and, therefore, if the Government could not see their way to assent to the second reading, he and others would be forced to vote in the other Lobby. The argument of "declining population" had been brought forward by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and it had been urged as a reason for the dilapidated condition of house property in certain towns. He and others complained, however—and they could prove their contention—that in the great cities, where the argument of declining population could have no weight, there were found equal evils arising from the system of leasehold tenures. This was abundantly shown in the evidence of the Commission on the Housing of the Poor. It had also been contended that freedom of contract existed to a much greater extent in towns than in the country, and that, therefore, it was right to interfere with agricultural holdings, whereas it was not fair to interfere with freedom of contract as it existed in towns. He was not sufficiently familiar with the relations of landlords and tenants over the water to speak about them; but, speaking for his own country and for his own constituency, he could point out instances where, owing to absolute ownership claimed—and claimed with the sanction of the laws of this country—it was perfectly preposterous to assert that there was freedom of contract between business men, artisans, and la-

bourers, who were bound to live in the place where they earned their livelihood, on the one hand, and the owners of the soil on the other. There were two principles embodied in our Land Laws which were opposed to the interests of the great majority of the population of the country. The first was that owners had the absolute right to say—"We can do as we like with our own. We deal with our lands as we have a right to do, on commercial principles; and we, therefore, demand that you shall accept our terms as to the tenure on which you shall enjoy the occupation of a bit of our land, and if you do not accept our terms you may emigrate to some foreign clime, or go wherever else you like." That was manifestly unfair. If a man was honest and hard-working, why should he be compelled to emigrate to some foreign country simply because he could not accept preposterous and unjustifiable terms? And why, because his business compelled him to stay in a certain place, should he be forced to comply with those conditions that were required of him? The other principle was worse than that. Whatever money, whatever labour a tenant chose to invest in the soil of another, belonged *ipso facto* to the owner of the soil, unless that owner chose to give him compensation. True, the Agricultural Holdings Acts introduced certain exceptions; but every farmer he spoke to and asked—"Have you found the Agricultural Holdings Act of any real service?" answered "No." These Agricultural Holdings Acts had been proved to be a delusion and a snare, except in a few limited cases. So far as he (Mr. Conybeare) was aware, there was no legal liability on the part of any owner of land to give one farthing compensation to those who had enormously enhanced and increased the value of his land. He was not now speaking of what was called the unearned increment, but of the deliberate investments of pounds, shillings, and pence—investments which added enormously to the value of the property of the owner. Yet after doing all this the investment became confiscated. He (Mr. Conybeare) did not wish to indulge in hard terms; but he maintained that anyone who said that this principle of confiscation was a just one, and ought to be maintained in the law of our country, was most unreasonable. In his own constituency, in North-

Western Cornwall, the evil was immensely increased. It had been until very recently impossible for poor miners and others who had invested the earnings of a lifetime in building on pieces of land—it had been impossible for them in most cases to obtain a term of years. They could only retain their holdings upon the “three-life lease;” and upon the dropping of these lives—it might be 10 or 15 years—their holdings went away from them. Every penny, every stone that they had put on the land went back to the owner. True, they might retain the property longer by paying an increased rent, or by bidding against somebody else at auction in the open market. Everything otherwise went to the owner of the soil. He ventured to think that this was a principle the law should not countenance for one moment. It went to the root of the whole question, and he could not go into the Lobby to vote against a principle which he believed was opposed to a gross injustice. The right hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen) had told them that it was undesirable to establish a dual ownership of houses when they saw the inconvenience which the dual ownership of land created. At present, however, they had single ownership practically in property belonging to two persons; and if a man built a house on the land of another person, and that other person calmly converted to his own use the house so built, was not that a practice more inconvenient and injurious to all classes in this country than would be a system by which the ownership of the house on the one hand and the ownership of the land on the other should be discriminated and apportioned to two owners respectively? He would only add that, in the interests of every class, and especially in the interests of his own constituents, with whom this was the burning question of the day, he could not oppose the second reading of this Bill.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): I shall confine myself very strictly to the immediate subject of this Bill. It is no wonder that there should be a tendency to widen the debate, and to make it embrace general principles; but I say that matters of great public interest are not really raised in the question now at issue. This is a Bill relating to the

tenure of houses in towns in Ireland, and is, therefore, geographically restricted. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary has stated with truth that it is not possible for us to accept the second reading of this Bill. I will state the reason which particularly weighs with him, and with the Government and myself, for declining to accept the second reading. My right hon. Friend has not done it on the ground that there is no case for consideration; on the contrary, he has admitted expressly that there is a case for consideration. The reason why we cannot accede to this Bill is as follows:—It alleges that there is in Ireland hardship on the part of the tenant in towns which calls for remedy. Our answer to that is, if there is hardship in Ireland on the part of the tenant in towns with respect to improvements he may make on his dwelling, that hardship, so far from being exceptional and peculiar to Ireland, is felt to a much greater extent in England and in Scotland, because the amount of hardship depends, in a great degree, on the strength and the vigour of the principle of growth in towns. It is in growing towns that there is a great tendency to make improvements; and as the principle of growth in towns is far greater and more vigorous both in England and Scotland than it is in Ireland, the grievance, whatever it may be, is far greater in England and Scotland than it is in Ireland. But, so far from asserting that that grievance ought not to be entertained in regard to England and Scotland, I admit it is a most proper subject to be examined into. But what I say is that we ought not to decide a question for England and Scotland upon a Bill that is brought in for Ireland. The House ought not to give its decision unawares. My hon. Friend said he wished to bring in the thin end of the wedge. To bring in the thin end of the wedge might be quite right upon certain occasions; but I think it is a sound principle that you should never bring in the thin end of the wedge unless you are also prepared for the thick end of the wedge. The thick end of the wedge is, in my opinion, the case of England and Scotland; and my sole proposition in objecting to this Bill is this—that we ought to have the case of England and Scotland before us fairly raised on its own merits, and ought

Mr. Conyngham

not to decide it unawares and blindfold in dealing with an Irish Bill. That is the objection I have to the second reading of this Bill on the part of the Government. It must be borne in mind that in regard to the Irish Land Act of 1870 the Government always founded themselves on the exceptional circumstances of Ireland, and the exceptional absence from freedom of contract in that country. We admit there is a case for consideration; and a question has been asked whether we are willing to agree to the appointment of a Select Committee on the subject. My right hon. Friend near me has expressed a disinclination to that course, having mainly in view the expectation that might be entertained that the Government would be held responsible for the recommendations of the Select Committee. We are perfectly willing to agree to the appointment of a Select Committee for the examination of this question, subject to two reservations. The first of these reservations is that we should wish to consider carefully whether, if a Select Committee is appointed, it ought not to be appointed for the Three Kingdoms, and should not embrace the stronger parts of the case as well as those which are less strong. I am not willing at the present moment to bind the Government to undertake the conduct of that Select Committee. That is a question which it would be necessary to consider further, because hon. Members will know that it is necessary for us not only to consider the merits of the various questions raised, but also the means which we have in our hands within the limited time at our disposal. Subject to those two reservations, we are willing to agree to the appointment of a Select Committee, either upon the case of the Three Kingdoms, or upon the case of Ireland, if we should be unable to arrange it for the Three Kingdoms. But if we could deal with it in relation to the Three Kingdoms, I think it would be preferable. In my opinion, there is nothing to make it difficult or inconvenient to deal with the question as a whole; and from an inquiry instituted on a sufficiently broad basis, and impartially conducted, I think great advantage would arise to the inhabitants of the three countries. I hope that intimation may possibly remove a subject of difference among us, because our

admission that there is a case proper to be dealt with is as frank and unequivocal as is the objection we feel to the particular manner of approaching that case which would be involved in the second reading of this Bill.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, the Prime Minister had informed the House that he had no objection to a Select Committee being appointed to consider this question, with two reservations. One might have expected, if that was the course which the Government were prepared to take on this question, that they should have heard it a great deal earlier in the debate, because if the Government had made that statement earlier in the debate the House would probably not have had to spend a good deal of Parliamentary time in the elaborate discussion of particular cases. It seemed to him that the mind of the Government on large and important questions was gradually made up as the debate proceeded. That was to say, when Notice of an important subject was brought forward in that House by any hon. Member, Her Majesty's Government were not to be the Leaders of the House, but were to be led by what they might hear in the course of the debate. That was not the usual course, and certainly it was not advisable that it should become the common course in that House. If an inquiry was to be made into this matter, it was necessary they should understand from the Government upon what principle that inquiry was to be made, and it was most desirable, if a Select Committee was to be appointed, that they should have a distinct intimation from the Government whether it would take charge of the Committee. There could be no doubt that this question was one of great public importance, and it was most undesirable that this matter should be referred to a Select Committee without having a definite and certain idea that the Government of the day proposed to deal with it on the Report of the Committee. He understood from the Chief Secretary that they were there to consider a question of that kind on the footing that political economy had long ago been banished to some distant place. That statement coming from the right hon. Gentleman did not astonish him; but it certainly did astonish him when the right hon. Gentleman went on further to say that, although political eco-

nomys had been banished to some distant place which he did not name, common sense still survived. Were they to understand that political economy had been banished to this distant region that was not named because political economy was inconsistent with common sense, and that common sense would prevail in this country even more than it had prevailed for some time past? If that was not the meaning of the Chief Secretary, he was unable to guess what the meaning of that extraordinary sentence was. The statement was hardly consistent, because, though political economy had been banished, he did not suppose that even the Chief Secretary would contend that political economy was dead. They might banish political economy to Jupiter or Saturn, but political economy would be sure to hold her own. Was the principle on which this Select Committee would conduct its proceedings some new and great principle, or simply a principle of expediency for dealing with a present and troublesome difficulty? It was important to know that before they proceeded to vote upon the question. There was another important matter which he thought had been left out of view in this debate, and it was, that if they were going to have an inquiry, they had better have one to see if they could not learn something from what took place in some parts of the United Kingdom for the purpose of guiding and helping them as to what might be required for the rest. Although some Scottish Members—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, his right hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen), and the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. E. R. Russell)—had spoken, it was not to be expected that those right hon. and hon. Gentlemen, though representing Scottish constituencies, knew very much about the mode in which land was obtained for the purpose of building in Scotland, and he thought that every Scotchman who knew anything about that matter would repudiate altogether the idea that their mode of taking land for building purposes in Scotland should be set aside by anything that could be invented by this Select Committee, or by the Government, for improving the mode of taking land for building in Ireland and England. He had sometimes been told that he came from a country

whose law was barbarous. Well, it was said jocularly, because they did not understand their legal terms, some of which were very good Latin. In his country there was a very excellent mode of enabling people to take land for the purpose of building. They were very Conservative in Scotland. ["No, no!"] Oh yes; they were Conservative in their proceedings, though not in their politics—and their mode was one derived from ancient times, and was essentially feudal in its nature. It was unquestionably, however—and he thought when he had described it Members would agree with him—the best mode for taking the land for permanent building. It was that when a man desired to get land on which to erect a dwelling-house, with ground attached or not, he took what was called a feu, and became in name only vassal of the person from whom he received his right. He paid for that land so taken what was practically an annual rent; but the land was really a grant in perpetuity, no one being able to wrest it from him. It was obvious that a person giving up his land in perpetuity must be entitled to some security for his feu duty, and that security was that the feu was agreed beforehand to erect buildings of a certain value, and that these buildings should be maintained in all time coming. The only right the superior retained was the right, if the buildings were allowed to deteriorate to such an extent as to cease to be a security for the feu-duty, or if the duty were not paid, to enter on possession of the subjects again, and he presumed no one would say that that was anything but an equitable and reasonable arrangement. Not only so, but the vassal had a right at any time to sell his property and call upon the superior to take the purchaser as his feu. They had thus no difficulty in Scotland, and the Prime Minister and other Gentlemen who had visited Scotland would have observed how, in the villages and small towns, men who had become somewhat prosperous, and were able to put by a little money to enable them to build a house, were always able to find suitable sites and build houses which were models of comfort and convenience. ["No!"] Well, there might be some isolated cases of difficulty, such as occurred in Ireland in the Liberal, but not in the Conservative, parts of the

Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald

country. It was so much the interest of the proprietor to give such fees that there was no difficulty about them except in the large towns, where, of course, some difficulty would always be felt. It had been suggested by the right hon. Gentleman that it was desirable to establish in the mind of every head of a family the sentiment of home. That was right if the circumstances were suitable. But in very large towns the population which lived in small houses were necessarily dependent for their subsistence upon the wages they obtained from suitable work, and in immense towns like Glasgow, Liverpool, and London it might be a grievous and intolerable burden for a man to have a house of his own if it was not near his work. It would be better for him to be a tenant and to be able to move his family any time it might suit him. This Bill presented many points suitable for a Select Committee; but he would again impress on the right hon. Gentleman the fact that two things were essential in order that an inquiry should be held. In the first place, they should have some distinct statement of the principles upon which the Government proposed the matter should be dealt with; and, in the second place, the Government should themselves take the responsibility of the conduct of that Select Committee, without which its deliberations would be of no value. The question was undoubtedly of great public importance, and it would be most undesirable that it should be gone into by a Select Committee at all without their having a definite idea that the Government proposed to deal with it on the Report of the Committee, and would take the responsibility for the legislation that might be brought in.

Mr HALDANE said, it had not been his intention to trespass on the attention of the House; but he had found himself at one with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Edinburgh on one point, and that was that he would desire some explanation of the scope of the inquiry which might be made by the Select Committee suggested. He rose also on behalf of those who, like himself, were interested in this question, not simply from the point of view of the Bill, but from the point of view of the redress of those general grievances which they held could only be redressed by leasehold

enfranchisement. There were two questions before them—the grievance and its remedy. The grievance was practically admitted; nor had it, he thought, become a Party question. And anyone who had studied the speeches of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) must have observed that he had taken up the whole subject of leasehold enfranchisement, and, with that marvellous power of transformation with which he was gifted, had induced the whole Conservative Party to take it up. But the question of the remedy was quite another matter. It was his intention, when he came into the House, to give a silent vote against the Bill, not because he did not approve its objects, but because he believed the remedy ought to be of a much more sweeping character. The principle of the present Law of Tenure was that the landlord should hand over a piece of ground for a time, and that at the end of that period it should revert to him with all the buildings upon it. He was afraid to talk of "freedom of contract," because that was the abibboleth of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and he was afraid he might mispronounce it. But he would ask—What freedom of contract was there in the case of a man who came forward and paid for what was a monopoly in the hands of another man, and only got it upon certain terms? The remedy—and he recommended hon. Gentlemen opposite to refer to the utterances of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington on the subject—the remedy for the grievance appeared of a very simple nature. They should abolish leasehold tenure—or at least put it in the power of every person holding under leasehold to convert that tenure, upon just and equitable terms, into a freehold. It was not by tinkering at the ancient Land Laws of the country that they could hope to meet the requirements of the time. It was by reforms of a sweeping nature, which could only take place if those who entered upon the work were prepared to act, not only in a thorough manner, but in accordance with the principles of justice. Therefore, if they were to pass a law on this subject which should enable men to get rid of their leaseholds and become freeholders on terms of proper compensation, he would welcome such a measure; but this Bill proposed nothing of

the sort. It only applied the principle of the Irish Land Act of 1870 to house tenure. But the principles of that Act were only applicable to, and were designed for, agriculture tenure—a class of holding entirely different from the leasehold tenure of towns. He therefore objected to the Bill, not because hon. Gentlemen opposite had not made out their case, but because the remedy they proposed was not a thorough and sufficient remedy. Let them adopt leasehold enfranchisement as a substitute for what was here proposed, or let them refer the whole question to a Select Committee, and if the Prime Minister was prepared to make the scope of the Committee wide enough to embrace the whole question of leasehold enfranchisement, then he would cordially and cheerfully support it. If not, his only alternative, holding, as he did, that the proposition of the Bill was unsound and legally untenable, was to vote against it.

MR. CRILLY desired to say with reference to the sympathetic statement of the Prime Minister that he admitted the propriety of the two reservations he had put before them—namely, first, that the pressure of work placed upon Government at the present time prevented them from giving attention to the conduct of the Committee; and, secondly, that England and Scotland should be included in the inquiry of the Committee. Their only reason for objecting to it was the fear that the Committee would not get to work quickly enough. They believed, however, that the Committee would soon get to work, seeing that his hon. Friend the Member for North Galway had on the Order Book a Motion referring to this subject on Tuesday next, and he had no doubt the Government would be able to appoint the Committee. He therefore desired, by the indulgence of the House, to withdraw the second reading of the Bill.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Bill *withdrawn*.

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

(Mr. Charles James, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Mellor.)

[BILL 26.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. C. H. JAMES, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time,

Mr. Haldane

said, that it was substantially the same as the measure which passed through the House last Session, and which shared the unfortunate fate of other Bills which failed to survive the defeat of the Government. The movement in favour of the enfranchisement of copyholds had a long history. In 1837 an exceedingly strong Committee appointed to inquire into the subject reported as follows:—

“Your Committee are satisfied that this tenure is ill-adapted to the wants of the present day, and is a blot on the juridical system of the country. They consider that the peculiarities of copyholds, which have their root in the villenage of the feudal system, are highly inconvenient from the point of view of the lords and of the general interests of the State. Your Committee have come to the conclusion that the abolition of this tenure would not only be of great public benefit, but should be made, if possible, a national object. No plan which merely gives the parties an option to enfranchise will meet the exigencies of the case, and we are desirous to see a plan introduced which shall eventually be compulsory on both the lords and the copyholders.”

In 1851 another Committee sat and decided—

“That copyhold and customary tenures are frequently a bar to the application of skill and capital, an impediment to the improvement of the land, and injurious to the public interests, and that it is highly desirable, in the interests of the lord, the tenant, and the public, that the entire enfranchisement of these tenures should be effected as soon as possible on equitable terms.”

Among the reasons for the abolition of copyhold tenure was the peculiarity of the modes in which the land descended. In some manors the custom of gavelkind prevailed, the land descending to all children in equal shares; in others it went to the youngest child by the custom of borough-English; and in others the ordinary rules of devolution were followed. It was absurd that provision should have to be made in deeds and settlements for such widely-divergent peculiarities. Under the existing law the rights of the lord of the manor with respect to timber and mines were very peculiar. The right of property was in the lord, but the possession with the tenant, the result being that neither lord nor tenant could touch either timber or mines without the consent of the other. The result was that throughout the country copyhold land had little or no timber upon it. The complications in the conveyance of copyholds were great and vexatious. Many of the formalities ob-

served were means of great oppression not useful to lords of the manor, but to their stewards and such like officials, who exacted heavy fees from tenants for nominal or useless services. One of the proposals of the Bill related to the heriots connected with copyholds. Under the heriot system the lord of the manor was entitled to take possession of the best chattel on his tenant's land, and cases had been known of valuable race-horses being seized in pursuance of this right. The anomaly would be removed by this Bill as far as timber was concerned; but, like previous measures on the subject of copyhold tenure, the Bill contained no provisions with regard to mines, on account of the enormous value of that kind of property. The Bill would also simplify the mode and lessen the cost of conveyances, and it would get rid of chief rents and heriots. Former Copyhold Bills had not fixed a time when the initiative must be taken by somebody; but the present measure provided that at the next admittance the lord must give a notice to the tenant to enfranchise that particular copyhold. Another provision was that the Land Commissioners should frame a Schedule of ordinary payments for ordinary cases of enfranchisements, and, consequently, tenants need in future experience no terror on the ground of expense. With regard to the stewards, they were not harshly dealt with, as the Bill would give to them what the Committee conceived to be fair compensation. The hon. Member concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. C. H. James.*)

MR. T. H. BOLTON said, he concurred in the desirability of getting rid of copyhold tenure as soon as possible, but doubted whether the Bill of his hon. Friend would effect that object. The proposal that power should be given to the Land Commissioners to fix the scale of compensation with reference to enfranchisement was unprecedented and exceedingly dangerous. In his opinion, the Bill was an elaborate and somewhat complicated alteration of the existing law; and, so far from effecting compulsory enfranchisement, in many cases of an irritating nature connected with

copyhold tenure it would have no effect whatever. There were many provisions in the Bill which were comparatively unnecessary, and in all the circumstances of the case he was of opinion that if the Bill were to be read a second time it would have to be considerably amended in Committee; and one thing he would urge was, that the House should lay down a scale of compensation itself, and not refer it to the Land Commissioners. As to Clause 7, he objected to it as altogether opposed to the professed object of the Bill.

MR. GREGORY, in supporting the principle of the Bill, remarked that Clause 7 was undoubtedly a blot in the measure which would require to be dealt with at a later stage before it could be made workable.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. BROADHURST) said, it might be convenient to state at once that the Government agreed to the second reading of the Bill; but in making that statement it must be understood that they did not bind themselves not to propose some Amendments at a later stage. He hoped, if the second reading was obtained, that the hon. Member (MR. C. H. JAMES) would fix the Committee stage at a date sufficiently far in the Session to give hon. Members and the Government an opportunity of considering all the provisions and details of the measure. With regard to the criticisms of the hon. Member (MR. T. H. BOLTON), he thought it would be found that the fixing of a scale of compensation by the Land Commissioners was only to be done under certain circumstances, and that there were other modes and ways of fixing compensation. He was somewhat surprised to find Clause 7 in the Bill, and he could not imagine how it came to be inserted, because it appeared to him to be calculated to defeat the main object of the measure. He hoped the House would now consent to the second reading of the Bill.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, it was absolutely necessary that the House should have some time to consider the details of the Bill, because the measure was a somewhat complicated one. He agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for North Sussex (MR. GREGORY) that Clause 7 was a blot on the

Bill. As to heriots, he would relate the case of a copyholder who reared a particular breed of horses. He knew that certain lords of the manor under whom he held copyholds were particularly anxious to become possessors of some of these animals. He, therefore, instructed his land steward to spread abroad the statement that he had died. The lords of the manor immediately sent down to his property to mark the particular horses which they wished to claim. The owner, becoming aware of this fact, and not being dead as was supposed, sold every one of the horses which had been so carefully marked by the lords of the manor, who were very much surprised at the state of things which was eventually revealed when he really died. He believed the House would be able to frame a measure out of this Bill which would, on the whole, be satisfactory.

MR. BETHELL said, he agreed in thinking that the main objection to this Bill was to be found in Clause 7. While the principle of the Bill had been admitted for many years, he thought it advisable to point out that while they were again asserting the principle of single ownership in land, as opposed to double ownership, the House must remember that of late it had been suggested throughout the country that the principle of double ownership should be introduced as against single ownership. Another objection he had to the measure was on the ground that it would be unfair to the lord of the manor. The present law provided for the enfranchisement of copyholds, but gave the power of enfranchisement to the lord of the manor as well as to the tenant. The present Bill proposed to confine that power to the tenant. This he thought most unfair.

MR. WARMINGTON, in supporting the Bill, said, he hoped in Committee to suggest Amendments which would simplify the procedure and diminish the costs in the enfranchisement of small estates. It would be well if a Schedule were added to the Bill setting forth the maximum scale of costs for estates of different value.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday 22nd March.

Sir Walter B. Bartlett

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (WATER SUPPLY, &c.) BILL.—[BILL 34.]

(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Mr. Bryce, Sir George Russell, Colonel Hughes.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it had passed its second reading last Session with the support of the Government, though defeated ultimately by the difficulties which private Members' Bills had to encounter. The Bill was merely intended to enable the Metropolitan Board of Works to appear before the Parliamentary Committees and oppose, if they thought fit, in the interests of the ratepayers' Bills promoted by the Water Companies giving power to enforce vexatious regulations or to raise excessive capital. The Auditor had disallowed the expenses incurred by the Metropolitan Board of Works for so acting on a previous occasion, on the ground that this was beyond their powers, and therefore it was that this Bill was now introduced.

COLONEL MAKINS said, the Bill was quite unnecessary, for no Committee in the present state of public opinion would grant a Water Company excessive powers of any kind. It was, therefore, quite unnecessary for the Metropolitan Board of Works to waste the ratepayers' money in appearing before Parliamentary Committees in such cases. The House should be careful how it gave a Body which was not directly, but only indirectly, representative of the ratepayers, the power of spending money unnecessarily; and Heaven knew that the rates were heavy enough already. He thought that, if anything, the power of the Metropolitan Board of Works in regard to expenditure ought to be curbed rather than enlarged, unless a strong case of necessity could be made out, and no necessity had been proved. There were plenty of hon. Members of that House representing the Metropolis who would jealously guard against anything being done to the detriment of the ratepayers. He therefore hoped that the House would not assent to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. COOPE, in rising to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that Bill was to his mind a most mischievous measure brought in inconsiderately by the Metropolitan Board of Works, who were very apt to give the Metropolis a great deal of unnecessary trouble. The measure would give that Board the power of taxing the ratepayers uselessly, as they had done before, and of taxing them heavily. On a former occasion that Board had taken upon itself without due legal power to put the Metropolis to an expense of £17,000, and then they came to that House with a Bill of Indemnity to relieve them from that to which they were personally liable. If in future they were to have a Municipality for the whole Metropolis, it would be unwise to intrust powers of that kind to a Body such as the Metropolitan Board of Works; and, under the whole circumstances of the case, he thought the Bill was one which the House ought not to pass. He begged, therefore, to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—*Mr. Coope.*

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. F. W. MACLEAN said, that the Bill appeared to be unsound in point of principle and dangerous in point of precedent. Its object was really to remove a restriction placed on the Metropolitan Board of Works by previous Acts of Parliament, and if passed it would result in increased rates and also in increased cost to the Water Companies without any corresponding benefit to the public at large. It was, he hoped, more than probable that in time they would have one comprehensive Body dealing for the Metropolis with all these questions, and this was, perhaps, the last effort made by a Body to some extent moribund in the hope by getting these powers of being in a position when the question arose to say—"We are now in possession of powers that are very important, and they ought not to be taken away from us." Moreover, if they sanctioned the Bill at the instance of the Metropolitan Board of Works, there could be no fair refusal given to all the Local Bodies of Provincial towns should they

come to Parliament asking for similar powers. He, therefore, seconded the Amendment.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. BROADHURST) said, it might facilitate Business if he stated at once that the Government were unable to agree to the second reading of the Bill. Hon. Members who had examined the Bill would be somewhat astounded at the enormous powers which the Metropolitan Board of Works sought from the House. There was, in fact, really no limit to the expenditure they might incur if the Bill became law. Having regard to the fact that the Government would very shortly be considering the proposals for a representative system of government [for the whole of the Metropolis, they were of opinion that they would not be consulting the interests of the ratepayers by agreeing to the proposal brought forward that afternoon. Under these circumstances, the Government would be compelled to oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. E. RIDER COOK said, that though he was in favour of a reform of London Government, he did not think that, on the chance of that reform, these very necessary and beneficial powers should be denied to the Metropolitan Board of Works. He was a member of the Board, and could say that in the past the Board had opposed several Water Bills, to the great advantage of the ratepayers. But they wanted to be able to do this with perfect legality. These powers of raising new capital which the Companies were constantly obtaining would immensely enhance the sum to be paid to the Companies whenever they came to be bought out.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS did not think that the reason given by the Government for opposing this Bill was a very good one. When they were in Office previously, they had under their consideration a scheme for the better government of London; but that had resulted in nothing to the advantage of the Metropolis. He saw no reason at present to suppose that any future deliberations would be productive of better results; and the reform of London Government still seemed some distance off. Meanwhile, the Water Companies were largely increasing their capital. When in Office some years ago, he (Sir R.

Assheton Cross) endeavoured to bring forward a plan for buying out the Water Companies. The necessary calculations were placed in the hands of Mr. Smith, a gentleman who had possessed the confidence of several Governments. Mr. Smith threw his whole heart into the matter, and produced a scheme and a basis of valuation which appeared to be most accurate and fair. Subsequently a Committee sat to inquire into the subject, and Mr. Smith was severely attacked on the ground that his estimate was excessive. The plan was rejected. Several years had since elapsed, and a Return recently made showed that, taking all the Water Companies together, if they had been purchased on Mr. Smith's estimate the profits to the purchaser would have amounted to £99,000. He thought it necessary to make this statement in justice to Mr. Smith. It was true that with regard to one Company the amount offered was greatly in excess; but his instructions to Mr. Smith were that he should buy the whole of Companies' works or none; and therefore, at the last moment, Mr. Smith was compelled to give one Company a larger sum than they were entitled to. Mr. Smith, as the result showed, was amply justified in what he had proposed. The Water Companies would, he undertook to say, be never again purchased at so low a rate, and the public had lost an opportunity which they never would have again. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt), in refusing to purchase, made a very great mistake, which, no doubt, he must have ever since regretted. They were told that the Companies would be bought up when London had a reformed government. But he supposed the question of Ireland would take precedence; and in the meantime the water consumers of the Metropolis were suffering.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, he thought the reasons given by the Under Secretary (Mr. Broadhurst) for opposing the second reading of the Bill were very inadequate. The Under Secretary told the House that the Bill ought not to be carried to a second reading because at some time or other we should have a better government of the Metropolis. For his own part, he thought that the public ought to make use of any protection which they possessed; and they had no other protector but the

Sir R. Assheton Cross

Metropolitan Board of Works, which in the past had, as far as possible, defended the interests of the ratepayers against the Water Companies. He could not forget that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), who was Home Secretary at the time, opposed with the greatest bitterness, and, unfortunately, with effect, one of the best Bills ever introduced into the House; and he thought that no greater misfortune had happened to the Metropolis than the failure of that Bill. Since that time nothing had been done in the matter, nor was anything likely to be done for some years.

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow*.

MOTION.

MARRIED WOMEN (MAINTENANCE IN CASE OF DESERTION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Pulley, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Maintenance of Married Women who shall have been deserted by their husbands, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Pulley, Mr. Thomas Blake, Mr. Winterbotham, and Mr. Warmington.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 111.]

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Spensley, Bill to restore the ancient constitutional practice of Payment of Members out of local rates, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Spensley, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Boyd Kinneer, and Mr. Conybeare.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 112.]

LAND TAX COMMISSIONERS' NAMES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Leveson Gower, Bill to appoint additional Commissioners for executing the Acts for granting a Land Tax and other Rates and Taxes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Leveson Gower and Mr. Henry H. Fowler.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 113.]

SCHOOL FEES OF NON-PAUPERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Llewellyn, Bill to amend the provisions of the Education Act, 1876, so as to enable parents of children being Non-Paupers to obtain payment of School Fees without having to apply to the guardians or their officers, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Llewellyn, Sir Richard Paget, and Mr. Hobhouse.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 114.]

INCOME TAX ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hubbard, Bill to amend the Administration of the Law of Income Tax, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hubbard, Sir Charles Forster, Mr. Leatham, and Mr. Whitley.

Bill *presented* and read the first time. [Bill 115.]

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT (1862) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Bill to amend "The Merchandise Marks Act 1862," in order to apply a more prompt and effectual method of dealing with infringements of Trade Marks and false marking of goods generally, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Joseph Cowen, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Baden-Powell, and Viscount Cranborne.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 116.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 25th February, 1886.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Arbitration * 17; Justices' Jurisdiction * 18; Law of Evidence Amendment * (19; Union of Benefices * 20).
Second Reading—Freshwater Fisheries (Eels) 15.

NEW PEER.

Sir Henry Alsopp, Baronet, having been created Baron Hindlip of Hindlip in the county of Worcester and of Alsop-en-le-Dale in the county of Derby—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

FRESHWATER FISHERIES (EELS) BILL.

The Lord Thurlow.

(No. 15.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD THURLOW, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that its object was merely to remove doubts which had arisen in the Courts of Law as to the exact interpretation to be placed on the wording of the Freshwater Fisheries Bill. It had been held in the Courts of Law that

this Bill included eels, though it was not the intention of the framers of that Act that they should be included. The provisions of that Act were inapplicable to this fish. It was a matter largely affecting the question of food supply, not only in London, but in Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and Liverpool, where large quantities of eels were consumed. At present there was a very large importation of eels from Ireland, Scotland, and other places where the Act of 1878 was not intended to apply. Beyond that, difficulties had also arisen in other parts of England in ascertaining where the eels sent for sale had actually been caught, and these difficulties had been made the subject of legal proceedings. He was informed that in London alone there were hundreds of shops in the East End where a very large trade was done in this class of fish, and the livelihood of these persons would be jeopardized if the Act of 1878 remained in the uncertain state in which it at present stood.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2"
—(*The Lord Thurlow.*)

Motion *agreed to*: Bill read 2^d accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow*.

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES.**RESOLUTION.**

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: My Lords, it will take but a few minutes to explain and justify the Notice I have given, as the subject has been made familiar on various occasions to your Lordships. The immediate, or, at least, the urgent fact is, that the demolition of Spring Gardens has begun, and that on Monday a deputation is about to approach Her Majesty's Government from the Institute of Architects and point out the course which ought to be adopted. That deputation may, of course, convince the Government, as many persons are convinced already, that it is better for the Public Offices Site Act to continue in abeyance, as it did, to his lasting credit, the whole time that the noble Marquess who now leads the Opposition presided in the Councils of Her Majesty. The arguments against the Public Offices Site Act are too well-known to be enumerated. However, the most conclusive did not come into existence until the Act was carried, and

therefore could not weigh with Parliament against it. It is the revelation of last August, under the late Government, that 10 years would be consumed in the work to be executed; that during all that time the Parade and Horse Guards would be disfigured; that during all that time a portion of Carlton House Terrace would be insupportable to residents, and useless in the market; that during all that time, in any year, the work might be arrested by the taste or the economy of Parliament, and thus remain a fragmentary monument both of extravagance and penury. If the House permits me, I will explain at once how the demolition of Spring Gardens, which your Lordships are intreated to arrest until the 1st of March, bears upon the case and tends to carry with it the remainder of the project. The whole defence of the Public Offices Site Act rested on what I have already mentioned—namely, the inadequate accommodation of the War Office. That accommodation ought at once to be extended. It can be at once extended by a plan I mentioned here, and have since urged on the late Government. There is in Spring Gardens an unofficial residence—it belonged to the late Sir William Gomm—of such dimensions that the Commander-in-Chief and Adjutant General with their respective Staffs might easily be placed in it. It is well situated between Pall Mall and the Horse Guards; it has abundant space for archives; it is available for the purposes of Government. The object of the Public Offices Site Act might thus be rapidly attained, not at the end, but at the beginning of a decade. But if the demolition now commenced goes forward, in a few days that residence may vanish altogether. Further steps will then be indispensable to give the War Office a refuge. It is true that even then it will have nothing to look forward to until 10 years have passed; and if that interval does not exhaust the life or patience of its inmates, the prospect of relief may be withdrawn in any of the Sessions—not always smooth, perhaps—which have to be encountered. My Lords, I do not charge the actual Government with any blind intention to precipitate the measure against a view so evidently reasonable. It never had a strenuous advocate within their circle beyond Mr. Shaw Lefevre, whose inability to find a seat in any part of the

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United Kingdom sufficiently expresses the opinion of the country with regard to it. What I am led to think the Government will dwell upon is the necessity, at any price, in any manner, of giving labour to the unemployed, whose wants endanger the Metropolis. But it should be remembered that a scheme of this kind would do little for the East of London, where the greatest scarcity prevails. Public Offices require skilled and special labour, which is not abundant in that region. To relieve distress within it much better schemes might be imagined. A tunnel between Rotherhithe and Shadwell has been often canvassed, and the embankment of the Thames on the Southern side has yet to be accomplished. In any case, it is not desirable to paralyze and to forestall the deputation, which must throw light on the course it is expedient to adopt. It may possibly be said that the materials are sold to a contractor, who is entitled to remove them. They ought not to have been sold to a contractor, when the whole project has so little in its favour, and when the electors—so far as we can judge—have so decidedly condemned it. But, even in that case, to deal with the contractor on the basis of an amicable settlement, might not be beyond the reach of Ministerial ability. The First Lord of the Treasury would not be unequal to the problem. It might exercise the virgin mind—virgin on finance—of the new Chancellor of the Exchequer. I have but one more remark by which, if possible, to urge your Lordships into interference against the demolition of Spring Gardens before the architects are listened to. Although, technically, the Public Offices Site Bill went into the Statute Book, it really never had the sanction of your Lordships. No division happened. I am responsible myself, and have before now explained the circumstances. But, while by accident, there was not a decision, in every debate opinion, argument, authority, were growing on the side unfavourable to the measure. It would well become the House, so far as they are able, to rectify a judgement inadvertently pronounced, and which the actual House of Commons has not in any way subscribed to.

Moved to resolve—

“That in the opinion of this House no further steps either of demolition or construction ought

to be taken under the Public Offices Site Act before Her Majesty's Government have heard the deputation from the Institute of Architects, arranged to take place on the 1st of March next."—*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell.*)

LORD LAMINGTON said, he was not aware that the work of demolition had commenced until he saw this Motion. He had given Notice that he would move a Resolution on the 5th of March that nothing should be done until after a discussion on the subject. He should be compelled to alter his Resolution accordingly.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (The Earl of MORLEY) said, the noble Lord (Lord Stratheden and Campbell) had been a consistent, he might almost say a persistent, opponent of the new site for Public Offices, and the noble Lord had submitted a modest proposal in regard to it—that no steps either of demolition or construction ought to be taken before Monday next. He need not tell the House that there was no great chance of anything being done in the way of construction before Monday next. But as to demolition, in consequence of measures already taken, an Act of Parliament passed and money voted by the House of Commons, the materials of the houses in Spring Gardens had actually been sold, and the contractors were already removing materials of houses which no longer belonged to the Government. Therefore, it was absolutely impossible to arrest the progress of the demolitions until Monday next. He thought the House would be satisfied with that explanation at present. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Lamington) had just told the House that he was about to raise a debate on the whole question in the course of next week. At that time he would be happy to give any information in his power, and the Government would then have heard what the Institute of Architects had to say on the subject. He did not think there was any probability of an alteration of the site which had been already fixed on.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL, in reply, said, that he would not divide the House unless he had an intimation that noble Lords upon the other side were ready to adopt the Motion, as his noble Friend (Lord Lamington, who sat among them had been prompt in its support. The noble Lord who spoke for

Her Majesty's Government had urged nothing but the argument contract, to which he (Lord Stratheden and Campbell) had replied already. He would further remind the Government that to indemnify contractors they had by the Vote of last year £10,000 in their possession which might have no other use, as it was far from certain that a further Vote would be conceded to them. If, however, the Government persisted in demolishing Spring Gardens, he could only offer a respectful but emphatic protest against the course they had decided on.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

METROPOLIS—SUNDAY MEETINGS IN THE SQUARES AND PARKS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD LAMINGTON, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether they intend to declare illegal all public meetings and processions in the squares and the parks on Sundays, as they interfere with the comfort of all classes, and may lead to disturbance? said, with respect to the very disgraceful riots which arose out of the meeting in Trafalgar Square, he thought the police and Sir Edmund Henderson had been very hardly treated indeed. On other occasions of monster meetings in Trafalgar Square he believed that the mob went away by different streets, and no riot or breaking of windows had before occurred in connection with those meetings. On this occasion they went away, as they had done so many times previously, by different thoroughfares, so that when the riot occurred both the police and Mr. Childers were equally taken by surprise, as they did not anticipate any disturbance. He should like to know how it was possible for either the police or anyone else to follow crowds of people dispersing in different directions. The real cause of all that which subsequently followed on the Monday when the riots took place was in allowing such immense gatherings to take place. It was said that there were 20,000, 30,000, or even as many as 50,000 persons assembled at the late meeting. Was there any city in Europe in which a similar thing would be permitted? In the French capital did they think 100 men would be allowed to assemble in a public

square? In Berlin or Vienna did they suppose that 40,000 or 50,000 would be permitted to assemble to endanger the safety of the Metropolis? The whole thing was a disgrace to any English Government—he did not care to which side of politics it belonged—that such proceedings should be tolerated. That the whole of Pall Mall, St. James's Street, and Piccadilly should be blocked by an assembly of people like that was perfectly monstrous. Moreover, by what rule were lorries allowed into the parts of the Park where carriages were not permitted? And Mr. Hyndman and his followers were allowed to build up platforms and to make these abominable speeches. It was time to put an end to such a state of things. It was disgraceful that a man like Hyndman—he was said to be a gentleman, but nobody would believe it—should be allowed to do as he had done. Mr. Quelch, who moved the first resolution, said—"They must seize all land, machinery, and capital for the benefit of the community." Mr. Burns said—

"The seeds of a bloody revolution were germinating. The Trafalgar Square meeting had affected Vienna and Paris, for when London moved the world moved."

Mr. Hyndman said—

"People like the Duke of Devonshire (Cries of 'Shoot him!')—well, if they did there would be another to-morrow. (Cries of 'Shoot him too!') The upper classes robbed the working men to debauch their daughters and sisters. They were the lazy, loafing, and criminal classes. They wanted a social revolution. They would bring it about peaceably if they could; it rested with the upper classes whether it should be peaceable or not. London was the centre where all the great vampires of the commercial world were gathered together."

Another said—

"The money now subscribed at the Mansion House had been stolen from the working classes."

He asked whether on a Sunday afternoon such a scene should be permitted? That on Sunday evening the streets should be made impassable for respectable people, who were afraid to leave their houses, was intolerable. He did not know what the law might be upon this subject; but if it was not strong enough it ought to be strengthened. Large sums had been voted for the preservation of the public Parks, and it was really monstrous that they should allow them to be occupied in the way they had been, to the exclusion of people who de-

sired to frequent them for enjoyment. He had limited his Motion to restricting the right of meetings on Sundays, because that was a day when all desired rest from their weekly toil. They had done themselves an immense amount of harm by the occurrence in question, by the credence which it seemed to have given to the idea that their various institutions were in a state of decay, and from the idea, also, which was prevalent, that the Government had neither the strength, the will, nor the authority to put down meetings of this kind. He felt that unless the matter was taken in hand the end would be a social and terrible revolution.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said, he regretted that in the Report of the Committee over which Mr. Childers presided, and in the Memorandum which the right hon. Gentleman had since published with regard to his future intentions as to this great question, no reference was made to the special branch of the subject mentioned by the noble Lord (Lord Lamington) who had just sat down. He (Viscount Midleton) ventured to think that this part of the question went to the very root of the matter. It was a question whether such meetings, especially when they were held on a Sunday, were any longer safe or desirable in the Metropolis. The Military Authorities, he believed, had arrived at the conclusion that, considering the enormous increase of the population of the Metropolis, it was a question of very great doubt whether any more military displays should take place in the heart of London—not because of any danger which the military were likely to produce, but because of the danger that might arise from the large crowds collected together on such occasions. Surely, if that was the case, gatherings of the kind which recently took place had become completely out of date. He had hoped that, considering the many representations that had been made to the Home Office, Mr. Childers would have seen the gravity of the question, and would have taken some steps to inquire as to what means could be adopted to prevent the peril to which the Metropolis was constantly exposed by the recurrence of these demonstrations. The result of the inquiry had been the retirement of Sir Edmund Henderson; but what struck him was the extreme ingratitude of the Home Office

Lord Lamington

in this matter. The penultimate Predecessor of the present Home Secretary cost £1,500 a-year for police protection. If a sum of that kind had been spent, he thought the present Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) might have behaved a little more generously to those to whom his Predecessor owed his existence. His own opinion was that the public services of Sir Edmund Henderson in the preservation of law and order had been considerably more than had been rendered by five Mr. Childerses in the past. There was no reason whatever why this question should not at least be investigated. Sir Richard Mayne, he knew, felt a great difficulty in controlling large bodies of men when they had been brought together in a limited space; and it should be remembered that that officer had to deal with a population very little more than half of the population under the charge of the Chief Commissioner at the present time. Every year made the difficulty greater, because with an increase of population must come also an increase of the criminal classes; and they also found that a large portion of the criminal community attended demonstrations for the purpose of carrying out the objects for which they existed—plunder and destruction. An inquiry such as he suggested would not cast the slightest slur upon the working classes, as no one for a moment would suppose that they had anything to do with the recent outrages. The time had come when they should make up their minds whether it was profitable or safe that these gatherings should be permitted to take place except under very stringent regulations as to control and as to the numbers attending them. If it should be found impossible to place restrictions either upon the numbers attending the meetings or upon the manner in which the meetings were held, then they must come to the conclusion that such demonstrations ought to be prohibited altogether. No one was more unwilling than he was to say or do anything to check the full expression of public opinion; but at the present time every class of Her Majesty's subjects had facilities for expressing their views in a legitimate manner upon any subject which did not exist in former times. He doubted whether there was a single district in London in which there was no building capable of being used for large

public meetings. That being so, he did not understand why a small and comparatively insignificant class should be allowed to monopolize open places of public resort which were intended for the use of the inhabitants of the Metropolis generally. He held that a definite conclusion ought to be come to upon the question of open-air meetings, so that in future Governments might not be left without guidance.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY said, that the Government ought to accede to the views of the noble Lord (Lord Lamington), who had brought the subject forward on the ground that those views were prompted by a desire to effect the happiness of the greatest number, a rule which they were inclined to follow, sometimes even at the expense of principle. The number of those who took part in the late riots was very small, not more than 2,000. The Government had explained the numerous executions in Burmah by the necessity of suppressing dacoity and of protecting the innocent villagers, and were they not equally bound to protect shopkeepers in London and innocent villagers in Ireland from the violence of the ill-disposed?

LORD ABERDARE said, that he was unable to agree with the noble Viscount in his remarks as to prohibiting public meetings. It was quite clear that from time to time the police organization required looking into, in order that they might have the proper proportion of officers and men, and that arrangements might be made to secure the efficiency of the force. This was a proper matter for consideration by a Committee of Inquiry; but the subject which was dealt with in this Resolution was more a matter for legislation, and it was impossible to deny that the same arguments which were used to prohibit Sunday meetings were equally applicable to meetings held on any other day. The Government of which he was a Member endeavoured to mitigate the inconvenience by limiting the space in Hyde Park on which those meetings could be held. It should be observed that less inconvenience was caused by meetings on Sundays than would arise on other days. If enormous processions were to march through the principal thoroughfares of the towns on week days, with the object of influencing the higher classes of society, all traffic would be impeded. He doubted whe-

ther it would be possible to prohibit public meetings in Hyde Park. The processions were generally arranged with a due regard to order, and the leaders of such demonstrations, as a rule, informed the Commissioners of Police of the intended line of march, and asked that adequate measures might be taken to insure order. Steps of this kind had been taken by the people who called the meeting in Trafalgar Square on the 8th instant. Although he was of opinion that meetings in the Park and other large open spaces could not be prevented, he thought that attention might well be turned to the question whether demonstrations should be permitted in Trafalgar Square, where meetings were frequently held, to the great inconvenience of the public, with the special object of overawing the Houses of Parliament. If meetings were held, he agreed that steps should be taken to minimize the public danger and inconvenience as much as possible.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, he held that the public had a right to be protected against such dangers as were incurred through the agglomeration of immense masses of people in the neighbourhood of places like Trafalgar Square, where shops were open, and people were employed in their ordinary daily avocations, and where there was a congestion of traffic. It was remarkable that the direction in which the flow of people set after meetings in Trafalgar Square was generally that of Whitehall. Colonel Pearson had stated before Mr. Childers's Committee that the flow of the crowd from such meetings was very largely down Whitehall, and that he had often been obliged to block Whitehall with police in order to prevent the crowd from surging down that thoroughfare. It should be remembered that the Public Offices and Houses of Parliament were in this direction, and ought not to be thus exposed. Anyone who happened to be in Hyde Park on Sunday last could see that respectable people were driven out of the Park, that at every 10 yards peaceable citizens were confronted by policemen, and that the place had all the appearance of being in state of siege. Was it decent that a state of things should exist which rendered it necessary that soldiers should be confined to barracks on the Sunday, and that every policeman not on duty should remain at home or at the headquarters of his district, in order to

be ready to protect harmless people against others who chose to resort to the Park for purposes of no public utility? The Legislature had decided that nominations at elections should no longer take place in the open air in consequence of the disturbances that used to accompany the proceedings, and it would be well to consider whether the precedent might not be applied to the occasions to which the debate referred. Such great masses of people as assembled in these cases could not hear what the orator said, and there was always turmoil and noise which were opposed to reasonable discussion. In Trafalgar Square on the 8th instant, the respectable working men who met to ventilate their grievances were opposed by a mob of a totally different character, and a collision was expected. The danger that he feared was not revolution; but that one day in the Park or Square two masses of men of opposite views would come into conflict, and that a bloody massacre might ensue. What would be said if anywhere out of London such demonstrations were organized in one town and were extended to another town by processions passing from one to the other? Yet the people taking part in the demonstrations in Hyde Park did not belong to the neighbourhood of the Parks, but they came from distant parts of London, and their object was to strike terror into the people who lived or occupied property about the Parks. In consequence of the terror produced by what happened in London on the Monday night, on the Tuesday 10 miles of shops were shut up, and all business was brought to a standstill. It was impossible with the best police arrangements to prevent disturbances and panic unless you could so dispose of and use your police as to prevent rioters proceeding collectively in certain directions in which they would be disposed to commit injuries. It was quite possible to deal with this matter without interfering with the right of public meetings; nobody wished to do that. There were plenty of places where people could hold meetings if they desired to do so, and where addresses could be delivered with the prospect of the speaker being listened to and heard. There were such places that were not surrounded by dense populations, and where danger would not attend the holding of an out-door meeting. If we allowed persons from all

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parts of London to assemble in Trafalgar Square and in the Parks, and this was especially true in reference to Sunday, we should irritate the police to the last degree, and if a collision did occur it would be impossible that the police should not remember how they had been harassed by these gatherings. We should also alienate the soldiers, on whom, in the last resort, we must rely, by shutting them in their barracks and depriving them of necessary recreation, which was as essential to them as to any other part of the community.

LORD THURLOW said, that the noble Lord who had asked the Question would appreciate the importance of it as much as anyone, and would especially appreciate the difficulty of entering upon many considerations that affected it at the present time. In these circumstances, he trusted their Lordships would excuse him if he replied as concisely as he could to the exact terms of the Question. He had, therefore, to state, on the part of the Home Office, that it was not the intention of Her Majesty's Government, at the present moment, to declare illegal all public meetings and all processions in the Squares and Parks on Sundays. It might not, however, be inappropriate if he reminded their Lordships that steps were about to be taken with a view, if possible, to improve the hitherto existing arrangements which governed these proceedings; but pending the contemplated inquiry, and the decision at which the Home Office might arrive, it would, perhaps, be wise on the part of the public, and even, perhaps, of Parliament, to refrain from further discussion.

LORD LAMINGTON said, that, in consequence of the unsatisfactory reply which had been given on behalf of the Government, he should certainly, in due time, bring the question before their Lordships again, and take their opinion upon it.

IRELAND—THE NATIONAL LEAGUE—LOCAL COURTS.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK said, in the unavoidable absence of Lord Castletown, who had been obliged to leave for Ireland last night, he had to ask the Question which stood on the Paper in the name of the noble Lord. The Question was as follows:—

"To ask the Lord President of the Council, Whether he will, in addition to the information

he has agreed to present respecting "Boycotting and other outrages," give such information as may be in the possession of the Government officials in Ireland, or can be obtained by them with reference to cases of trials of farmers and others by National League local courts, and the infliction of fines and sentences by those tribunals; and, also any cases of appeals from these courts to the Superior National League Court in Dublin for confirmation or revision?"

The noble Earl said, that the Question had reference to a state of things which prevailed at the present moment in Ireland of the most alarming and dangerous character, and which it was necessary some steps should be taken to deal with, if any semblance of law and order was to obtain in that country. From the information at his disposal, and at the disposal of his noble Friend who was to have asked the Question, it appeared that National League Courts not only existed and flourished in Ireland, but that the decrees and decisions of these Courts were obeyed and enforced, while the decisions of Her Majesty's Courts were not enforced at all. He (the Earl of Limerick) would not trouble the House at any great length with any quotations to prove the existence of these Courts, nor was it necessary that he should do so. The Irish newspapers were full of instances of inquiries held by branches of the League; and it was not at all necessary for him to go into them at any length. He would only take one or two cases; and he would ask that the Government should, at least, actively inquire as to the extent to which these Courts existed and the nature of the operations, and put an effective stop to the further spread of acts of illegality. In one case he found that, on November 19th, 1885, a meeting was held in a Roman Catholic chapel, and the statement of the parish priest was heard against a man stated to be a land-grabber. The result was that a fine of £30 was imposed. In the town of Drumcollagher the action of a tailor in supplying a suit of clothes to a man who was at enmity with the League, was brought forward; but as the tailor had died no further action was taken. In another case he found reported in the papers—no names were given—that a man who had taken a farm was summoned to the League Court and ordered to pay £600 to the former tenant or surrender the farm. If such cases as these were true, it went to show that there

were Courts in Ireland hearing cases and enforcing fines and penalties. How was this done? It was done by an extreme and monstrous system of "Boycotting," accompanied in many cases by dreadful consequences to the victims of the system. This system was not confined to rich or poor in particular—more frequently, indeed, it was the poor who suffered from it. He asked the Question with great confidence in the noble Earl opposite (Earl Spencer), for he could bear willing testimony to the fact that when he was Lord Lieutenant he took the strongest means to put down all these illegalities. It was with the greatest pleasure he (the Earl of Limerick) said that there was no Member of the House who would bear more willing evidence to the manner in which the noble Earl had discharged his duties as Viceroy with impartiality, firmness, and fairness. He (the Earl of Limerick) then quoted from the charge of a County Court Judge in Ireland, who said that he did not think that any honest man could say that the country was in a state of tranquillity, or that obedience to the law was observed. On the contrary, the law and government of the country were never held in greater contempt than at present. The Government was superseded by a much more powerful Government; and if that were so, it was impossible that he could compliment them, however much he would wish to do so, on the state of order which prevailed.

THE EARL OF EGMONT said, that one of the cases mentioned had occurred on his property. A tenant took a farm in 1881; he spent a good deal of money upon it, and improved it; and in 1885 the League ordered him to pay £600 to the former tenant, who had been evicted. He understood that the present holder had already paid £500.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Earl SPENCER) said: I do not propose to enter into a discussion of the subject which the noble Earl has introduced. I readily admit the very grave condition of affairs to which allusion has been made, and which shows that a very unfortunate state of things has existed during the last seven months in Ireland. There is no doubt that the fact that these Land Courts are held, and that they exercise these functions, if, as I believe, it is true that they do, shows a very unfortunate state of things,

The Earl of Limerick

and a state of things which must be remedied. I do not propose now to state—I have told your Lordships before that I am unable to state—the policy by which Her Majesty's Government have to meet the question of social order in Ireland, and the other matters which are committed to them. I cannot go into that. With regard to the Notice on the Paper, I regret that it is not possible for the Government—though they are anxious to furnish as much information to the House and the public on this subject as they can—to give any Return of this character that would be satisfactory, or which it would conduce to the public interest to give. These Land Courts, as they are called, are held in private houses, and sometimes, I believe, as the noble Earl mentioned, they are held in Roman Catholic chapels; but, being held in private, we have no means of getting any information about them excepting reports which were brought to the Government in a confidential manner. Those reports could not be presented to Parliament. There are obvious and numerous reasons why they could not be made public. It is, therefore, quite out of the power of the Government to grant these Returns, although they would be exceedingly glad if they could to furnish any information on the subject. The other night, when the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Cranbrook) asked for a Return, I stated that the Government would most willingly give it, and that Return is being prepared as quickly as possible. That Return relates to "Boycotting" and intimidation; but it does not touch these particular cases of the Land Courts, as to which, for the reasons I have indicated, it would be impossible for the Government to produce satisfactory information.

LORD ASHBOURNE said, that though the noble Earl had stated that he could not, without detriment to the public interest, supply a technical Return as to these Courts asked for by his noble Friend (the Earl of Limerick), he (Lord Ashbourne) did think that it would have been possible for the noble Earl (Earl Spencer), without detriment to the public interest, to have said something more than he did in the observations he had made. What was the state of facts which was practically and almost in terms admitted now not only to have

existed during the last seven months; but he would go further, and say during many more months of the noble Earl's own tenure of Office as Viceroy, and which existed now in greater intensity than at any former time—what was the state of facts admittedly in existence? That there were Courts held under the sanction of the National League, with a procedure of their own and an appellate system of their own, administered under the sanction of the League, administered with the sanctions of terror and intimidation. The purpose of such Courts was to supersede, degrade, and bring into contempt the administration of the Queen's law. That was the state of facts now admitted by the responsible Minister of the Crown to be the existing state of affairs in Ireland, and to have been the state of affairs in Ireland for the last seven months. The late Government were quite aware of the great difficulty which the noble Earl had stated of obtaining evidence in regard to what took place at those meetings; and that might have been one of the very powerful considerations presented to Parliament by the late Government to induce it to supersede the ordinary law so as to enable them to grapple with the state of things, and with a procedure so insidious and so destructive to the administration of the authority of the law in Ireland. But what was the outcome of the statement of the noble Earl? The noble Earl admitted the great evil that existed. He would be taken to admit its deadly peril to the Queen's Sovereignty and to respect for the law; and he further practically avowed that in that position of affairs the Government were unable to do anything, even by way of a public announcement, to restore confidence in the law and the assertion of the law. It was easy to say that the Government were unable to make a full announcement of their policy, and that they were not to expect it from them for four or five weeks to come; but that was a question, not of policy, but of administering the existing law, so as to insure respect for the Queen's authority and something like decent respect for the Queen's law. At all events, he thought they were entitled to some statement from those who represented the existing Government that they were not only alive to the gravity of the situation which they acknowledged existed, but

that they would take such resolute steps as might be in their power to note what went on in Ireland, and to procure such evidence as might be in their power; and that when they had procured that evidence no exertion would be wanting to put down a state of facts which was as perilous as it was discreditable to the Empire. [Earl SPENCER assented.] A gesture could not be reported; but he thought he was doing nothing disrespectful to their Lordships when he translated the nods and gestures of the noble Earl (Earl Spencer) as meaning that they—the present Government—would anxiously watch the process and procedure by which these Courts now sought to bring the Queen's law into contempt, and that whenever they could procure evidence—and no efforts would be wanting on their part to procure evidence—that no exertions would be wanting to bring to punishment and trial those who in these Courts brought into disrepute the whole administration of the Government in Ireland. He ventured thus to put into plain English what he took to be the meaning of the applause and gesture of the noble Earl opposite; and if he (Lord Ashbourne) laboured under a misconception, it was due not only to himself, but to their Lordships' House, that he should be publicly corrected, so that there should be a perfect understanding as to every particular about so grave a matter.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Earl GRANVILLE): I have not the slightest hesitation in endorsing by words what the noble and learned Lord (Lord Ashbourne) gathers from the gesture of my noble Friend (Earl Spencer) who was some time ago Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The Government feel the responsibility resting upon them, and deem it necessary to watch in the most attentive manner all the events going on in Ireland; and they are devoting themselves to considering the very best mode of dealing, among other subjects, with disorder and disrespect for the law. But I must say that the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Ashbourne) is one of the last persons who should make an attack on the Government. He has said that "Boycotting" existed during the Viceroyalty of my noble Friend near me. Nobody denied that some "Boycotting" did

exist at that time. But Lord Carnarvon told your Lordships, and the Leader of the other House under the late Government told that Assembly, that the country was almost in a state of normal quiet on the accession of the present Government to Office, and it is well known that it increased rapidly after the Prorogation of Parliament; and yet the late Government did not in any manner provide a remedy for dealing with it by exceptional legislation. There was nothing like the amount of "Boycotting" that afterwards existed when the late Government were in Office. [Lord ASHBOURNE dissented.] The noble and learned Lord shakes his head. I do not know exactly what that gesture means. Does he deny that "Boycotting" increased day by day?

LORD ASHBOURNE said, he was not dealing with "Boycotting," but with the particular subject referred to in the Question put by the noble Earl (the Earl of Limerick)—namely, as to the existence of the National League Courts. He was quite prepared to discuss the wider question.

EARL GRANVILLE: As far as I know, the noble and learned Lord (Lord Ashbourne) was talking of the same thing. It is part of the whole question; and, therefore, what I wish to remonstrate against is the noble and learned Lord taking every opportunity to twit the Government with being a little slow in dealing with that which the late Government entirely neglected.

ARBITRATION BILL [H.L.] (NO. 17.)

A Bill to consolidate the law relating to Arbitration:

JUSTICES' JURISDICTION BILL [H.L.] (NO. 18.)

A Bill to extend the jurisdiction of justices in general and quarter sessions of the peace: And

LAW OF EVIDENCE AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.] (NO. 19.)

A Bill further to amend the law of evidence: Were presented by The Lord Bramwell; read 1st.

UNION OF BENEFICES BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the law relating to the union of benefices—Was presented by The Earl of Milltown; read 1st. (No. 20.)

House adjourned at Six o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

Earl Granville

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 25th February, 1886.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBERS SWORN—Right honble. Frederick Edward Gould Lambart, commonly called Viscount Kilcourseie, for Somerset County (Southern Division); John William Mellor, esquire, for Grantham.

SELECT COMMITTEES—Selection, Sir Lyon Playfair *disch.*; Dr. Cameron *added*; Rivers Pollution (River Lea), *appointed*; National Provident Insurance, *appointed*; Educational Endowments, *nominated*.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-6); CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART, Votes 7, 8, 14; CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES, Votes 3 & 5; CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES, Votes 1 & 4; CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS, Votes 4 & 6; REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, Votes 2 & 3; NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-6).

PUBLIC BILLS—Ordered—First Reading—Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2) [118]; Waterworks (Rating)* [117].

Committee—Lunacy (Vacating of Seats)* [85]—*r.t.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PARLIAMENT—STANDING ORDERS.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (MR. COURTNEY): The Motions I have to make are to alter the form of Standing Order 183A, in order to bring it into agreement with an altered condition of things. The Standing Order, as it now exists, requires that in every Bill which contains power to take dwellings occupied by the labouring classes, compulsorily or by agreement, clauses shall be inserted to prevent the promoters from taking them until they shall have obtained the approval of the Central Authority to a scheme affording equal accommodation to them. The Standing Order in the case of Scotland declares the "Central Authority" to be the Home Secretary. But a Secretary for Scotland has now been appointed, who has superseded the Home Secretary as Central Authority for Scotland; and the object of the alterations of the Standing Order, which I am about to propose, is simply to substitute the Secretary for Scotland for the Home Secretary as the Central Authority. I beg to move, in line 49 of the Standing Order, in the passage which

defines the Central Authority to mean "as regards the Metropolis or Scotland the Secretary of State for the Home Department," after the word "Metropolis," to leave out "or Scotland."

Question, in Standing Order 183A, in line 49, after the word "Metropolis," to leave out the words "or Scotland," put, and *agreed to*.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. COURTNEY) moved, in line 50, after the word "Department," to insert the words "and as regards Scotland, the Secretary for Scotland."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to*.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR *discharged* from attendance on the Committee:—Dr. CAMERON *added* to the Committee.—(Sir John R. Mowbray.)

BELFAST MAIN DRAINAGE BILL. RESOLUTION.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to move—

"That the Petition against the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, deposited in the Private Bill Office on the 19th instant, be printed and circulated with the Votes."

The Petition referred to here is one which was adopted at a public meeting of the occupiers and inhabitants of Belfast in opposition to a local Private Bill which is about to come before a Committee of this House. But in consequence of the depressed condition of trade in Belfast and the enormous cost which attends the opposition to a Private Bill in Parliament the ratepayers are unable to send witnesses here, and appear in opposition to the Bill in the ordinary way. I have given Notice of my intention on Tuesday next to move an Instruction on an important matter relating to this Bill; and I think it would be for the convenience of the House, and would also tend to an economy of its time, if the facts relating to the case were placed at once in the hands of the general body of Members. I, therefore, make this Motion.

Motion agreed to.

Ordered, That the Petition against the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, deposited in the Private Bill Office on the 19th instant, be printed and circulated with the Votes.

NOTICE OF QUESTION.

PARLIAMENT—ORDER—ARGUMENTATIVE QUESTIONS.

COLONEL WARING: I beg to give Notice that on Monday next I will ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, with reference to his statement as to dispensing with certain powers claimed by the Executive in Ireland, Whether he is aware that the National League arrogates to itself the power directly and indirectly to prohibit the payment of rent; whether the Rev. Mr. O'Connor, parish priest, of Firies, is not reported in *The Kerry Sentinel* of November 10 to have stated at a meeting of the National League—

"That any tenant who went behind the back of the other tenants and paid his rent was a traitor to the cause. (A Voice: Shoot them.) Father O'Connor: Don't."

Whether Mr. Curtin was not shot on the Friday following, having paid his rent; and, whether as this and similar circumstances have occurred constantly in Ireland the Chief Secretary will take steps to bring the laws of conspiracy to bear upon illegal combinations of this character?

Mr. SEXTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of Order. I would ask whether the statement of the hon. and gallant Member that the National League arrogates to itself certain powers is not a matter of opinion and argument, and is, therefore, by the Standing Orders of the House, excluded from the Journals of the House?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: At the same time I would ask, as a matter of Order, whether it is within the spirit of the Rules of this House that hon. Members, at Notice time, should inflict upon the House long extracts from letters in newspapers, containing expressions such as those to which my hon. Friend has called attention, which will not and cannot afterwards appear on the Journals of the House, being contrary to the Orders and spirit of the Rules of the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: In reply to the two hon. Members, I have to say that I wish the House would sanction me in restraining Questions of the nature referred to, and also in enforcing the practice that when Questions are to be

put they may be placed on the Notice Paper without previous Notice, or being required to read them. With reference to the special Question asked, I shall, of course, before it appears on the Paper, carefully revise it; and if I find introduced in it any argumentative matter or any disputed statement of fact I shall not allow it to appear.

MR. T. O. HARRINGTON: When the Question is put I will ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, whether the meeting referred to was not a meeting of the tenantry of a certain estate; whether it is not the fact that the landlord, in consequence of the action of the tenants since, has made a reduction of rent to the extent of 20 per cent; and, whether the landlord in question is not a Member of Her Majesty's Government?

QUESTIONS.

WALES—INSPECTOR OF SLATE AND SETT QUARRIES.

MR. JONES-PARRY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will appoint an Inspector of slate and sett quarries in North Wales?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDEBS), in reply, said, his hon. Friend might not be aware that legislation would be necessary before the appointment of the officer referred to could be made. The advisability of such a Bill was now occupying his careful attention.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — ALLEGED DISORDER — CONDUCT OF POLICE AT BENNETSBRIDGE, CO. KILKENNY.

MR. MARUM asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to alleged action of the Constabulary force at Bennetsbridge, in the county of Kilkenny, in flinging stones and grappling irons during night-time from the summits of bridges spanning the River Nore, and from other places into such river, to the danger and bodily injury of boatmen and others of the public plying on the same, instead of ascertaining the names of offenders, if any, against the police regulations of the river, and proceeding by summons according to due course of

law; and, whether he will cause inquiry to be made, with a view to putting a stop to such alleged irregular action of the Constabulary?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I am assured that the police have never acted as alleged in this Question. The River Nore at Bennetsbridge is not navigable, and consequently neither boatmen nor the public ply on it.

RAILWAYS—RAILWAY COUPLINGS.

MR. CHANNING asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Inspecting Officers of Railways have reported upon the various Railway coupling appliances that were exhibited at the Inventions Exhibition last year; and, if so, when will the Report be laid upon the Table; whether he is aware of the fact that the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants have voted the sum of five hundred pounds to assist in testing improved modes of Railway couplings; and, whether, having regard to the great loss of life and limb consequent upon the present system of doing this dangerous part of Railway work, the Government will supplement this sum by a grant from the Treasury for the purpose of a thorough and practical investigation into this important question?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. MUNDELLA): The Railway Inspecting Officers have not reported to the Board of Trade upon the various railway coupling appliances that were exhibited at the Inventions Exhibition last year. Some of those officers were on the jury to whom those appliances were referred; and I believe the jury expressed an opinion with regard to the various inventions that were submitted to them. I am not aware that the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants have voted the sum of £500 to assist in testing improved methods of railway couplings; but I do know that some experiments have recently taken place under the auspices of that society in regard to those matters upon the London and South-Western Railway. With regard to the last paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, I am not prepared to recommend the Treasury to supplement the sum referred to for the purpose of further investigations in this important matter, for I do not think it would be desirable

Mr. Speaker

that the Board of Trade should assume the responsibility of deciding upon the respective merits of various inventions—a responsibility which must properly rest upon those who have the control and management of railways.

**IRELAND—COMMISSIONERS OF CHARITABLE DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS
—“BELFAST WHITE LINEN HALL.”**

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Will he lay upon the Table of the House, Copies of all Correspondence, had from 4th December 1884 to 25th January 1886, between John Saffern, of Windsor, Belfast, and the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland, relative to the management of the lands and property of the “Belfast White Linen Hall,” a charity founded and established in the year 1783, at a great cost, for the encouragement and extension of the linen trade; also Copies of all Correspondence and Protests and Statements had between the Chamberlain, Chairman, or Committee of the said “Belfast White Linen Hall” and the said Commissioners, and the said John Saffern, relative to the management of the said charity from the 1st day of November 1882 till the 25th day of January 1886?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): A correspondence on this subject has taken place between Mr. Saffern and the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests; and if the hon. Member will move for it in due form there is no objection to its production. There has been no correspondence between the Commissioners and the Linen Hall; and if any has taken place between the Linen Hall and Mr. Saffern the Government have no control over it, and are not in a position to produce it. The hon. Member should, therefore, confine his Motion to the Correspondence I have first mentioned.

**SEA AND COAST FISHERIES IRELAND
—GRIEVANCE OF THE FOYLE
FISHERMEN.**

Mr. JAMES O'DOHERTY asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Whether the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries have reported, on the complaints of the Foyle fishermen, with respect to a steamer

which the lessees of the Foyle and Bann Fisheries send out at night without lights among their boats; whether complaints have been made by the fishermen with respect to the uncertain boundary between the several fisheries in the Foyle and the sea beyond; and, whether he will ask for a report on these matters, and lay it upon the Table of the House?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): Yes, Sir; the Inspectors of Fisheries have reported on these matters, and there is no objection to the production of the Report, if the hon. Member will move for it.

**EXCISE—COTTAGE BREWING
LICENCES.**

Mr. EVERETT asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will kindly consider the practicability of complying with the wishes of the agricultural labourers that the cottage brewing licences shall expire in April instead of September, so that those who cannot afford to take them till haytime in May or June may be able to enjoy the use of them for all the year instead of for only a small portion of it, as now?

Mr. JASPERMORE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he would consider the inequality of the farmer with a large house and small farm having to pay the Private Brewer's Duty, whilst the farmer with a small house but a large farm pays the licence only; and, whether, considering the small sums produced to the Exchequer by Private Brewer's Licences, he would consider the utility of abolishing them altogether?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT): In answer to the hon. Member for Suffolk (Mr. Everett), I made some inquiry about this matter, and I hope something may be done; but I do not wish to pledge myself. In reference to the Question of the hon. Member for Shropshire (Mr. J. More), there is considerable difficulty about the first part. This matter was very carefully considered at the time the alteration was made in the Malt Tax, and I fear I cannot propose any change in that direction. As to the second part of the Question, it is quite true that the sum derived from these licences is very small; but then we have to consider the unfair operation which this

would have upon small brewers. At present I do not see my way to abolishing these licences.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND—CONVOCA-
TION—“THE HOUSE OF LAYMEN.”

MR. PICTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury did, on the 16th instant, while the two Houses of Convocation were sitting, open a third House in the Broad Sanctuary, giving it the title of the “House of Laymen;” whether, in his opening address to that House, His Grace used the following words, as reported in *The Times*:—

“The Convocation of Canterbury has now, after much careful discussion, requested the Bishops in each diocese of the Province to call upon the lay members of their several conferences, who are themselves all elected by the laity of the parishes, to elect a House of Laymen;”

and, whether the request, mentioned by the Archbishop as adopted after careful discussion, was recorded in the proceedings of Convocation and acted upon without licence from Her Majesty the Queen; and, if so, whether any authoritative legal opinion was previously obtained as to the consistency of any such resolution, or order or ordinance, with the 25th Henry VIII., c. 19, where it is enacted that the clergy shall not

“Enact, promulge, or execute any canons, constitutions, or ordinances provincial, by whatsoever name or names they may be called, in their convocations in time coming (which always shall be assembled by authority of the King’s writ), unless the same clergy may have the King’s Most Royal Assent and licence to make, promulge, and execute such canons, constitutions, and ordinances provincial or synodal, on pain of every one of the clergy doing contrary to this Act, and being thereof convict, to suffer imprisonment and make fine at the King’s will?”

COLONEL WARING: I wish also to ask the right hon. Gentleman another Question—namely, whether, in the event of the Law Officers of the Crown advising Her Majesty’s Government that the action of the Archbishop was illegal, the Government will be prepared to bring in a Bill to legalize such an alteration in the constitution of Convocation as the Archbishop sought to make, thereby facilitating in the Church of England that reform from within which constitutes the sole advantage derived by the Irish Church from the

otherwise unmixed disaster of disestablishment and disendowment? [“Order!”]

MR. SEXTON: As a Question of Order, I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether the Question of the hon. and gallant Member, like the former Notice given by the hon. and gallant Gentleman, is not entirely irregular?

MR. SPEAKER: The last part of the Question of the hon. and gallant Member is entirely out of Order.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): When I have answered the Question on the Paper, I think the hon. and gallant Gentleman will not find it necessary to put his Question. In reply to my hon. Friend, I beg to say that I have ascertained that the Archbishop did, at the time and place named, open a meeting called the House of Laymen; but the Archbishop did not open a third House of Convocation. The House of Laymen is a voluntary body, and in no sense a third House. The Archbishop did use the words which my hon. Friend quotes; but the request was an informal one, and was not recorded in the proceedings of Convocation. It was not proposed to promulgate or execute any ordinances by any name whatsoever, so no question arose as to their legality.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—
MR. MICHAEL LYNCH, BARN,
CO. GALWAY.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that the Recorder of Galway last month granted to Mr. Marcus Lynch a decree of ejectment against Michael Carter, of Barna, from his holding of six acres, although the rent was fully paid up; that the cause of the proposed eviction is the fact that the tenant, who holds from a middleman, got his rent reduced in the Land Court from £8 2s. 2d. to £5, this being less than the middleman paid the head landlord; that though the tenant has always paid the fair rent fixed by the Land Commissioners, the county court now holds that to escape eviction he is bound to pay the higher rent due by the middleman, in spite of the operation of the Land Act; are the Government aware that analogous cases have previously occurred in county Waterford and elsewhere; do they propose to take any steps to prevent the nullification of the Land Act by such proceedings; and,

The Chancellor of the Exchequer

is it intended to lend the force of the Crown to the landlord to evict Carter, whose "fair rent" is fully paid, and who has complied with all the conditions of his judicial tenancy under the Land Act?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): The Question of the hon. and learned Member has reference to a subject which, no doubt, as an abstract one, is of importance to tenants holding under middlemen; but in this particular instance I am informed that the tenant has appealed, and the legal rights of the parties depend upon the result of the appeal, which will be disposed of next month.

**COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—
THE LATE OFFICIAL ASSIGNEE
(MR. C. H. JAMES).**

MR. PETER McDONALD asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If the Irish Chief Remembrancer has completed his investigations into the accounts of the late official assignee of the Irish Court of Bankruptcy, Mr. Charles Henry James; and, if he has reported thereon; and, if so, will the report be printed and circulated in the usual manner?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): The Treasury have been informed by the Treasury Remembrancer of Dublin that the investigation of the accounts of the late official assignee of the Court of Bankruptcy would be completed during the next week. Until my Lords have received and considered the information thus obtained they cannot state what course they will adopt with respect to it. As I have not yet seen the Report, I cannot say whether it can be laid on the Table of the House.

MR. PETER McDONALD: Might I ask the hon. Gentleman whether this examination has not been going on for the last eight months?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I have no means of answering that Question.

**PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS — LIST
OF CLAIMS TO VOTE OF THE DUBLIN
PORT AND DOCKS BOARD.**

MR. PETER McDONALD asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the manner

in which the revision of the Dublin Port and Docks Board list of claims to vote has been made, such revision having been begun on the 23rd, instead of, as the Act directs, "as soon as possible after the first day of November," the result of which was that, before it was half gone through, the revising barrister closed the list, stating it should be signed on the 30th; and, if the present Irish authorities purpose taking steps to remedy the wrong so done to the traders and manufacturers of Dublin, by ordering a new revision and election?

MR. MACARTNEY: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I would like to ask whether it is a fact that 900 claims put forward by the Nationalist Party were disallowed; whether many of the so-called claimants had left without leaving their addresses; whether the persons advocating such claims were not liable under the 64th section of the Act of 1867 to fine; and, whether the term "traders and manufacturers of Dublin" could not at all be said to apply to these persons?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): The hon. Member opposite must be aware that his Question is one which could not be answered without Notice. No representation whatever has been made to the Irish Government as to the manner in which the revision was carried out. Should any such representation be made, it will, of course, receive careful attention; but the hon. Member is no doubt aware that the Revising Barrister is appointed by the Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, and is not under the control of Government.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—THE "MARY MARK."

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the case that the British barque *Mary Mark*, when lying at anchor at British Honduras, was on 9th July 1883 run down by a Spanish man-of-war, owing to the sole negligence of the latter, as certified by a Court of Inquiry held at Belize 7th August 1883; that the claim of the owners, in respect of the loss thereby sustained, was submitted to the Spanish Government by Her Majesty's Foreign Office in March 1884, but that up to the present no compensation has been awarded; and, what

steps Her Majesty's Foreign Office propose to take to insure the prompt settlement of the reasonable demands of the owners, so long neglected?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE): The facts of the case are correctly stated by the hon. Member; but it must be added that the Spanish Government do not recognize the sufficiency of the inquiry held by British authority at Belize, and are prosecuting a further investigation of their own. Sir Clare Ford, Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid, was assured, on the 12th ultimo, that the case would receive immediate consideration, and he will continue to press the matter on the attention of the Spanish Government.

LAND COMMISSION COURT (IRELAND) —APPEALS.

MR. MARUM asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether his attention has been called to the large arrears of appeal cases, in reference to fixing fair rents, now depending in the Land Commission Courts in Ireland, and undisposed of, amounting to some 10,000 in number; and, further, to the great length of time which has elapsed since proceedings have been initiated by some of the poor tenantry concerned, and the harassing character of the dilatory proceedings; for instance, in the county Carlow appeal cases: — Denis Pack Beresford, landlord, Thomas O'Neill, tenant (Mr. M. M. Murphy, solicitor for the tenant). Record No. 631. That notice to have a fair rent fixed was served on the 21st April 1883; the case was heard by Sub-Commission, 19th March 1884, and rent reduced from £78 to £63; that notice of appeal was served by landlord immediately after; that appeal was listed for hearing, 15th July 1885, tenant and six witnesses brought to Dublin from Slyguff, county Carlow, seventy miles, kept in Dublin for two days, and appeal not heard; that appeal was again listed on 29th July 1885, and tenant and his witnesses had again to go to Dublin, but the case was not heard; that, pursuant to General Order, Session 1885-6, there will be no sitting for hearings for the county of Carlow until the 2nd August 1886. And, again, in the case of Arthur M'Murrough Kavanagh, landlord, Denis Doherty, tenant (same solicitor). Record No. 660. That

originating notice was served, 18th May 1883; case heard on 5th June 1884 by Sub-Commission at Bagenalstown, and rent fixed at £34, old rent £48; that notice of appeal by landlord was served on the 20th June 1884, and the case has never been listed for hearing by the Appeal Court; and, whether Her Majesty's Government is prepared to make immediate provision for this state of things?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I have not been able to go fully into the subject of the arrears of appeal cases before the Land Commission. I should observe, however, that the number of cases at present undisposed of is about 8,000. As regards the particular cases referred to, it appears that in both instances the appeal is by the landlord. It is fair, therefore, to assume that the tenants are not dissatisfied with the judicial rents, which, I believe, are considered to be the rents they are liable for pending the hearing of the appeals. The delay and expense due to a case not being reached, or having to be postponed for one cause or another, are, I fear, inevitable when the sittings at different places have to be fixed some time in advance. I am assured that the Land Commissioners use every effort to dispose of all the cases on their lists.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—FICTITIOUS OUTRAGES, MOVILLE, CO. DONEGAL.

MR. JAMES O'DOHERTY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the police at Moville, county Donegal, have discovered that the author of certain outrages reported to them by one Caldwell Moore (caretaker for a local landlord there) is Moore himself; whether Moore, having been summoned therefor, failed to appear to answer the charge, and a warrant has been issued for his arrest; whether Moore has been since made amenable; and, whether care will be taken to exclude Moore's reported outrages from the forthcoming return of agrarian crime in Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The facts are as stated. Moore was convicted at Petty Sessions on the 2nd instant, and sent to prison for 14 days in default of paying a fine of £1. The case was not reported by the police as an outrage.

Mr. W. F. Lawrence

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (IRELAND) ACT (1884)—DEFECTIVE RETURNS.

MR. CLANCY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, last year, a person named Townsend, agent of Sir Roger Palmer, baronet, failed to make a return, which he was bound to make under the "Representation of the People Act, 1884," of the names of nearly two hundred Parliamentary voters in the district of Rush, county of Dublin; and, if so, whether he will take steps to enforce the penalties provided by the Act against Townsend?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I am informed that Mr. Townsend did omit to make the Return provided for by the Representation of the People Act, 1884. I will consult my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland as to whether a prosecution should be instituted, and, if so, by whom.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND):—

MR. H. M'DOUGALL, AGENT TO THE GORMANSTOWN ESTATE, CO. MEATH.

MR. CLANCY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Henry M'Dougall, agent of the Gormanstown estate in the county of Meath, recovered money under the Arrears Act when, as a matter of fact, no arrears were due on that estate; whether, when called on for an explanation, he practically admitted his offence by re-funding the money in one case in which he had obtained it on an ex parte application made in spite of the tenant's refusal to join in applying; and, whether he will accordingly direct a prosecution of M'Dougall, either under the section of the Arrears Act which is concerned with such cases, or for perjury?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): Applications under the Arrears Act were made in the case of 20 tenants on the Gormanstown Estate; and in one case the tenant was stated by the agent, Mr. M'Dougall, to owe a half-year's rent, £3 10s., which, as a matter of fact, had been paid. Mr. M'Dougall was called on to explain this in November last; and his explanation was, and is, that the payment of the rent had not been written up in the

ledger by his clerk—who was leaving him at the time—that he had 1,349 tenants under him as agent, who took the benefit of the Act, and that, as there was pressure for time, the payment escaped attention. He has refunded the sum paid by the Land Commissioners, and has given the tenant credit for half a year's rent. I am advised that, on this information, there does not appear to be evidence of a criminal intent on Mr. M'Dougall's part; but, if a case is made, the Attorney General will consider it.

MR. CLANCY asked, whether 10 such cases regarding Mr. M'Dougall had not been laid before the late Attorney General (Mr. Holmes)?

MR. JOHN MORLEY said, he could not be aware of that fact.

AFFAIRS OF THE EAST—SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF'S MISSION.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, To state the total amount of actual payments for telegrams to and from Sir H. D. Wolff, distinguishing those to and from Turkey and to and from Egypt. He further asked if it was the intention of the Government to take the Vote for the Diplomatic Service that night?

MR. RYLANDS inquired whether arrangements had been made to pay Sir H. Drummond Wolff any salary or personal allowances in connection with his mission?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BAYCE): In answer to the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), I may say that the Estimates, I think, will show that Sir H. Drummond Wolff is in receipt of a salary. In reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), I have to say that the cost of the telegrams sent from the Foreign Office to Sir H. Drummond Wolff at Constantinople amounted to £165, and to Cairo, up to the 20th instant, to £607. The cost of the telegrams received from Sir H. Drummond Wolff while at Constantinople amounted to £685, and from Cairo, up to the 20th instant, to about £2,507. The total amount, therefore, up to the 20th instant, was £3,964.

MR. RYLANDS asked what was the amount of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's salary, as it was not shown in the Estimates?

MR. SPEAKER: The question of salary does not arise out of the cost for telegrams.

FRANCE AND MADAGASCAR—THE TREATY.

MR. M'ARTHUR asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received the full Malagasy text of the Treaty lately concluded between France and Madagascar; and, if so, whether he will lay that document, together with a translation, on the Table of the House, with as little delay as possible?

SIR ROBERT FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the new Treaty concluded between France and Madagascar will in any way change the relations of England, Germany, Italy, and the United States with the Malagasy Government, or otherwise affect the existing Treaties between those Powers and the Queen of Madagascar?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BAYCE): The French text of the Treaty, as it has been published in the Yellow Book laid before the French Chamber, has been received from Lord Lyons, and will be laid on the Table; but neither the Malagasy text nor a translation of it has as yet been received. In reply to the Question of the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London, I may now state that by that Treaty the relations with Madagascar of the Powers named will be so far changed by Articles 1 and 2 of the Treaty as to give to France the right of representing Madagascar in all its foreign relations through a Resident appointed by the French Government. Distinct assurances have been given by France to the Powers that the Treaty will make no change in their existing Treaties with Madagascar.

NAVY—HAULBOWLINE DOCK (CORK HARBOUR).

MR. LANE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, At what date the construction of the Royal Dock at Haulbowline was commenced; what was the total amount of expenditure on the work up to the 31st December 1885; what was the original estimated cost; whether the plans provided for the erection of suitable workshops connected

with the dock; and, whether, considering the importance of having a proper dock in Cork Harbour in which Her Majesty's ships could be repaired, and the great dearth of employment in Queenstown, he can promise to accelerate the completion of the work by employing additional labourers and artificers?

THE LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. R. W. DUFF): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that the work was commenced in the year 1865, and the expenditure up to the 31st December, 1885, amounted to £494,845, the work having been chiefly done by free labour. The original plans, which proposed the employment of convict labour, estimated the cost at £650,000. The original plan contains a design for the erection of workshops; but the time has not yet come when they are wanted. In regard to the last paragraph of the Question, I beg to say that the works are drawing to a close. To engage extra labourers just now would defeat the object which the hon. Member appears to have in view.

MR. LANE: Might I ask the hon. Gentleman when he thinks it will be necessary to commence the workshops?

MR. R. W. DUFF: I think the erection of the workshops will have to be delayed till the Dockyard is completed.

MR. LANE: Might I ask what time the hon. Gentleman thinks the work will be completed, considering that it has now been 22 years in progress?

MR. R. W. DUFF: I think the work will be completed in the course of the present year.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND) — WORKS AT KILLERDUFF AND POLNAMUCK, CO. MAYO.

MR. CRILLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, early in 1885, the Irish Piers and Harbours Commissioners made grants of £1,250 and £400 for the construction respectively of a boat-slip and breakwater at Killerduff, and of an inclined approach to the landing place at Polnamuck, both in the parish of Ballycastle, county Mayo; whether it is a fact that, although nearly a year has expired, the Board of Works in Ireland has not as yet even commenced the construction of

the works in question; and, whether, if the facts be as stated, he, in view of the severe distress existing on the Western Coast, will use his influence, as President of the Board of Works, to hasten the beginning of these undertakings, which would, by providing local labour, relieve local distress, and which would, when they were finished, advance the interests and protect the lives and property of the local fishermen?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The hon. Member, in describing me as President of the Board of Works, invests me with a responsibility which I do not possess. That Department is under the control of the Treasury, and not of the Irish Government. However, the Board have furnished me with a Report, from which it appears that the recommendations of the Piers and Harbours Commissioners in these cases were made, not early in 1885, but in the month of July last, and that the working plans and necessary legal preliminaries were not completed till towards the end of the year. There will be no unnecessary delay in beginning work. I am glad to be able to add that, in view of the existing distress, the Board have departed from the usual course of calling for tenders, and have ordered that, in 17 cases, the works shall be executed by day-labour, under the supervision of their own officers.

THE ADMIRALTY — NAVAL PENSIONS.

CAPTAIN PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether, having regard to the difficulty in providing Greenwich Hospital pensions for the aged Seamen and Marines who are eligible for them, the Admiralty will abstain from bestowing the pension of £150 a year, freed by the death of the late Admiral Mordaunt, upon another Flag Officer?

THE LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY Mr. R. W. DUFF: There is no intention to deprive officers of their share of Greenwich Hospital funds. This share is a small one, officers and their relatives receiving between £8,000 and £9,000 a year; while seamen, marines, their children, and relatives receive £145,000 a year from the funds of the charity.

POLICE SUPERANNUATION AND PENSIONS BILL.

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is his intention to introduce the Police Superannuation and Pensions Bill of the last Liberal Government during the present Session?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): I have to reply that the Government are still in favour of the principle of this Bill, which they have supported for the last three years. I therefore hope to be able to re-introduce a measure dealing with this subject; but there are certain details in the Bill of last year which will have to be reconsidered.

DISTURBANCES IN THE METROPOLIS—COMPENSATION.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will indicate the mode by which compensation will be made to the tradesmen who were sufferers in the riot of the 8th instant, for the destruction and robbery to which they were exposed from no fault of their own?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to say that a Bill has been drafted, and will be introduced immediately, enacting that such compensation as seems just shall be provided out of the Metropolitan Police Fund to those who have suffered loss through the riots on the 8th of February. The various claims will be inquired into by the Receiver of Police; and in the event of dispute an arbitrator will be appointed to decide upon the claims. I hope to be able to introduce the Bill tomorrow.

MR. MAGNIAC asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would include in the Bill the case of persons whose property was destroyed at the late General Election?

MR. CHILDERS: No, Sir; it is not our intention to do so.

HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION (NORTH OF SCOTLAND).

DR. R. M'DONALD asked the President of the Board of Trade, If any inquiry has taken place on the subject of new and improved harbour accommoda-

tion for the islands of Lewis and Skye, and for the Highlands generally; and, if so, when may the House hope to have a report thereof, and hear the intentions of Her Majesty's Government on the subject?

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. O. T. D. ACLAND): No inquiry has been made on the subject of harbour accommodation since the general inquiry made in the last Parliament by the Select Committee presided over by my right hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks).

SCOTLAND—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS.

DR. R. M'DONALD asked the Secretary for Scotland, If the Government will advise Her Majesty to appoint a Royal Commission or Select Committee to inquire into the administration of justice in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): It is not the intention of the Government to advise Her Majesty to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into this matter, no sufficient cause for it having been shown. I would remind the hon. Member that in the Report of the Crofters' Commission, 1884, there was a passage which deals with this matter, and which has been fully kept in view.

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)—MR. WILLIAM IVORY, SHERIFF OF INVERNESS-SHIRE.

DR. R. M'DONALD asked the Secretary for Scotland, If any inquiry has been made into the circumstances connected with the alleged illegal demands of Sheriff Ivory, of Inverness-shire, to have the contents of private telegrams disclosed to him; and, if so, will the papers and memoranda in reference thereto be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I will refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the then Postmaster General and myself on the 8th of June, 1885, on this subject, from which it will be seen that we did not consider there was ground for further inquiry beyond what was then made; and also to a statement made in this

House by the First Lord of the Treasury of the late Government on 10th July last, in which he said that "no new information having reached the present Government, the Secretary of State did not see any ground for re-opening the case." Nothing has since occurred to alter the views thus expressed on the part of two successive Governments. I believe that there are various documents which have been called affidavits connected with the case.

ARMY MEDICAL OFFICERS—THE SERBIAN AND BULGARIAN CAMPAIGN.

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any officers of the Army Medical Service have been sent to report upon the surgical treatment of the wounded, and the working of the field hospitals, in the recent Servian and Bulgarian War; and, if so, whether their Report will be published?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): No British medical officers have been sent to report on the campaign between Servia and Bulgaria.

POST OFFICE—THE UNIVERSITIES.

MR. SHIRLEY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the fact that the Post Office Authorities have interfered with the long-continued practice of the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge to send messages within their localities respectively; and, if so, whether there is any, and what, justification, for the interference?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): The attention of the Postmaster General having been called to certain private arrangements made by the Colleges for the collection and delivery of letters in their respective localities, he was advised that these arrangements were illegal, as being an infringement of the exclusive privilege of carrying letters by post conferred on him by Act of Parliament. It was, therefore, incumbent upon the Postmaster General to inform the College authorities to that effect, and to request that the arrangements objected to might be discontinued. I am happy to say that the Postmaster General's representations were received in the spirit which might have been expected

Dr. R. M'Donald

in the learned bodies to which they were addressed, and steps have been taken to put an end to the practices to which objection was made.

Mr. RAIKES gave Notice that he would, at an early date, ask the hon. Gentleman what Act of Parliament conferred the privilege to which he had referred?

ARMY—THE SOUDAN CAMPAIGN—THE ROYAL IRISH REGIMENT.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is intended to give any special recognition to the Royal Irish Regiment to commemorate their march from Korti to Gubat, which began on the 28th January 1895 and was completed 6th February, seeing that it was the only regiment which accomplished it?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): The Royal Irish Regiment, in conjunction with the other regiments, did its duty well in the course of the campaign. It is not intended to give any mark of recognition to the regiment, as the services of all the troops engaged in the operations were specially acknowledged.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked if the regiment had not performed a very gallant march across the desert on foot?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know about on foot or otherwise; but the whole of that regiment was not engaged in the operations.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: One battalion.

INLAND REVENUE OFFICIALS.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether any consideration will be given to the representations made during the late Parliament on behalf of the Inland Revenue officials; and, whether the Government will consent to the appointment of a committee to inquire into the alleged grievances?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT) said, that this matter had not come before him, and he should certainly act upon the same principles as his immediate Predecessor, who declined to re-open this question unless new points or new evidence were brought before him. Last

December, however, it had been found possible, owing to savings in other branches of the Inland Revenue, to improve very sensibly the condition of the Excise staff, and Papers on the subject would be laid before the House.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the officers of the Treasury had bound themselves to accept the decision of any Committee which might be appointed by the House; and whether it was not in the right hon. Gentleman's recollection that when he was a candidate for the representation of Derby he did not undertake in writing, if he (Sir Herbert Maxwell) were not mistaken, to support a Motion for inquiry?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I really have no recollection of that; but candidates and Chancellors of the Exchequer are very different persons.

THE LUNACY COMMISSIONERS (ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND)—THE REPORTS.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience caused by the delay in issuing the Reports of the English and Scotch Lunacy Commissioners; whether it is the case that they are never ready for distribution until the month of August, when the Session has ended, or nearly so, and that last year the Scotch Report was not ready till September; and, whether there is any special reason why these Reports, which are prepared annually on set forms that never vary materially, could not be issued while the facts are fresh, say in at least three or four months after the expiration of the year?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): I have been in communication with the English and Scotch Commissioners on the subject of the issue of their Reports. The former tell me that, owing to the data for the tabulation of statistics not being to hand till the end of March, they cannot promise an earlier issue of their full Report; but they will undertake to have ready by the end of April for presentation to Parliament a tabular statement showing the total number of lunatics in various institutions up to the beginning of each year. The Scotch Commissioners tell

me that they expect to be able to present their Report in future by the middle of June.

THE NEW FOREST—MUTILATION OF HOLLY TREES.

MR. W. H. JAMES asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the fact that a wholesale mutilation of large and ornamental holly trees has taken place throughout the New Forest during November and December last, by cutting off the heads for sale with the berries; by whose authority and by whom this has been done; what precautions have been taken to prevent the death of the trees so mutilated; what is the total amount receivable from the sale of such holly; and, whether a Select Committee of this House unanimously recommended, in 1875, that the ancient ornamental woods and trees should be preserved, and the character of the scenery be maintained, by the officials in charge of the said Forest?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER), in reply, said, that no unusual cutting of the trees had taken place during the last season. The cutting was executed under the direction of the proper authorities, and as it was for the benefit of the trees no steps would be taken to prevent it. The amount which had been realized from the sale of the cuttings was £142 3s. With reference to the recommendation of the Select Committee that the ornamental trees should be preserved, they were endeavouring to carry it out; but the authorities had not the powers they required for the purpose.

ARMY (SIDE ARMS)—TENDERS FOR SWORDS.

MR. MAPPIN asked the Secretary of State for War, What steps have been taken to obtain the entire quantity of Cavalry swords from manufacturers of steel cutting tools in this country; whether tenders for the supply of Cavalry swords were advertised for in *The Times* and other newspapers; and, whether applications have been made during 1885, by letter or otherwise, to manufacturers of steel cutting tools in England, and how many such applications were made and sent to Sheffield, Birmingham, or other towns in this country?

Mr. Childers

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. WOODALL): No steps were taken to invite the manufacturers of steel cutting tools to tender for the supply of swords. The sword of 1885, introduced upon the Report of the Committee of which the hon. Gentleman was a Member, has to sustain a test in advance of any to which swords had hitherto been subjected by the War Department; and it was not considered probable that weapons which would stand such a test could be produced in sufficient numbers by firms which had never made swords. For what were regarded as sufficient reasons, it was not thought advisable to advertise the requirements; but the Department will gladly welcome any desire of English manufacturers to address themselves to the task of producing the whole quantity of swords from time to time required; and if my hon. Friend will confer with me on the subject I will undertake to afford him all reasonable facilities and encouragement.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND—COXWOLD RECTORY AND TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the Senior Member for Cambridge University, Whether it is a fact that, under a grant of Henry VIII. and after the dissolution of the Monastery at Newburgh, the Rectory of Coxwold, Yorkshire, which had belonged to that Monastery, was given to Trinity College, Cambridge, under the sacred obligation of providing for the spiritual wants of the parishioners; whether the present state of things as between Trinity College, Cambridge, and the parish of Coxwold is as follows: Trinity College is possessed of the Rectory, which comprises the whole ecclesiastical revenues of the parish, of the annual value of £1,678 13s. 8d. commuted rent-charge, under the sacred obligation of providing for the spiritual wants of the people of the parish, which obligation the College discharges by the annual money payment of £30, there being no parsonage house in the parish, no glebe land, and no other endowment except £20 per annum from the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, while the parish is so extensive that it is impossible for one clergyman properly to discharge his duties without assistance; and, whether steps cannot be taken with-

out delay to put an end to the neglect on the part of Trinity College to fulfil the obligations accepted by the College when it became possessed of the whole ecclesiastical revenues of the parish of Coxwold?

MR. SPEAKER: I am very sorry to have to point out to the right hon. Baronet that under the Rules of the House he is not entitled to put a Question to an hon. Member who is not in an official position.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: May I be allowed to say that I have brought the case under the notice of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; but they decline to have anything to do with so gross a case. My object in putting the Question upon the Paper was to obtain a confirmation of the report as to the state of the case.

MR. SPEAKER: I am afraid that it is not in accordance with the Rules of this House to put a Question of this nature to a private Member.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: In consequence of your ruling, Sir, I beg to give Notice that on going into Committee of Supply I will call attention to the matter which forms the subject of my Notice, and will move a Resolution.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MAJOR KERR, CAVAN MILITIA.

MR. HAYDEN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the authorities intend retiring Major Kerr, of the Cavan Militia, as being beyond the limit of age and service?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): This officer has not yet attained an age at which he would, under existing Regulations, be compulsorily retired.

MR. HAYDEN asked the Secretary of State for War, What number of recruits has the Adjutant of the Cavan Militia secured since the last training of the regiment?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): 35 for the Army, and 56 for the Militia, since the 1st of July, 1885.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—OUT-DOOR RELIEF.

MR. DWYER GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as President of the Irish Local Government Board, If any circular will

be issued to local authorities in Ireland relative to out-door relief similar to that recently issued by the English Local Government Board; and, whether, in view of the distress and want of employment in Ireland, local authorities will be permitted to grant out-door relief there on similar conditions to those upon which it may be granted in England?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): The Irish Local Government Board have already much information on the subject of the prevailing distress, from communications made to them by Boards of Guardians and others, and from the Reports of their Inspectors, and they do not think it necessary, at present, to issue a Circular. The hon. Member is no doubt aware that, under existing powers, out-door relief cannot be afforded to able-bodied men while there is room in the work-house; but, as I have previously stated, the situation is most carefully watched, and we shall not hesitate to ask for further powers if the necessity should unfortunately arise.

INLAND REVENUE—THE INCOME TAX.

MR. DWYER GRAY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether any directions have lately been given for the more rigid exaction or more prompt collection of the Income Tax?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): In reply to the Question of the hon. Member, I have to inform him that no instructions have been given for the more rigid exaction or more prompt collection of the Income Tax by the Treasury. The preparation of the terminal assessments for 1885-6, however, caused some delay in the commencement of the collection of the tax, which was due on or before the 1st of January last; and that has necessitated at this moment greater activity on the part of the collectors to enable them to collect the amount proper for the current financial year before the 31st March next.

INLAND REVENUE—STAMPED NEWSPAPER WRAPPERS.

MR. DWYER GRAY asked the Financial Secretary to the present Government, up to a certain question of the for impressed paper Burmah, and if

papers was stamped at the Custom House, Dublin; whether a new regulation was then made requiring all such paper to be sent to Somerset House, London, to be stamped, but the Government paying the cost of carriage; whether recently, still another regulation has been made requiring the newspapers to pay the carriage to and from London: whether the receipts for the goods are still required to be sent to the Custom House, Dublin; and, what reasons have influenced the Government in making these changes?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I have, in reply to the Question, to say that newspaper wrappers, which it is supposed is the meaning of "paper for impressed stamps," have never been stamped in Dublin, and no new regulation requiring each wrapper to be sent to London has consequently been made. Formerly the carriage of the paper wrappers sent up to London to be stamped was paid by the Government; but from motives of public economy the Board of Inland Revenue now expect newspaper proprietors in all parts of the Kingdom to pay the carriage of wrappers which they send up to be impressed for their own convenience. Receipts will be required at the Custom House, Dublin.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—THE RESIDENT MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT, LETTERKENNY ASYLUM.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, on the 28th April 1885, in reply to an inquiry by William Feny, the resident medical superintendent of the Letterkenny Lunatic Asylum stated that John Feny, an inmate, "was not improving in the state of his mind, but that his bodily health is good;" whether, in reply to a further application, William Feny was informed, by the same official, on the 20th August 1885, that his son John had died on the 14th July 1884; and, whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the case?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): Some confusion appears to have arisen from the fact that there were two how 'n of the same name at there made and sent asylum.

mingham, or other NNOR: Will the country?

quire generally

Mr. Childers

into the condition of the persons in this asylum, and the number of deaths?

MR. JOHN MORLEY was understood to reply in the affirmative.

THE SEED RATE (IRELAND).

MR. FOLEY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, under the existing distress which prevails along the Connemara coast, the Government will prevent undue pressure being exercised in the collection of the seed rate in that district, and will also give immediate instructions that the works which have been discontinued at the Bunowen Pier be at once resumed, with the view of mitigating to some extent the prevailing distress?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): As I have already stated in reply to the hon. and gallant Member for North Galway, I hope shortly to be in a position to make an announcement of our intentions with respect to the seed rate. The Board of Works inform me that work has not been suspended at the pier at Bunowen. On the contrary, directions were given on the 22nd instant for additional men to be employed on it.

FRANCE AND CHINA—THE RECENT TREATY.

MR. MAGNIAO asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Treaty lately made by the French Government with China purports to confer any exclusive privilege upon French subjects, in place of following the example of the Treaty of Lord Elgin, under which equal rights were stipulated for the subjects of all nations; whether the Government have made or will make endeavours to procure the like privileges, if any, for British subjects; and, with an authenticated Copy of the Franco-Chinese Treaty will be communicated to the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BAYCE): I beg to thank my hon. Friend for having held this Question over from last week, at my request, and perhaps the House will allow me to take this opportunity of saying that it would be not merely for the advantage of the Foreign Office, but for that of the public service and hon. Members themselves, if in future, when possible, they

would be kind enough to give two or three days' Notice of Questions which refer to the Foreign Office, because it is often necessary to send telegrams abroad and make extensive researches at the Foreign Office itself, which necessarily take some time, in order to answer their Questions. In answer to my hon. Friend I have to say that there will be no objection to laying at once before Parliament the text of the Franco-Chinese Treaty, which has already been published in Paris. Meanwhile I may state that permission to trade across the land frontier of Tonquin at certain fixed points and to establish Consuls is granted to French subjects; but the conditions under which the trade is to be carried on are to be defined in special regulations which are now being negotiated in China. The Article in regard to the construction of railways by French assistance stipulates that no exclusive privilege is to be constituted in favour of France. Her Majesty's *Chargé d'Affaires* in China was repeatedly instructed, at the time when the Treaty was being negotiated, to claim for this country, under the Most-Favoured Nation Clause of our Treaty, any such special privileges as might be granted to French subjects. He has made representations accordingly, and is continuing to pay every attention to the negotiations, which are still going on, with a view to secure British subjects any improved facilities which these new regulations may contain. Papers on the subject will be prepared and laid on the Table of the House as soon as possible.

ARMY—PAYMENT OF PENSIONS.

MR. C. H. WILSON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he is aware of the evils and inconveniences resulting from paying the Army Pensioners quarterly, and whether he will consider the desirability of paying them at shorter intervals, say every month?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE): It is believed that the great majority of pensioners themselves prefer the present system of quarterly payments. It was found that the men were more apt to squander the monthly small sum than they are to make away with the more appreciable amount received quarterly. There is, of course, a saving in labour, and therefore in ex-

pense, to the War Department and the Post Office by the quarterly instead of monthly payment of pensions; and it would require strong evidence of inconvenience or hardship to justify a reversion to the former system.

COLLEGIATE APPOINTMENTS (SCOTLAND).

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked the Secretary for Scotland, What course the Government intend to take with respect to the two vacant Principalships and the vacant Professorship in the University of St. Andrews?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN): The Government hope, in a few days, to fill up the Principalship of the United College of St. Salvator and St. Leonard and the Physiological Chair at Aberdeen. With regard to the Principalship of St. Mary's College and the vacant Divinity Professorship, to which it has been attached, the Government are considering the obligations under which they are laid by the Report of the Royal Commission of 1878 and their legal position with regard to the recommendations of that Report.

ARMY—REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF RECRUITING.

SIR WALTER B. BARTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will take care that the Annual Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, and also the Preliminary Return of the British Army (presented last year on the 18th of April), may both be presented before the discussion on the Army Estimates is taken?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): I hope to present the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting in the course of a few days. With regard to the preliminary general Annual Return, I will do my best to hasten its completion; but I cannot at present make any promise on the subject.

ANNEXATION OF UPPER BURMAH.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If the Council of India were consulted either by the late or the present Secretary of State on the question of the annexation of Upper Burmah, and if

they were agreed in advising that the interests of India demanded the annexation of that Country; or, if not, who were the advisers of the late Secretary of State who expressed that opinion?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): The orders on the subject to which the hon. Member refers were given by the late Secretary of State under the special powers by which the Secretary of State can deal with certain questions without submitting them to the Council. With regard to any other advisers, I must refer him to the late Secretary of State.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked if they were to understand that the Council of India had not been consulted by either the late or the present Indian Secretary?

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, he had already answered the Question in regard to the late Secretary of State. As to the present Secretary of State, he reminded the hon. Gentleman that the annexation took place before he came into Office.

ALLOTMENTS AND SMALL HOLDINGS— THE RETURN.

MR. HENRY TOLLEMACHE asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether, considering the importance of the subject, the Government will lay upon the Table of this House the Return on the subject of Allotments and Small Holdings, which has been promised by the Lord President of the Council to the House of Lords?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY (MR. HENEGE), in reply, said, the Return promised by the Lord President of the Council to the House of Lords would be laid on the Table of the House of Commons also.

POST OFFICE — PARCELS POST BETWEEN FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Is the Postmaster General taking any further steps to induce the French Government to complete the connecting link for the parcels post between France and England, the system being in operation in the two countries?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): The

Postmaster General is in active communication with the French Postal Administration as to the proposed Parcels Post between this country and France. Some questions of difficulty have presented themselves, which, however, it is hoped, will be shortly adjusted. In any event, before a Parcel Post Convention can be brought into operation it will have to be submitted to the French Chambers for ratification.

POLLUTION OF THE THAMES—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the intention of the Government to take efficient steps to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Pollution of the Thames by the outfalls at Barking Creek and Crossness?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): This question has been repeatedly under the consideration of the Metropolitan Board, who have charge of the sewerage of London. They have not yet finally reported to me their conclusions; but I will press the Board for an early answer.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that 6,000 tons of liquid muck were emptied into the Thames every day at these points?

MR. CHILDERS said, that was a calculation he should be slow to accept the responsibility for; but there was no question that the subject was a serious one.

METROPOLIS — REORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will now say in what way he proposes to make the further inquiry into the organisation of the Police Force of the Metropolis, which he states his intention to undertake; and, whether he will engage that no such steps shall be taken until the House has had opportunity of expressing an opinion on the Report of the Committee now in the hands of Members?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): I propose to make my inquiry into the organization of the Police Force by means of a Departmental Com-

Sir George Campbell

mittee, over which I shall myself preside. ["Oh!" and a laugh.] Yes; I am responsible for the organization, and I am not going to throw the responsibility upon others. I have not finally settled the names of the Committee; but, in all probability, whoever may be the new Chief Commissioner will be one. I also hope to have the assistance of Mr. Pemberton, now Assistant Under Secretary at the Home Office, and long a Member of this House, and of Mr. Pennesfather, whose financial experience in police matters will be of great service to me. Perhaps I may be allowed to say, when on the point of instituting this inquiry, how much I regret the absence of the late Chief Commissioner, Sir Edmund Henderson, whose lengthened experience and intimate knowledge of the details of police administration would have been invaluable upon such an inquiry. I am afraid I do not quite understand the words "such steps" in the second Question. I shall certainly undertake this inquiry without waiting for any particular debate in this House. To-morrow my hon. Friend the Member for Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart) has the first place on the Motion for Supply, and proposes to call attention to this subject. If Notice of a serious Motion be placed upon the Table, it will be sufficient time to consider whether any facilities would be required for its discussion.

Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, on the Motion which he has mentioned as coming on to-morrow, we shall have the opportunity of discussing the Report of the Special Committee, and the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman himself in this matter?

Mr. CHILDERS: The only answer I can give is that the hon. Gentleman, if he wishes to discuss either the Report or my conduct, will be able to do so on the Motion of the hon. Member for Shoreditch.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Is there any objection to placing Sir Edmund Henderson on the Committee?

Mr. CHILDERS: It would hardly be right that a gentleman who has just retired or is just retiring from the Public Service should be asked to sit on the Committee; but means will be found, no doubt, of obtaining the advantage of Colonel Henderson's experience.

ARMY CLOTHING FACTORY, PIMLICO.

Mr. ALBERT GREY asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether it is the case, as stated in *The Pall Mall Gazette* of February 22nd, that the wages of the workwomen employed in the Army Clothing Factory at Pimlico have been reduced 25 per cent. in the last year?

Mr. MAGNIAC asked whether it is the fact, as currently reported, that the women in the factory referred to were working at starvation wages; and whether he will give a Return showing the number of workers whose wages were respectively below and above 10s. per week in the week ending February 12?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. WOODALL): I shall be happy to give the Returns, and to include in them all the information I can. The statement referred to in the first Question is not accurate. The average wages of the women employed in the Army Clothing Factory during 1884 amounted to 15s. 8d. a-week of actual earnings. The average for 1885 was 15s. 8½d. The corresponding average for the four weeks ending February 17 last was 17s. 1½d. Perhaps the numbers at different rates of wages will make the comparison more intelligible. In 1884 and 1885 respectively there were employed in all 1,259 and 1,399 women. Of these, 231 and 262 received respectively less than 10s. a-week; 752 and 805 from 10s. to £1 a-week; 254 and 291 from 20s. to 30s. a-week; and 22 and 41 respectively over 30s. a-week. I may add that certain Memorials and representations have been addressed to the Secretary of State concerning the general administration of the clothing factory, to which I am giving my own very careful attention.

THE LONDON WATER COMPANIES.

Mr. ROBSON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is the intention of the Government to introduce, at an early date, a Bill dealing with the acquisition of the London Water Companies, so long looked forward to by the people of London?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): I am fully alive to the great importance of this question; but I think the question of the acquisition of the

London Water Companies' property cannot be dissociated from the larger question of the government of London, as to which I hope to be able to make a statement in a few weeks.

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT—THE WEST CLARE RAILWAY COMPANY.

MR. COX asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Treasury, in the month of June last, intimated their willingness to aid undertakings under the Tramways (Ireland) Act by loans to be made through the Irish Board of Works, and the West Clare Railway Company applied in the same month for a loan on the security of shares having dividends guaranteed in perpetuity by the county of Clare; has the granting of this loan been delayed by the Board of Works down to the present time, although the adequacy of the proposed security is not questioned; has the result of this delay been that the works of the Railway had been partially suspended about two months ago, by which several hundred men were thrown out of employment; whether representations have reached the Government that great distress exists in the district; and, whether they will cause the Board of Works to hasten the completion of this loan, and enable the works to be resumed, which will give large and immediate employment where it is now so badly wanted?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER) said, that serious legal difficulties had arisen in the way of granting to the West Clare Railway Company the loan for which they applied on the security offered by them. The Board of Public Works had had every desire to facilitate in every way in their power the advance of the loan, in order that the works might not be stopped, and that the railway might be completed and opened for traffic. Their Surveyor was now on the spot, and it was hoped that in the course of a few days his Report would be received, and such arrangements made as would enable the works, a portion of which only were suspended, to be resumed.

THE POSTAL UNION—AUSTRALIA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Mr. Childers

The names of the Australasian Colonies that have declined to join the Postal Union; is he aware that French mail steamers convey ten centime or one penny postal cards from France via Australia to New Caledonia; and, whether he will take steps to introduce penny postal cards between England and Australia in the interests of poor emigrants and their friends?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): The Australian Colonies were all represented at the Postal Union Congress which was held at Lisbon last year; and after considering the conditions on which they could be admitted into the Union they all declined to join for the present. It is true, as the hon. Member states, that postcards can be forwarded from France to New Caledonia for a postage of 10 centimes, or 1d. each. Pending admission of the Australian Colonies into the Postal Union, it has not been considered desirable to extend the postcard system from this country to Australia. No such arrangement could take place without the previous concurrence of the Colonies concerned; and, looking at the reduction of postage which would be involved by the introduction of 1d. postcards, it is by no means certain that they would acquiesce in any such arrangement.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—SPEECH OF LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL AT BELFAST.

MR. NEWNES asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to language used in the north of Ireland, on Monday last, by a Member of this House, the late Secretary of State for India, to the following effect:—

"In the north the great privileges you possess are worth defending, are worth demonstrating for, and, by Heaven, it may be they are worth fighting for. I do not myself fear that so heavy a trial could be put upon you, but I impress upon you to keep the organisation in perfect readiness;"

and, whether he intends to prosecute the author of these words under the same Act which has been put in force with regard to the London Socialists?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): From no want of respect to the hon. Member who made the speech, but simply from want of time on my

part, I have not properly read that speech so as to appreciate the whole of it. But the speech itself to which the hon. Member refers, and the language to which he objects, was not delivered in England; and, therefore, it is no part of my duty to consider its character in the aspect suggested by the Question.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that if no action is taken in this matter by the Government, I shall take the earliest opportunity open to me to move a Resolution to the effect that this House particularly regrets and condemns the public employment, by a Member of this House who has held high Office under the Crown and who continues to hold the Office of a Privy Councillor, of language designed to intimidate this House, and to excite bodies of persons in Ireland to the use of arms, in defiance of the will of this House and in opposition to the authority of the Crown.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I beg to give Notice, with regard to the Notice of Motion just now given by the hon. Member for Sligo, that if it should appear on the Paper to-morrow I shall ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will afford a very early day for its discussion?

ARMY ENFIELD SMALL ARMS FACTORY.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that the War Office have sent orders to the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield to the effect that the number of workmen will be reduced by 300 on the 1st of April, thus throwing a large number of men out of employment during the time of the present prevailing distress?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): No such order has been given. The number of workmen employed in a Government factory must, of course, depend on the money voted by Parliament for the produce of that factory. The Vote to be asked for Enfield for next year's service is at present under consideration.

IRISH ESTATES OF THE LONDON COMPANIES

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the attempt by the Salters' Company, the

Ironmongers' Company, and other London Companies to make sale of their Derry estates; and, if the Government propose to do anything to prevent these Corporations making away with their property before the question can be legislatively dealt with?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): I understand that in a very short time a Bill will be introduced by my right hon. Friend, whose Department it concerns, on the subject to which this Question refers, and which would embrace such cases as are mentioned in the Question. The further Question, whether that Bill can be extended to retrospective proceedings, is one which I am not so well able to answer at the present moment, not having a precise knowledge of the character of those proceedings.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Would the right hon. Gentleman kindly permit me to ask this Question—Whether his attention has been drawn to a recent notice issued by the agent of the Salters' Company in the following words:—

"On being informed that you had refused to contract for the purchase of your farm I consulted the agent of the Salters' Company. I am now desirous to give you notice that if the necessary steps to complete be not taken within one fortnight from this date, proceedings will be taken in the High Court of Chancery in Ireland to compel the performance of your agreement to purchase, and that this notice will be used to fix you with the costs of such proceedings."

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I am cognizant of the document which the hon. and learned Gentleman has quoted; but the answer I have previously given will, I think, convey a perfect and distinct intimation to the Companies concerned as to the intention of the Government.

SMALL HOLDINGS AND ALLOTMENTS.

COLONEL BROOKFIELD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government propose to give any legislative effect to the opinion recently expressed by the House on the subject of small holdings and allotments?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): In the debate to which this Question refers it was, I think, fully understood by the House, and was stated expressly by myself and others, that the preliminary condition of giving effect in any manner to the idea contained in the Motion would be the establishment of a thoroughly efficient local government.

When Her Majesty's Government are able to propose to the House their Local Government Bill they will consider what steps they can properly take in the direction of the Motion which was carried on the occasion referred to.

IRELAND—AUTHORITY OF THE CROWN.

MR. BADEN-POWELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is correctly reported as having declared on 22nd February that—

“Her Majesty's Government are very desirous to see the authority of the Crown in Ireland restored to that full state of efficiency which it enjoys in England and Scotland;”

and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government have taken or are taking effectual steps to put an end forthwith to so alarming a state of affairs as is implied in this confession that the authority of the Crown is in a definite degree in abeyance in Ireland?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): I thought that this Question had been answered by me more than once. With regard to the words ascribed to me, I have no complaint whatever to make of the report of my words. I have no doubt of their substantial accuracy. I considered, and still consider, that the efficiency of the authority of the Crown in any portion of Her Majesty's Dominions must be measured by the degree of fulness with which the Judicial and Administrative Departments of the Government attain the end for which they are appointed in the protection of personal liberty, property, and life. Well, Sir, I have stated more than once, and I apprehend it cannot be denied, that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the question of social order in Ireland requires close attention, and we are engaged in considering by what means we can obtain remedies for the existing state of things.

MR. LALOR asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If it is in accordance with the invitation conveyed in his letter of the 12th instant to Lord De Vesci, seeking information in reference to the wants and wishes of the Irish people, that Lord De Vesci, through his agent Mr. Fitzherbert, has been trying to compel his labourers and small tenants to sign a document protesting against Home Rule for Ireland, and, at the same time, compelling those labourers who signed the

paper to remit a portion of their week's wages in order to pay expenses?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): In regard to the first part of the Question, the object of my letter to Lord de Vesci was to make it known, for the purpose of obviating possible misapprehensions, that I should be very glad to receive information of the wants and wishes of the people of Ireland from those best qualified to describe them, quite irrespective of parties or opinions. I do not see the connection between the object of that letter and the report which the Question recites. I am aware of no such proceeding on the part of Lord de Vesci or his agent. I have never known Lord de Vesci except in the character of a most humane, kind, and estimable man; and I should be very slow indeed to credit without evidence any report to a contrary effect. I have no information supporting the report here mentioned; and I do not find, upon telegraphic inquiry, that the Government of Ireland are in possession of any such information.

MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

MR. GLADSTONE, in rising to move—

“That the Orders of the Day subsequent to the Order for the Committee on the Land Registry Bill [*Lords*] be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of a Bill relating to Crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland,”

said, that when they approached 10 o'clock the Government would ask the House to report Progress, in order to enable his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland to bring forward his Motion.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-6).

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(1.) £460, London University.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID: I wish to call the attention of Her Majesty's

Mr. W. E. Gladstone

Government to the fact that the University of London is treated in a manner in which no other University in the Kingdom is treated. The fees of the University are paid into the Public Chest, and every 1*d.* paid by the University has to be accounted for to a Public Department, and has to be voted by this House. If hon. Members will turn to the next Vote they will find that University College, Wales, is allowed the sum of £1,000 to spend as it likes; £2,550 has already been granted to that Body, and this is a Supplementary Vote for £750. If hon. Members will look at the Vote for the Scotch Universities they will find that a sum of money is also given to them to spend as they like. Now, the University of London has already existed for 50 years. Earl Granville is the Chancellor of the University, and Sir James Paget Vice-Chancellor; and, in my opinion, the University, through its Senate, is in every way capable of managing the affairs of the University if it has a suitable grant given to it by Parliament. That, I believe, would be a much better course than to retain the present system of asking the House to vote particular items. If hon. Members will look at this Vote they will find that the sum of £160 which appears in the Estimates has come from the extension of the work of the University. As a member of the Senate of the University, I may say that there are many other extensions of the work of the University which might be undertaken by the University, if it were not for the trouble caused by the necessity for their being submitted to the scrutiny of the Government. About two years ago an appeal was made to the late Chancellor of the Exchequer for an allowance to the University of London for the purpose of giving it autonomy in these matters; and that proposal was viewed by him with favour, and would have been acted upon if special circumstances had not arisen which caused a postponement. If hon. Members will examine the Estimates, they will find that a larger sum is received from fees this year than was received in the year before; and that result, instead of being brought about by the grants made out of the Revenues of this country, is due to the system of examination adopted by the University of London for many years past, and which has been of so sa-

tisfactory a character as to induce a larger number of students to enter the University. It is hardly fair, however, that the University should receive no benefit from its growing prosperity; and I, therefore, claim on its behalf that in future the Government should give a lump sum to the University, instead of putting down in the Votes every year the charges which have to be borne by the University. I find that the amount received from fees last year was £10,900, while the total amount required for the expenses of the University was £12,900. Consequently, the University only cost the Government at the present moment £2,000; but in some years it has cost £1,000, £5,000, £6,000, and even £7,000 above the fees; therefore, in my opinion, if a grant of £5,000 a-year were given to the University, which would be a less sum than is given to some of the small Scotch Universities, the University of London would only be put on the footing it is entitled to occupy. I earnestly hope that the Secretary to the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer will consider this matter with the view of no longer placing a detailed charge upon the Estimates with regard to the University of London, but of giving a lump sum of £5,000 to the University, on the same principle as large sums are now given to the Scotch Universities.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I think the suggestion which my hon. Friend has made is a very valuable one; but I would submit that the case which the hon. Baronet has to urge would come with greater force when the Vote for the University of London is proposed for next year. The present Vote of £160 is only a Supplementary sum in order to make up a deficiency which has occurred. As far as the main questions are concerned, the grant from Parliament for the Universities is practically decreasing. If it is proposed now to make a new departure it will require considerable discussion, and I may, perhaps, raise the grave question whether, under existing circumstances, Parliament ought to make any grant at all to this University. It must be borne in mind that the circumstances which exist in 1886 are very different from those which existed in 1836 when these grants were first made, and the proposal of my hon. Friend might raise the whole question whether the

House would be justified in making any grant at all. I do not wish, however, to forestall the discussion of that question; but I shall be happy, when the regular Estimates are brought forward, to discuss the matter at greater length. I do not know that any information is needed by the Committee as to this particular Vote; but I may say that, so far as the Public Revenue is concerned, the additional amount seems to be more than counterbalanced by an increase of fees.

MR. BRUNNER: It seems to me that the aim of the Government ought to be to encourage the University of London to do better and better work. If the work done 50 years ago was worth a certain sum per year, it seems to me that it is now worth at least twice the same amount of money.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID: The late Chancellor of the Exchequer, now Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers), was good enough to say, after he had examined the matter, that he thought a grant ought to be given to the University of London; because, instead of inducing the University to spend as little as possible, they ought to be encouraged to spend more. I must confess that, in my opinion, it is by no means liberal—nay, rather somewhat shabby—for a public official who seems to know nothing of the matter to say that it is questionable whether the only public money voted for University purposes in the South of England ought not to be done away with altogether, when upon the very next Vote the same hon. Gentleman will have to stand up and support a considerable Vote for a University in Wales.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): I expressed no opinion as to the propriety of the Vote at all; and, so far from being ignorant of the merits of the question, I was speaking from information which had been supplied to me by the highest authority. No doubt, my hon. Friend is correct in the statement which he has made with regard to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and with regard to that matter I expressed no opinion whatever. I think there can be no desire on the part of the Government to make a profit out of the University fees. The net charge in regard to the University of

London is £3,600; and all I suggested was that, if a proposal were made to increase that grant, the question might be raised whether the State ought to be called upon to make any grant at all.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: I quite agree with the Secretary to the Treasury that the Committee will be able to discuss the matter in a more suitable manner when they come to the main Vote. But, at the same time, I think the remarks made by the Secretary to the Treasury, if they are left uncontradicted, would produce an erroneous impression out-of-doors. It might be supposed that, although there was a strong case for a grant when the University of London was first founded, it is less needed now, on account of the action which has since been taken by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. On the contrary, the fact is that a much larger number of persons now take degrees in the University of London than at any former period, and there are a very large number of persons for whom the University of London is the only University open. So far from the case of the University being weaker than it was at the time of its foundation, my hon. Friend will find, when he takes into consideration the amount of work done and the number of persons who take degrees, that it is very much stronger than ever it was. I think that the University of London may fairly claim that the small sum voted by this House is well spent, and that the University has never been doing more or better work than at the present moment.

MR. RYLANDS: I quite agree with my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury that this is a matter which had better be discussed when we have the regular Estimates before us. I am not inclined to differ from my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) as to the fact that the University is doing more work now than in former years. If it is, it is compensated, to a certain extent, by the amount of fees it receives; and I believe that the fees it receives amount to a larger sum year by year. I believe that, as my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury has stated, there is no disposition on the part of the Government to make a profit out of the University. What the Government do is this—they pay a sum of money which is considered

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by the best authorities to be the sum necessary to maintain the University of London in a state of efficiency; and it appears that the fees received by the University itself gradually approach nearer and nearer the sum voted by Parliament. But I do not suppose, if the fees were so increased as to become in excess of the Vote, that under such circumstances the Government would wish to keep back any portion of them. On the contrary, I think there is a general desire that the University of London should have every support it can obtain in that way. But I wish to remind the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) that there is some difference in the situation of the University now as compared with what it was some years ago. We have now Universities springing up in other parts of the Kingdom; and I am glad to think that an important University—the Victoria University at Manchester—has not only the power of granting degrees, but that it has other important educational advantages which it is able to confer upon a very large and populous district. It is quite clear that if we are to make this a question of increasing the grant to the University of London, it will be necessary to open up a much wider question than my hon. Friend the Member for St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid) imagines.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID: My hon. Friend does not appear to be aware that the Scotch Universities receive a grant from this House, and that they, nevertheless, appropriate the fees paid by the students to their own purposes. My contention is that the University of London should be allowed to use the fees paid by the students in the same way that other Colleges and Universities do which receive a Government grant. If that course were followed, I believe that it would be of great advantage to the University itself. I may add that the University of London is the only great institution in the South of England which has the power of conferring degrees in the way required by a large number of students; and therefore I think that a considerable grant in aid ought to be given to that University, especially when we find that a sum of £4,000 is to be given to a little poky College in Wales. I cannot understand why, under such circumstances,

a sum of £5,000 should be considered too much for the University of London, which has been in existence for 50 years, and which has in its Senate a body of the highest distinction quite capable of managing the affairs of the University without submitting them to the supervision of the Treasury. I hope that the matter will be thoroughly considered before the regular Estimates are brought on this year.

CAPTAIN VERNEY: I am quite sure that the hon. Member who has just sat down has never extended his travels as far as Aberystwyth, because I am satisfied that if he had ever seen that remarkable and beautiful building he would never have alluded to it as a "poky little College." I am proud to say that I am a member of the Senate of that College.

Vote agreed to.

(2.) £750, University Colleges, Wales.

(3.) £37,700, Public Education, Ireland.

MR. P. McDONALD: Before this Vote is agreed to, I wish to call the attention of the Committee to the condition of the National School teachers. They have many grievances to complain of; but I will only trouble the Committee with those which are most pressing, and the first of them is the insufficiency of the remuneration which they receive. They are very much under-paid as compared with the elementary school teachers of England and Scotland. They do not receive quite two-thirds of the salary of the English elementary teachers, and they are not as well paid as the ordinary artisans of Ireland; in fact, their emoluments are very much below the pay received by the ordinary Police Force. But there is another and, perhaps, a still greater grievance in the manner in which they are housed. It is only in the towns that accommodation can be had by the teachers. I have been informed, and in some cases I am aware, that in the country districts they have to walk three, four, and, in some instances, five miles from their residences to the schools. Even the female teachers have to do the same. I think the Committee will admit that that is a state of things which ought not to exist; but, at the present moment, they can find no accommoda-

tion nearer the schools than miserable cabins totally unfit for educated people, with any nicety of taste, to live in. Therefore, I consider that the condition of the teachers, as regards the manner in which they are housed, ought to receive immediate attention at the hands of Her Majesty's Government. Another matter of complaint on the part of the teachers is that they are not placed on the Pension List like other public servants. I maintain that they ought, at least, to be treated as well as the junior Civil servants—at any rate, as well as the Excisemen and the Policemen. That, however, is not the case. As they discharge duties second only to the clergyman of the parish, and they ought to be placed in a position that would, at least, command for them the respect of the people. If nothing is done to improve their condition it is quite evident that they will be unable to exercise authority and discharge the duties necessary to the position they occupy. The duties thrown upon them are of a very arduous nature, and every effort should be made by the Government to secure for them the necessary respect of parents and pupils. There is one other point which I desire to mention, and it is this—the desirability of introducing without delay technical teaching into the schools. Last autumn very exhaustive evidence was given on that subject before Sir Eardley Wilmot's Committee; and I believe there was a consensus of opinion in that Committee that technical education was a subject which ought to receive immediate attention at the hands of the Government. Now, I consider that we ought, in this matter of technical education, to begin at the beginning, and that is in the elementary schools. I am pleased to learn that a beginning has been made by the Commissioners by the introduction of that admirable text-book, *Handicraft for Handy People*; but, instead of requiring the pupils to buy it, there ought to be 50 copies presented free to each school. In the second place, we should have normal or district schools, perhaps one or two for each county; and they ought to be established so that they would be able to educate technically the youths in such districts in the trades and manufacturing operations suited to the locality, and which required to be developed. I believe that we have al-

ready existing in Ireland institutions which might take the place, for the present, of these technical schools—I allude to the workhouse schools; but I consider that the education given in these workhouse schools is such that youths so instructed, when sent into the world, are unable to shift for themselves; and I regret to say that in consequence they very often go from the workhouse into the gaol. Such a state of things should no longer be allowed to exist. They should be taught the use of their hands and eyes. Instruct them in some useful trade or occupation, so that when they go abroad they will be able to find some employment, and no longer become a burden upon the public. We have also other institutions in Ireland—the industrial schools, where, already, the managers of the schools are very ably carrying out the intentions of the founders. They are instructing the youths placed under their care in trades that will fit them to find a ready means of employment after they leave these establishments; but I think the Government ought to give increased grants to these industrial schools, so that the technical education carried on should be made more perfect. In the first place, however, the Government ought to apply themselves to the workhouse schools, and place in each two or three men trained and capable of imparting instruction in some particular trade or occupation. I hope, therefore, that before the Estimates of the year are brought on these matters will receive the attention of the Government, and that some steps will have been taken in the direction I have indicated.

MR. PENROSE FITZGERALD: I am very glad that the attention of the Committee has been called to the subject of the inadequacy of the pay of the National School teachers in Ireland, and I am glad that I am able to speak on the same side of the question as the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. It is a fact, and a notorious fact to anyone who knows anything of the subject, that the National School teachers of Ireland are not sufficiently paid; and I venture to remind the Committee that there is no body of men to whom we must more look for the future of the young of Ireland than the teachers of the National Schools. I would not have presumed to occupy the time of the Committee if the

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hon. Member who has just sat down had not omitted one other part of the claim of the National teachers, which calls, I think, for the immediate interference of Her Majesty's Government; and that is that their pay, inadequate as it is, is worse than inadequate, because it is uncertain. What I refer to is the power which now rests with the Boards of Guardians in Ireland either to increase or not to increase the pay of the National School teachers at their will or discretion, by voting a sum of money per annum as an addition to their ordinary remuneration. In the Board of Guardians with which I am acquainted, it not unfrequently happens that in one year a sum of money is voted for the teachers in the Union; but after they have enjoyed it for one year it is possible by some accident—perhaps by a whip being made by some of the Guardians who are careful of the public purse—that the decision formally arrived at is reversed, and next year the pay the teachers thought from the previous vote of the Board of Guardians they were entitled to receive is cut down, and they are deprived of an addition to their salary of £20 or £30 a year, which they thought they were fairly entitled to look forward to. I therefore urge upon the Government to take into consideration whether the pay of the National School teachers of Ireland should not at least be made certain. I can hardly hope that Her Majesty's Government will be guided altogether by the views of the hon. Member who has just sat down upon technical education; but I sincerely trust that they will, at any rate, take the subject into consideration. It is one which the people of Ireland have much at heart. It is one in which I have myself taken a deep interest, and I know of no subject which is more calculated to confer advantage upon the country.

MR. T. C. HARRINGTON: I am anxious to say a word in support of the view which has been expressed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge, Mr. P. Fitzgerald. There can be no doubt that the uncertainty which exists in regard to the salary of the National school teachers is one of the most pressing of the immediate grievances this deserving body have to complain of. The salary of the National teachers in Ireland is derived from three sources.

One portion of the salary is a certain fixed annual sum, another portion of it is made contingent on the will of the local Guardians as to whether they will throw it upon the rates or not, and a third portion of their emoluments is derived from the gratuities given to them from the parents or guardians of the children. The system works in such a manner that, in the richest districts in Ireland, where the National teachers have a fair allowance from the parents and guardians of the children in the shape of school fees, they have also the other two portions of the salary made certain; because, as a general rule, it is in the wealthiest parts of the country that the Guardians contribute out of the rates, and by so doing enable the school teachers to derive the whole benefit of the system. But in the poorer districts of Ireland, where the Guardians are not able to make a contribution out of the rates, and where the parents contribute very little, if at all, in the shape of school fees—and these are the very districts where education is most required—it will be found that the teachers are very inadequately remunerated. The only emolument they receive is the salary granted annually by the National Board of Education; and because the local Boards of Guardians are so poor, or so ungenerous, as not to contribute a certain sum out of the rates, the teachers are not only deprived of that portion which the Guardians do not contribute, but are also deprived of that portion which the National Board are willing to give contingent upon a certain sum being provided by the Guardians. I think this is a matter which deserves the immediate attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; and I am sure that when he applies his mind to the case he will see that this is a pressing grievance, falling heavily upon the poor teachers of Ireland, which demands a remedy.

MR. EVERETT: I would like to make a remark upon one of the suggestions which has been made by the hon. Member for Sligo, Mr. P. McDonald—namely, that the Government should give pensions to the Irish schoolmasters. Now, there are many taxpayers in this country who think that the pension system has already been extended quite far enough. We, who have to find the money to pay pensions to other people,

have nothing in the shape of pensions provided for ourselves except the poor rates or the workhouse. No doubt, it is a very pleasant thing to receive a pension; but, seeing the difficulty of raising the money which is necessary in order to pay pensions, I would respectfully submit that the time is come when, instead of making any extension of the system of pensioning our public servants, we ought rather to be disposed to inquire, in our future arrangements for the Public Service, whether it is not desirable to adopt the system which prevails in regard to private employment—namely, to pay a workman for the full value of the work he performs, leaving him to make a provision for his own future maintenance.

MR. SEXTON: I sympathize with what the hon. Gentleman has stated; but I am afraid that he is not very much acquainted with this particular subject. He is labouring under the embarrassment of applying an abstract theory without having made the particular subject to which he wishes to apply it a matter of investigation. Our complaint is not so much of the inadequacy of the pension itself, as of the fact that the men and women we employ are obliged to serve so long before they become eligible for a pension that the pension is of no use to them when they get it. A man commences to serve as a teacher at the age of 18 or 20; and it is only when he reaches the age of 65, and in the case of a woman when she reaches the age of 60, that a pension of a very reasonable amount comes to them. We think that the pension ought to be made available at an earlier age than that. I will also tell the hon. Gentleman another fact—namely, that the British Exchequer has accomplished a remarkable feat in connection with the matter of Irish education. Formerly an annual payment of £7,000 was made out of the Imperial Purse; but a few years ago another system was established by which the grant of £7,000 from the Imperial Purse was discontinued, and the cost placed upon the local ratepayers. I think it is out of the sphere of argument that the National School teachers are wretchedly paid, and the advantages which have often been promised them have been too long deferred. The only question now is, in what manner and to what extent the Government are pre-

pared to give them redress? We should all regret if it is thought necessary to postpone the consideration of the subject until after that other question of Imperial politics which is about to be brought forward. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will consider whether the two questions are inextricably blended; but if not, I trust we may indulge in a hope that he may be able to make some cheering statement to-night.

MR. P. J. POWER: I am fully prepared to endorse the statement of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. P. M'Donald) in regard to the defective accommodation for the housing of the school teachers. In many instances, owing to the difficulty of obtaining suitable accommodation, they have to walk four or five statute miles to the school, teach the children all day, and then return to their homes. I hope the Government will see their way to the making of some concession in this matter, and that, at any rate, something will be done to make the salaries of the teachers more certain than they are at present. I must remind the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that the Government have themselves to thank for the salaries of these persons being so uncertain. If they had made the education of the Irish people in harmony with the wishes of the Irish people, I venture to say—and I speak from some experience—that the majority of Unions in Ireland would have readily become contributors towards the salaries. They are not contributors at present, because they believe they would stultify themselves if they were to contribute towards the maintenance of a system which they oppose, and which, under the name of National, is as anti-National as can well be imagined. I hope that, as vacancies occur in the National Board of Education, the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who has shown his sympathy with the Irish people in many respects, will endeavour to place upon the Board individuals who are more in harmony with the feelings of the Irish people. The National Board, as at present constituted, does not possess the confidence of the Irish people; and it acts in a most dictatorial way upon many subjects. In the constituency which I have the honour to represent—Waterford—some time since the managers of a convent school decided on

Mr. Everett

placing their school under the National Board. Over the building where the schools were conducted stood a stone cross. The National Board of Education compelled the nuns to remove this cross, contending that its remaining there was against the spirit of the National Education in Ireland. Can it be imagined that in the 19th century, and in a Catholic country, a National Board, supposed to govern the education of the people upon National principles, should have been so anti-National in their proceedings as to insist upon the removal of this cross? I hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will undertake to bring in a measure upon this question, if it is not included in that other measure to which reference has been made; and I trust that some endeavour will be made to render the education of the Irish people in conformity with the wishes of the people. If this is done, the taunt which has been cast against the Irish Board of Guardians will at once be removed, and they will readily become ungrudging contributors to the cost of National Education.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I have listened with great interest to the remarks which have been made by hon. Members from Ireland, and by the hon. Member for Cambridge Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald. I have long been aware of the great interest which is taken in Ireland in the question of the position and remuneration of the National School teachers. Although I have only been in Office for a very short time I have not been idle. I have endeavoured to acquire all the information I could as to the position of these teachers; and I have listened to their demands, and considered the weight which ought to be attached to them. But I think the Committee will see that this is hardly the occasion on which I might be expected to enter upon so wide a question. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. P. McDonald, goes very far indeed when he asks me to say whether this matter will form part of another question with which Her Majesty's Government will have to deal. I must certainly defer giving an answer to that question at the present moment. What has been very truly pointed out in regard to the condition of the National

School teachers is its liability to fluctuation; but, so far as the present Estimate is concerned, it is satisfactory to find that the fluctuation in the amount is a fluctuation in the right direction. All Parties in the Committee will feel satisfaction in voting money for what all must admit to be a good cause. There is a larger number of pupils on the books than in the previous year, an increase in the average daily attendance, and, what is most satisfactory of all, an increase in the general results achieved. The consequences of all this is directly favourable to the teachers themselves. It has re-acted upon them. They have been stimulated to make more zealous efforts for their own self-improvement, and to seek for a higher standard of classification and inspection. The opening of the denominational Training Colleges has also stirred them up to renewed efforts, and awakened in them a natural desire for promotion. The result of the examinations accounts for the increase in the expenditure, that result having been beyond the calculation which was made at the time the original Estimate was framed; and of this Supplementary Vote of £27,700, no less than £6,000 arises from an increase in the salaries of the teachers, £8,000 from the result fees classified as unconditional, and £7,000 from gifts; so that no less than £21,000 go in the direction of meeting some of the complaints which have been made in the course of the discussion. I can only promise that when the general Estimate is framed I shall be prepared with rather more mature views on this question than I am able to express at the present moment.

Mr. DEASY: Upon this question I only desire to say a few words. I accept the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that he will look into the whole matter between this and the framing of the general Estimates of the year; and I trust that the House will then be much better informed as to the intentions of the Government with regard to the wants of the National School teachers of Ireland than they are now. For myself, and speaking for other Members of the Irish Party, we might say a great deal about the treatment which the Irish National School teachers have received at the hands of successive Governments. During the past 10 or 12 years promises have fre-

quently been made that their position should be materially improved; but, like most promises emanating from the British Government, they have been invariably broken. I trust that a new order of things will now prevail; and that the right hon. Gentleman now at the head of the Irish Department will carry out the intentions he has expressed to-night, and be able to do something substantial for a very deserving, although hitherto a very unfortunate, class of the Irish people—the Irish teachers, to whose charge is committed almost the whole care of the future education of the Irish population. I am glad that in this matter I am able to agree with the aims of the Patriotic and Loyal Union of Ireland; and, having regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald), I can only regret that the hon. Member was not in Parliament when his Government were in power, and able to give valuable assistance to the Irish Members in this direction. If he had been, I have no doubt that he would have exerted himself to better the condition of the Irish National teachers. I am glad to find that no serious opposition is likely to be offered to any proposition that may be made for assisting the National School teachers. I have only one word more to offer, and it is on behalf of the teachers employed in the workhouses. These teachers have not been as well treated even as the ordinary teachers; and it is a great shame, I think, that they who are confined within the walls of the workhouses in Ireland, having the lowest class of children to instruct, should not receive more consideration than that which they at present obtain from the National Board. I strongly object to the way in which these teachers are treated; and one result of the system is that the instruction of the pauper children in these establishments is left entirely in the hands of young and incompetent teachers, as is now the case; because when a young workhouse teacher passes his examinations and becomes a first or second-class teacher he resigns his position and takes up a school outside. I consider that the duty of the workhouse school teachers is infinitely more arduous than that of the teachers of the ordinary National Schools. They have to deal with a totally different class of people;

Mr. Deasy

and if the condition of any teachers in Ireland calls for immediate improvement, I would venture to suggest that particular attention should be paid to the position of teachers in the workhouse schools. As regards the industrial training in the workhouses by the National School teachers, I think that is a question which must be left over for a later Vote; but it is one which ought not to be overlooked by the Chief Secretary in the course of any inquiries he proposes to make. I scarcely think that the employment of National School teachers to instruct children in this useful branch of education will commend itself to the Committee; nor do I think it is the proper mode of conducting such instruction. On the contrary, I think that the industrial training of children in the workhouses is a matter which ought to be dealt with by itself, and it is certainly one of the most important questions which can be brought before a Committee of this House. I will only add that I feel perfectly satisfied, after the speech we have heard from the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, that there will be a full and satisfactory provision laid before us when we come to discuss the matter more formally.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(4.) £3,000, Slave Trade Services.

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, in aid of Colonial Local Revenue, and to defray the Salaries and Allowances of Governors, &c., and other Charges connected with the Colonies, including Expenses incurred under ‘The Pacific Islanders Protection Act, 1875.’”

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask if this Vote has anything to do with the Canadian Volunteers for the Expedition against Riel?

MR. CREMER: I would also ask for information concerning this Vote. What have the Canadians done to entitle them to medals to be paid for by the taxpayers of this country?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): Part of the Vote is for the cost of medals to

Volunteers in Canada who served in the recent Expedition against Riel; it has nothing to do with the services of the Canadian Militia. The Canadian Volunteers performed a great public service; and, in the opinion of the Canadian Government and of the Home Government, it was a fit and proper recognition of their services that a medal should be granted to them by the Imperial Government.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Last year, when I put a Question in reference to the suppression of Riel's rebellion, and the causes from which the rebellion itself had sprung, all information was denied; but, nevertheless, this country is now called upon to pay for medals for the Canadian Volunteers. It is only a natural thing that men who behave well on the field of battle should be rewarded; but my complaint is that when I put a Question last year as to the rebellion of Riel, and asked for information in regard to the grievances of the Indians and Half-breeds in the North-West of Canada, I could get no information whatever. Unfortunately, it is too frequently the case that no information can be obtained with regard to Colonial questions. We are now asked, in this case, to pay for the cost of these medals; but why should not the Canadian Government pay for their own medals themselves? They entered upon the war for the benefit of their own country, and the least they can do is to pay the wages and rewards of their soldiers. The door ought either to be open or shut; and if it is right that this country should be called upon to provide the rewards intended to be given to the Canadian soldiers we ought to pay the wages of the soldiers as well. We should either do that, or have nothing to do with them at all. We did not care to send out soldiers to Canada to put down the rebellion there; and why should we give the men engaged in suppressing it silver pieces in the shape of medals, when we decline to give them silver pieces to put in their pockets? We have heard too much already of this rebellion, which arose out of a renewed attempt at insurrection on the part of this unfortunate man—Riel—who appears to have been a confirmed lunatic, and ought to have been confined in an asylum. Instead of taking that course the Canadian Government took him and hung him, and they hung a number of

other Indians at the same time, in a way that was not altogether creditable to the Canadian Volunteers. Under these circumstances, I shall certainly divide the Committee against this Vote. If we want to go to war with the Indians, or with anybody else, let us go to war in a just cause; but we ought not, in a case like this, to be called upon to pay anything either for medals or in the shape of soldiers' wages. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: By the whole sum?

MR. T. M. HEALY: Yes; by the entire sum charged in connection with the cost of these medals.

MR. CREMER: The answer which the Secretary to the Treasury gave just now to a question I addressed to the Committee was not quite understood in this quarter of the House. I asked distinctly whether the sum named in the Estimate was for the purpose of rewarding the Volunteers who suppressed the rebellion of the Half-breeds; but the reply of the hon. Gentleman, so far as it was understood, was unsatisfactory, and I shall certainly join with the hon. Member for South Londonderry (Mr. T. M. Healy) in opposing the Vote. I believe the feeling extensively prevails that those Half-breeds were goaded into rebellion by the injustice with which they were treated by the Canadian Government; and I cannot understand why, when a Government has driven its subjects into rebellion, the British taxpayer should be called upon to reward the soldiers engaged in suppressing the rebellion into which these unfortunate Canadian subjects were goaded. It seems to me that those of us who have the interests of the people at heart, and who represent the poorer class of the taxpayers, would be wanting in our duty unless we gave a distinct and sturdy opposition to this Vote.

MR. HOPPER: I certainly heard nothing from the hon. Gentleman who spoke from the Front Bench on the other side of the House to justify the Committee in voting this sum. After all, we must not lose sight of the policy which led to the Expedition against Riel. The whole matter was one which had reference to the internal policy of the Canadian Dominion, and it was a matter in which the Canadian troops were alone engaged. I, therefore, take

it that neither the Government of this country nor the taxpayers were consulted as to the merits of the policy pursued by the Canadian Government; and I take it that if we vote this sum now we shall most decidedly be giving the sanction of this House and of this country to the merits of a policy which was entered into by the Canadian Dominion after consultation with the Imperial Government. Under these circumstances, and not approving of the policy which led to the execution of Riel, I consider that Members sitting upon these Benches are perfectly entitled to divide the Committee against the Vote, more especially when it is manifest that the question of policy is the one which underlies the Vote.

MR. JOHNSTON: Hon. Members below the Gangway on this side of the House always show their sympathy with rebels against the British power and the Queen's authority in all parts of the world. [MR. T. M. HEALY: Civil war.] In this case a notorious rebel was trying his hand for a second time at insurrection, and to put down British power in Canada; but the loyal Volunteers of Canada, a large proportion of whom, I am happy to say, are Orangemen, always prepared to vindicate the honour of the British Government, volunteered to go to the North-West Provinces, and having gone there succeeded in putting down the rebellion against British authority. That being so, I think it would have been a very ungrateful act on the part of Her Majesty's Government, and of the House of Commons, if they were to fail to recognize the loyalty of the Volunteers of the Dominion of Canada, and were to refuse to make this small recognition of their services that is asked from the Committee in the Vote to-night. Hon. Members below the Gangway on this side of the House have made themselves familiar with these sort of matters in Ireland; and I cannot forget that cheers were given for the Mahdi whenever an attack was made upon the British troops in the Soudan. The Mahdi found no want of sympathizers in Ireland amongst those who would like to see the British Flag lowered and trampled in the dust. Hon. Members below the Gangway have sympathized on every occasion with the enemies of England and of the Crown of England. And the sentiments uttered to-night

below the Gangway only show that feeling which is ever ready to express itself whenever there is an opportunity of sympathizing with rebellion against British authority, and expressing a desire to bring dishonour upon the British Flag. I hope the Committee will not listen to the arguments which have been advanced to-night; but as I am quite sure that the loyal Volunteers of Canada are fully entitled to these medals I trust that nothing will be done in this House to deprive them of the reward they have so well merited.

MR. RYLANDS: I do hope that the Committee will not be led into a discussion which strikes me as going altogether beyond the purpose of this Vote. We are not here to sit in judgment upon the Canadian policy, or upon the acts of the Canadian Government. For my own part, I have a high opinion of the ability of the Canadian Government, and perfect confidence that in the steps which they took with regard to the rebellion they took steps which they considered to be necessary for the welfare of the Dominion. The point for the consideration of this Committee is altogether a different one. It is whether the Canadian Government, having its own Administration, and paying its own administrative expenses, should not also have authority to confer any reward it may deem necessary to mark its appreciation of the services rendered by its soldiers. As to loyalty, or want of loyalty, that has nothing to do with the question. I may not be of the same opinion altogether as hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the other side of the House; but I am quite sure that this is a kind of expenditure, out of British taxes, which will not be satisfactory to the people of this country. I do not wish to deprecate, for a moment, the policy of the Canadian Government, or the services rendered by the Canadian Volunteers. The accounts which I read in the newspapers certainly redounded to the honour and credit of the Volunteers; but I must say that I have not heard from my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury any reason sufficient to justify this Vote. I strongly suspect that my hon. Friend is only the mouthpiece of the late Government; and that if he would make a clean breast of it it would be found that this Imperial idea was sprung in the mind of some Member of the late Government,

Mr. Hooper

and that it was the late Government which proposed to give these medals, and not the occupants of the present Treasury Bench. I shall be very glad, indeed, if my hon. Friend will withdraw this Vote. Otherwise I shall feel bound, although with some reluctance I admit, to vote against it.

MR. LANE: I cannot find that there is any precedent for a Vote of this kind; and I strongly object to the establishment of a precedent which may be hereafter made use of to justify similar expenditure. I may add that, personally, I oppose the Vote on the same grounds as my hon. Friend the Member for Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy)—namely, that the Volunteers of Canada were engaged in suppressing a rebellion, with which we, as the Representatives of an oppressed people in Ireland, naturally sympathize. In addition to that fact, I am afraid that a precedent might be established for spending the taxes of the people of this country in rewarding with medals the Indian troops who have been lately engaged in the suppression of the Burmese and Egyptian "rebellions." I am, therefore, bound to oppose this Vote. I trust that the Committee will take no notice whatever of the arguments which have been put before it by the hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. W. Johnston), who, with the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), has lately been proving his loyalty to the Crown by preaching rebellion in Belfast. I trust that my hon. Friend the Member for Derry, Mr. T. M. Healy, will persist in dividing against the Vote, which, I think, ought to be rejected upon the simple ground that it would establish a very dangerous precedent for the future in regard to the manner in which the money of the taxpayers of the country at large is to be expended.

MR. SEXTON: The hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. W. Johnston) has altogether misrepresented the remarks which fell from my hon. Friend the Member for Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy). My hon. Friend did not speak upon the merits of the question at all; but he said he thought that the Government of Canada would have acted more wisely if, instead of executing Riel, they had confined him in a lunatic asylum. My hon. Friend said that Riel was a man of strong convictions and very excitable tempera-

ment; but he undoubtedly holds—and I hold—that certain incidents connected with that rebellion, and the punishment of it, did not redound to the general credit of the country. The statement of my hon. Friend was that the Canadian Government have not only their own Administration, but their own Treasury. They initiated and carried on the Expedition, and brought to a close the rebellion in the North-West. They paid the wages of their soldiers, and they ought also to have rewarded them. That is the simple position of matters, and not that which has been put forward by the hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. W. Johnston), who has entirely misrepresented the drift of the argument addressed to the Committee by my hon. Friend. The Government of Canada actually pay the salary of the Governor General whom we send out from this country; and I am at a loss to understand why the Mother Country should be asked to pay for such an expenditure as this. There is only one other point. I have always understood that the presentation of military medals was intended as a reward for distinguished bravery. I should like to know how many soldiers were engaged in suppressing this rebellion? I see that 5,250 medals have been issued, and I should like to know whether every soldier who took part in the suppression of the rebellion has been granted a medal for distinguished bravery?

MR. LABOUCHÈRE: I think that the Canadian Government ought to take an example from the United States in this matter, considering that Canada itself is in America. No medals of any kind were given by the United States to the soldiers who were engaged in putting down the Great Rebellion there. It was thought an undesirable thing that anyone should go about the country with a medal for having killed some of his fellow-countrymen. But if the Canadian Government choose to take a different view, let them pay for it themselves. Why should we do so? They have no right to expect that this country should pay for medals presented to their soldiers. I hope there will be a division upon the Vote, and that there will be a majority against this perfectly ridiculous and wicked charge.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I entirely endorse the opinion which has been expressed by the hon. Member for

Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). I really think that this is a very bad precedent to set. I understand that it has been already stated by an hon. Member that there is no precedent for awarding medals, under such circumstances, to soldiers not engaged in a war against the enemies of this country; and I think it is a serious matter for consideration whether it is proper that we should establish a precedent now. Certainly, when the hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. W. Johnston) stands up in the House of Commons and asks the Government to justify this grant on the plea that the Volunteers employed were Orangemen, I at once decline to accept such a recommendation, coming at such a moment, from the hon. Member. It is quite enough, however, for the Committee to know that there is no precedent for this Vote, and I think it is impossible for the House of Commons to go on voting away the money of the taxpayers as they have been doing within the last three or four days. We have been told that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury is not responsible for this Vote; but, as a matter of fact, he is responsible for it. It is all very well for hon. Members who sit on that Bench to offer opinions now which are intended to put themselves in accord with those which they were accustomed to express when they sat below the Gangway. The Committee has nothing to do with that. The hon. Gentleman brings forward this Estimate with the sanction of the Treasury; but, at the same time, I am perfectly sure that my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government cannot for a moment sanction a Vote of this kind for which it is perfectly clear there is no precedent whatever. In no other instance except where the services have been rendered by the soldiers of Her Majesty have we given medals to troops engaged in any other transaction, with yards of ribbon besides.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I think I am entitled to explain that the Supplementary Estimates which the Committee are now discussing are not Supplementary Estimates which have been prepared by the present Government, nor have they been signed by myself, as Financial Secretary, but by my Predecessor who

sits opposite. The present Government had no discretion in the matter, nor have they exercised any. When they came into Office they found that the money now asked for had been expended, and that the medals had been manufactured; and, consequently, they have not been in a position to exercise any discretion in regard to the purpose for which the grant is made.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have only an imperfect knowledge of the present case, because I was not Secretary of State for the Colonies when the medals were granted, and, as hon. Members are aware, it is not the duty, nor is it, of course, in the power of every Member of a Government to become aware of all the circumstances and all the facts which may be brought under the notice of the Government. But I have, however, some recollection of the circumstances of this case. This is a medal to reward soldiers acting under the orders of a General Officer in the Queen's Service. I believe the custom is that when a medal is given to one portion of the force, it is given to the whole force. I am under that impression; but I wish to speak with caution upon the matter, because I do not desire to create any false impression. I believe the operations undertaken in the North-West of Canada were undertaken by the Government of Canada, with the full knowledge of the Colonial Department of this country, but without any desire on the part of the Colonial Office to interfere with the full responsibility of a Constitutional Government like that of Canada. The military operations in question were not conducted during the Administration of the late Government, but in that of its Predecessor. It was represented, I believe by the Government of Canada, that a very great public advantage would be derived from a recognition on the part of Her Majesty of the bravery and endurance which the soldiers displayed in the discharge of their duty in the Dominion of Canada. It was also represented that no such recognition could be given by the Government of Canada itself, because it had no power to grant a Royal medal in recognition of those military operations. Considering all the circumstances of the case, having regard to the fact that the Colonial forces were forces of the Crown, although not paid by this country, and having regard also to the fact that this

Sir Robert Peel

country had received much aid and comfort from our Colonial forces in an enterprise which this country lately conducted on the Nile, the late Government deemed it advisable to accede to the request of the Canadian Government, and grant a medal to these men in recognition of the services they had rendered in an Expedition which terminated so successfully.

MR. INCE: I am quite willing, after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, to accept the word of the right hon. Gentleman that he knows very little about this matter. But I am bound to say that when the right hon. Gentleman said that the Dominion of Canada could not grant these medals, he carefully guarded himself against saying that the Dominion of Canada cannot pay for them. That is the question which the Committee have to consider. I was also surprised to hear from my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury that neither he, or the Government of which he is a distinguished Member, have anything to do with the Estimates which are brought forward, and which he recommends the Committee to adopt. I do not know why the hon. Gentleman moved them, unless he was prepared to recommend them. I can quite understand that there might be a difficulty if the medal has already been ordered and the money spent. I understand, however, that the medals are of standard silver, and there is one suggestion I would throw out for the consideration of the Committee. I imagine they are of the value put down in the Estimate, and I anticipate that that value could be obtained if the Committee, in its wisdom, did not choose to pay for the medals. I am quite willing to pay for the 1,320 yards of ribbon, because the ribbon could not possibly be disposed of at its original value, and also the £5 charged for waste of metal. If the Treasury is in a difficulty how to get over the liability of this country for £1,200, I would suggest that the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. T. M. Healy) should move to reduce the Vote by the sum of £1,155, which would allow the medals to be sold at their market value.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As there may be some difficulty in regard to the payment for the ribbon, I am quite willing to adopt the suggestion of my hon. and learned

Friend. I will, therefore, move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £1,155.

CAPTAIN VERNEY: I rise for the purpose of seconding the Amendment proposed by the hon. and learned Member for the reduction of this Vote. As one of the many Members of this House who have the honour of wearing Her Majesty's medals, I feel that I ought not to vote against the Motion of the Secretary to the Treasury without giving a reason. I entirely endorse what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary for War (Mr. W. H. Smith), that no medal can be granted, and no medal has any value, unless it comes from Her Majesty. No Colonial Government can grant a medal that would have any value in the eyes of either a soldier or sailor. It is because it is presented by Her Majesty, and for no other reason, that a piece of silver has a priceless value in the eyes of the man who receives it. But those who receive it receive it on the recommendation of the Government of the day; and I am distinctly of opinion that the Government of the day wrongly advised Her Majesty when they recommended that those who had been engaged in the suppression of what practically amounted to a civil war, and who were fighting against their fellow-countrymen, should receive this reward. Such a reward as the granting of a medal should be reserved only for those who fight against the enemies of their country.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £45, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1896, in aid of Colonial Local Revenue, and to defray the Salaries and Allowances of Governors, &c., and other Charge connected with the Colonies, including Expenses incurred under 'The Pacific Islanders Protection Act, 1875.'—(Mr. T. M. Healy.)

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I think there are other considerations involved which have not been put by any other Member. This is certainly a very formidable grant—a Vote of £1,200—and I have no doubt that it merits the careful consideration which the Committee has given to it. But I would ask hon. Members to consider whether the Canadians might not, with much justice and truth, put a serious misconstruction on the rejection of the Vote by the Com-

mittee to-night. If the Committee think that the late Government were wrong in granting the medals, they can censure them. But what is the position as it affects the Dominion? And what is the position in which we stand, not only with regard to Canada, but with regard to one of our Australian Colonies? We were carrying on military operations which sorely strained the military resources of this country. The Nile Expedition could hardly have been carried on with so much celerity if it had not been for the Canadian boatmen; and the Canadian Government afforded all possible facilities for giving the British Government the assistance of those boatmen. That was a favour shown to this country by the Canadian Government in a most honourable and dignified manner. I imagine that the fact must remain on their mind that they did render assistance to Her Majesty's Government in a time of need. But how is it proposed to reward them? They came to our assistance at a time when their services were really wanted and were really useful, and they did, in point of fact, render invaluable service in a matter in which we should hardly have got the work done without their aid. Soon after this invaluable service had been rendered to us, the Government of the Dominion was placed in a position of considerable difficulty by the outbreak of a rebellion, which was successfully put down by an Expedition of Volunteers organized and carried out by a remarkable development of the martial spirit in Canada. After the return of the Expedition the Government of the Dominion asked that a special mark of favour should be shown by the Crown to the Volunteers who took part in the Expedition. What would be thought in Canada if the House of Commons, after the Crown and the Government had come forward to grant a reward, declined to vote £1,200 now asked for for the medals for the soldiers? That is all I have to put before the Committee. The Committee may censure the late Government; but it would be most impolitic not to comply with the request of the Canadian Government, who have rendered us material assistance when the resources of this country were to some extent overtaxed. I cannot help making an appeal to the Prime Minister whether that is a position the Committee could occupy with

dignity or advantage, and whether it might not produce serious misunderstanding in Canada if the Vote now asked for were, by any possibility, to be refused by the Committee? I trust the Committee will not be disposed to go to a division without a word from the Prime Minister indicating his opinion on the expediency of refusing the Vote.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): I am very glad that explanation has been made, because it puts clearly before the Committee the position of the Government with regard to this Vote. The resignation of one Government and the appointment of another, when it occurs in the interval between the spending of a sum of money and the final sanction of the House to it, frequently leads to some difficulty, because it is one Government that comes to a decision to spend the money, and it is another whose formal and unquestionable duty it is to submit to the House the Estimate that has been prepared and signed. Nothing remains to them but to submit it to the House. A fair and candid statement has been made by the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War (Mr. W. H. Smith), who has given the reasons which influenced the late Government in the decision at which they arrived. Well, Sir, the present Government were not parties to that decision. I own that I feel great difficulty in making myself a party to it, *ex post facto*, by stating that I thought a sound discretion had been exercised. I have not the slightest idea that any improper motive can be imputed to the late Government in coming to this decision. But when I come to consider the vote I should give, I approach the question less as a Minister than as a Member of Parliament; and, looking at it as a Member of Parliament, I am certainly unable to adopt the whole statement just made by the noble Lord. But what the noble Lord stated is entitled to the consideration of the Committee. He has asked whether, if we were to reject the Vote, the Act would not be liable to be misconstrued in Canada? I do not doubt that the rejection of the Vote is within the competency of the Committee; but it is impossible for me to deny that it would be open to misconstruction in Canada; and, on the whole, I am not willing to incur the risk of that misconstruction. I

Lord Randolph Churchill

feel, with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), that the question of giving military decorations for military services in operations that were of the nature of civil war is a very nice question indeed, which admits of being argued against as well as for; and that reason, of itself, would have inclined me to leave the matter entirely in the hands of the Canadian Government. But I could not resist the force of the fact that what has been done has been done in perfect good faith, whether the judgment exercised has been sound or not. If the Committee were to intervene now and withhold its sanction, it is probable that such an act on the part of the Committee would be open to serious misconstruction in Canada; and it is by no means worth while incurring such a risk in a matter of this kind.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 66; Noes 209; Majority 143.—(Div. List, No. 10.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHA- ITABLE SERVICES.

6. £3,000, Superannuation and Retired Allowances.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: What has become of the Vote before this, for South Africa and St. Helena? Why is it that no notice has been taken of it?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): It will be taken on Monday instead of to-night, in order that the discussion upon it may not interfere with the Crofters' Bill.

MR. RYLANDS: Upon this Vote I wish to express my hope that the whole question with regard to pensions in the Public Service will receive strict attention at the hands of the Committee and Her Majesty's Government. The Committee will be aware that this sum of £3,000 is an addition to the total sum of £160,710 asked for in the original Estimate of 1885-6 for Superannuation and Retired Allowances in this Class; but, in addition to these figures, a very large sum is voted every year and charged upon the Consolidated Fund, amounting to several millions sterling; and I am quite certain that, unless some serious effort is made to check the con-

tinual increase of the charge for pensions, there will be great public dissatisfaction. I may, in fact, say that there is very great public dissatisfaction already. The other evening, hon. Members will recollect, I appealed to my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury Mr. H. H. Fowler on the Vote with regard to the new Office formed for the Secretary for Scotland. I suggested that it was extremely desirable that, in every case where it was possible, those gentlemen already on pension who are not past the age of efficient work should be drafted into the Public Service, with a view to effect a saving of pension. We are continually placing men on pension, with the view of re-organizing the Departments of the Public Service; but when these re-organizations in the Public Service have taken place, I have found that the economy which has resulted from it to the public is very difficult to see, although the cause of public economy has been invariably alleged as a reason for bringing forward the measure. Now, since I called attention to this subject, two nights ago, I have received letters in connection with it, and I know that there are at this present time many gentlemen who have been forced to accept pensions—men who are now in the prime of life, and who are anxious to get public employment, but have no chance of obtaining it. It has been suggested to me, and I have myself brought the subject under the notice of the Treasury, that it would be very desirable if a list of all those gentlemen who are placed on pension and who are still able to render public service should be kept; and that, if possible, such list should also indicate the names of those who will be willing to give their services to the State in fulfilment of public duty. It would be desirable also that all appointments, so far as possible, should be accompanied with this condition—that any gentleman entering the Public Service should place himself at the disposal of the Government, to this extent, at least, that if he is placed on pension he will be liable to be brought again into the Public Service for the discharge of such duties as, in the judgment of the Government, he may be able to perform. But now there is a continual difficulty with regard to the men put on pension, who decline to go back to the Public Service, because they

were only appointed for particular duties. But, leaving these gentlemen out of the question, it seems to me that it is extremely desirable that some system should be adopted by means of which some saving of expenditure in pensions might be made—that is to say, by the employment of suitable persons who may be retired under peculiar circumstances, but who are still able to serve the public. I am bound to say, however, that I believe the servants of the Crown are very much indisposed to facilitate any arrangement which would again bring into the Service gentlemen who may be retired on pension, because it is quite clear that when there is a vacancy in any Office there is a chance of promotion, which would be done away with, to a greater or less extent, if some outsider were admitted. The servants of the Crown, to a large extent, seem to think that the Public Service exists for their benefit, and they are always to be found supporting measures which tend to the increase of public charges; but I hope we are approaching the time when the public, through their Representatives in this House, will show these gentlemen that they are appointed by the public and exist for the Public Service, and that unless some change is brought about in this matter, there will not alone be great dissatisfaction, but, perhaps, an end of their interest altogether. If this enormous Pension List goes on increasing as it has done for many years past, looking at its enormous total, looking at the fact that Democracy is a greater power in this House than it was, and that it will probably be greater hereafter, I verily believe that there will be such stern measures taken by the public that individual interests may not be regarded in quite so favourable a manner as some gentlemen may desire. I think, therefore, in the interest of the Crown, that the attention of the Government and the assistance of the Government should be directed at once to this question, and I hope we shall be informed how far some impression can be made upon the Pension List with the view of reducing this very serious charge.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have not interrupted the hon. Member for Burnley in the course his remarks have taken in consequence of what I believe to be a very lax practice. I think the clear rule is that the discussion on a Supplemen-

tary Vote should be confined to the specific items contained therein, and that the general principle should not be entered upon except for the purpose of illustration.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I concur, Mr. Courtney, with your view that no general principle should be discussed on a Supplementary Estimate, and shall, of course, act upon it in dealing with the Vote before the Committee. I find, in the details of the Vote under A for Superannuation Allowances, a specific charge for £1,000 on account of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, in addition to the original Estimate. I wish to know what that charge is for—and I ask if there has been any re-arrangement in the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, owing to which some person in the prime of life has been retired; or has there been an unexpected breakdown of some important member of the High Court of Justice for whom it is necessary to provide a pension?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): Mr. Courtney, after the remarks you have just made I shall not transgress your ruling by entering upon the general subject raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands); but, perhaps, I may be allowed to say that I entirely sympathize with him, and will exercise any power I may possess to carry out the object in view. With regard to the Question asked by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), I have given particular attention to the Estimates for this matter. My hon. Friend will understand that they are not in the Estimates of the year, but that they consist of unexpected claims which have come before Parliament in a Supplementary Estimate. There has been no re-organization of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice. I may say that two of the oldest officers of the Court of Chancery have retired this year, which explains the charge of £1,000 for superannuation allowances. The two gentlemen referred to, I believe, have been known to me in the Public Service for more years than I care to remember. As I said, they have now retired after a life-long service under the ordinary Rules, and they are, therefore, entitled to pensions.

Vote agreed to.

Mr. Rylands

7. £612, Pauper Lunatics, Scotland.

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(8.) £2,700, Registration of Voters, England.

SIR JOHN GORST: Mr. Courtney, I wish to ask a Question with regard to this Vote, and, in doing so, I shall proceed strictly in accordance with your ruling. I will remind the Committee that last year the sum of £40,000 was granted by Parliament in aid of the expenses of registration in counties. Of that sum £20,000 was appropriated to the extra remuneration of Clerks of the Peace and other county expenses, and the remaining £20,000 was for the extra remuneration of overseers. I am informed that the Returns were made by the counties to the Local Government Board, and that they were to receive this sum from the Imperial Government before Christmas last; but, notwithstanding that, I am informed that no sums have been received by the counties with respect to this grant. I ask the reason for this—whether it was owing to this Supplementary Vote of £2,700 being required that the delay has taken place; whether the sum asked for is for the purposes I have described; and whether the Government can name any period of time within which the counties were entitled to the payment of the expenses under the Vote of last year, and when payment will be made?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. JAMES COLLINGS): In answer to the inquiry of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, I may say that I anticipate that the payment in respect of the expenses of Clerks of the Peace and overseers, in connection with the registration of voters, will be made immediately. The accounts are made up, and I see no reason why the money should not be paid to the counties almost at once.

MR. CONYBEARE: A few days ago I took the opportunity of addressing a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister on the subject of the amendment of the law in relation to the registration of voters. I regretted that no hope was held out by the right hon. Gentleman at the time of the matter being taken up by Her Majesty's Government during this year; and, although there are two private Members' Bills upon the subject, I fear it is very

doubtful whether in the course of the Session they will be able to get passed any amendment of the Law of Registration. The principal reason assigned for not taking up this question in a Government measure this year was that Parliament had met under unusual circumstances, and that it would be better to wait until we are near the close of Parliament than to attempt legislation on the subject while Parliament is young. But it seems to me not impossible that this Parliament may come to an end before the present year expires; and it is on that account that I venture to renew my protest against the law as it exists for the registration of voters, and to express the hope that in the interest of the people of the country the Government will deal with the question. Every election that takes place shows how unfair to the majority of the working classes is the action of the present law. With the permission of the Committee I will state what occurred with regard to my own election. I acted not only as my own election agent, but looked after the business relating to the list in the Revision Court as well. I found in the case of one particular parish the names of certain voters, working men, which were struck off the list from no fault of their own, but simply because of the default or negligence of the overseers with regard to the initials representing their Christian names, and it was with great difficulty that I persuaded the Revising Barrister in their case not to strike off the names of the individuals. It seems to me a grievance of which the working classes have to complain, that when they see their names on the Registers they should afterwards be deprived of their right to vote, as I have said, through no default on their part, but through the negligence or ignorance of those with whom the duty rests of making out the lists. I do not complain specially of the lists of last year, because it is a matter of notoriety that owing to the great amount of work thrown upon the authorities in connection with the Reform Act, it was impossible to avoid a good many mistakes; nor do I want to charge the overseers with any *mala fides*; but I say that when this Vote is asked to supplement the Vote originally granted for the registration of voters, it is desirable to see that the work is properly done. Then, in

another case which came under my notice, the overseers did not comply with the law; and I make a very strong representation on this ground. I think it is most desirable that the overseers should discharge their duty in all respects according to law. The law requires that overseers should publish the lists of voters in a particular manner—namely, by affixing them to the outside wall or door of every church or chapel in each parish. This was not done on the occasion referred to; and although I complained to the Revising Barrister, he refused to entertain my complaint, and made some excuse. I draw attention to this because, where lists are hung up inside churches or chapels, it is almost impossible for those concerned to ascertain whether they are on the list or not. For the reasons I have given I think these are matters which Her Majesty's Government ought to take notice of, with a view to remedy the evil complained of as soon as possible. There are other matters in connection with the Registration Law about which I shall have to speak at another time, but which are not germane to this particular Vote. As we are here asked to vote large sums of money for the purpose of carrying out the work of the Registration Act, I think it is only right to call attention to the facts I have described. In conclusion, I think that the subject ought to be dealt with in the time at the disposal of the present Government, and at the earliest opportunity, because I certainly feel with regard to political matters of the present day that it is impossible to say whether or not we shall have another General Election before the end of the year.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON: I also have to complain of the way in which the overseers, in my own experience, performed their duties of registration. In the division which I represent (Banbury) there were whole parishes in which the voters were incorrectly described; and hon. Members can imagine the expense this would throw upon the candidates, while the voters themselves might be deprived of the privilege to which they were entitled. I remember the difficulty we had in rectifying these blunders. In some cases it was impossible to do so, the Revising Barristers saying they had no power to make the necessary rectifications. I hope the

Government will not wait till they can bring in a Bill to deal with the whole subject, but that they will introduce a short Bill in which two things ought to be provided for—one is, that Revising Barristers may have power, where the name of a person duly qualified to vote appears on the Register, to insert the proper qualification; the other is, that if negligence on the part of the overseer is proved, power should be given to the Revising Barrister to mulct the overseer in costs. If these provisions were made in a Bill of a few lines, I think we might rest contented for the present; and I shall be glad to hear from the Treasury Bench whether any steps will be taken in the direction indicated. Although, perhaps, it is not so germane to the Vote before us as the question of Registration, I would ask my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Jesse Collings), if he can state the total number of twopences paid to the overseers and Clerks of the Peace, which would indicate the total number of voters on the Register?

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM: I can support the statements of hon. Gentlemen who have just spoken on the subject of registration. From my own knowledge, I am in a position to state that thousands of the poorer class of voters lost their qualification at the last Election by the blundering of the overseers. I am of opinion that no part of our system is worse performed than the part performed by the overseers. I believe, moreover, that in many cases they have acted in the most partizan spirit, a circumstance which in itself ought to bring their conduct under severe censure. I entirely concur with the wish of the hon. Baronet the Member for Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) that there were some means by which a severe penalty could be inflicted in the case of overseers who have acted improperly.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am glad to hear the opinions expressed by hon. Members on the other side of the House on this question of the registration of voters. There is, in my opinion, nothing more absolutely necessary for the free choice of Members of this House than the purification of the present method of placing the names of voters on the lists. The Prime Minister himself, when speaking at Mid Lothian, placed this at

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the very core of the subject. I am convinced that, unless some fine or mulct is placed on overseers, it is absolutely hopeless to expect a correct and impartial discharge of their duties; and, with regard to Ireland, I shall be prepared to show not only that proper persons were not in the lists, but that improper persons, who had no political existence at all, were placed on the roll of voters. There is no doubt that if a Select Committee were granted to inquire into this matter, it would be shown that there were scores of cases of the grossest misconduct on the part of overseers; and now that a Liberal Government is in Office, I trust that some steps will be taken to procure a purification of the lists. It is not enough that a grant should be made in aid of the cost of registration; the matter should be taken out of the hands of local partizans; and I trust that the Government will see the enormous importance, as affecting every Member of the House, of performing the duty. In Ireland we are simply disgusted with the way in which this business is carried on; and I beg to assure hon. Members opposite that any steps which they may take to insure purification of the lists will have our cordial support.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I do not regret the discussion which has taken place on this Vote, although it has occupied a considerable amount of time. I can assure hon. Members on this side of the House, and the hon. and learned Member for Derry (Mr. T. M. HEALY), that, in my opinion, this question of registration has become a crying evil, and that, as hon. Members have agreed, it is desirable that the whole Law of Registration, and, what is more important, its administration, should be reformed. Hon. Members will remember that the question was carefully considered when we were engaged with the Reform Bill; but that it was absolutely impossible to deal with it then, and we allowed the existing machinery to stand as it was in view of the dissolution of Parliament and the General Election. But I think that the present Government is pledged to an alteration of the law, and I have no doubt that the suggestions made to-night, and those that may be made hereafter, will be taken into their consideration. I believe

that a Select Committee has sat to consider the question of reforming the Registration Laws. I think that probably the best way to deal with the matter will be to get rid of the overseers altogether; but, of course, I cannot pledge myself or the Government to any specific mode of procedure, although I can assure hon. Gentlemen that it is a matter with which, when they have the opportunity, the Government intends to deal.

MR. MACFARLANE: This is a question which relates not to England and Wales only, but to the whole Kingdom. I wish, therefore, to make a few remarks upon the question with regard to Scotland.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will not be in Order in referring to Scotland, the Vote before the Committee having reference only to England and Wales.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS): In reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Banbury) (Sir Bernhard Samuelson), I have to state that there was an allowance of 4*d.* for each name placed upon the list—that is to say, 2*d.* for each name to the overseers and 2*d.* to the Clerks of the Peace. The number of voters in England and Wales was 2,546,640, which, at 4*d.* per head, gives the sum of £42,444. The increase in the number of county voters for England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland was 1,729,300; and if we add to this the increase for the extension of the borough and service franchise, taking into account the increase of population from 1881 to the time when the Act came into force, it is assumed that it will give a total increase of 2,000,000 of voters.

Vote agreed to.

9. £2,000, Registration of Voters, Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: After the remarks which fell from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler), I do not think it necessary to enter upon a long discussion of this Vote. I shall, therefore, say but a very few words upon it. I think it absolutely necessary that there should be some protection to voters in reference to this matter of registration. In Ireland, the Sheriff or the Clerk of the

Peace gives out the printing of the voters' lists to the Conservative newspaper, and the Conservative newspaper, when once the lists are signed by the Revising Barrister, as we know, may put in any names it pleases. We do charge that after the voters' lists in Ulster had passed from the hands of the Revising Barrister, and were signed by him and handed over to be printed, the lists were stuffed, and that dozens and scores of persons appeared who were never on it at all, while persons who were struck off the lists appeared afterwards as genuine voters. The serious effect of this will be that there will exist in the public mind a sense of uneasiness and distrust; and even supposing that our charges are not substantial, there will still remain the belief that, under the present system, such things are possible. I say it is essential that we should have a fair Court, fair law, and honest people to carry it out. The whole machinery should be above suspicion, and then if a mistake were made everyone would believe it was a mistake; whereas, in the present circumstances, if a mistake is made the assumption is to the contrary; and there is in the North of Ireland a feeling that not only the boundaries, but the voters' lists, have been jerrymandered.

MR. MACARTNEY: I should not trouble the Committee were it not that the hon. and learned Member for Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy) has, as usual, taken the course of making very serious charges against Members from the North of Ireland. He makes the assertion, although he did not name any instance, that the printing of the lists of voters was given only to the Conservative newspapers. There are not many newspapers in the North of Ireland representing the opinions of hon. Members below the Gangway; but I quite admit that, where there are newspapers representing those opinions, they are entitled to a share of the printing. But the hon. and learned Member has also stated that there exists a general and strong impression amongst the public in the North of Ireland that the registration of voters there has been tampered with. Now, I totally dissent from that view. There was, of course, very heavy work during the last registration, and I believe that all the officials connected with it discharged their duties with unusual labour and efficiency. A

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large amount of work was done in one Revising Court; and I believe, with regard to the lists, that a very great deal of trouble was given to the Revising Barrister and the officers connected with the registration by the fraudulent claims made by the Nationalist Party. One person, a blacksmith in a small village, was claimed for four times in the list, and 26 names were struck out without any attempt of the National Party to defend them. I certainly protest before the Committee against the continual repetition of these grave charges, which are made, without any specific case being given, against officials in the North of Ireland or in Ireland generally.

MR. DILLON: The hon. Member for Antrim (Mr. Macartney) has conveyed the impression that the state of things in the North of Ireland with regard to the registration of voters as described by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Derry does not exist. But the hon. Member forgets that his knowledge is confined to that Party who have power to appoint the officials in question, which, allow me to remind the Committee, is exercised with a degree of bigotry and exclusiveness which cannot be surpassed in any country in the world. Of course, amongst his Friends no such things as we allege are possible, and, of course, when an error is made it cannot be committed in favour of them, but against them. I think, with the exception of one Province, the officials are bitter partizans and agents of the Conservative Party. We object that these men are notorious partizans, and we say that they should have no control over these lists. The hon. Member says that no such impression exists in the North of Ireland as that the lists have been tampered with. I venture to suggest that the contrary is the case. I myself fought a close contest, and numbers of respectable people came to me afterwards and absolutely swore that such action had gone on—

MR. MACARTNEY: I said "general impression."

MR. DILLON: It is, of course, very natural that the hon. Member (Mr. Macartney) and his Friends are satisfied with the present state of things, and that we are not. That is the whole point of the matter. We contend that whenever an error is committed it is in-

variably in favour of the hon. Gentleman's Party; and we are prepared to bring evidence in support of our case before a Committee of this House. I know men who are prepared to swear as to the irregularities which have occurred as to minors having been put on the Register, &c. Now, these are the facts which destroy public confidence in the list. An hon. Member asked me the other day how a minor can vote in a matter of this kind; but I pointed out to him that the Presiding Officer had no power whatever of dealing with the matter so long as the name appeared on the Register. I have only to say, in conclusion, because the case has been very well put by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy), that I desire to earnestly press upon the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) that the Government ought not to postpone action in this matter to prevent a recurrence of such malpractices. In a very short time there may be another General Election; and, therefore, at the very next registration the lists of voters ought to be purified.

MR. CLANCY: The hon. Member for Antrim (Mr. Macartney) has accounted for the partizanship shown in the distribution of the printing, by stating that Nationalist newspapers in Ulster are few in number. I do not know if that is so; but all I can say is, that the practice of giving the printing of the lists to the Tory newspapers is quite general throughout Ireland. No matter which Province it is, the practice is that wherever the responsible officer is a Conservative, the Tories get the printing of the lists. The hon. Member has charged that the Nationalist Party filled the voters' lists with double claims. The hon. Member simply shows his ignorance by making such a complaint. The practice is a necessary one and is indulged in by both parties when they know their business. I can state a fact for the information of hon. Members in regard to the way in which the lists are made up in Ireland. In the Rathmines Division of the county of Dublin, out of 500 claims put in by the friends of the hon. Member for Antrim (Mr. Macartney) not 50 were sustained. In some cases, triple and even quadruple cases were made in respect of the same person. With reference to another observation which fell

from the hon. Member, I should like to say this—that my experience of the county of Dublin registration work teaches me that as gross irregularities are to be found there, within sight of Dublin Castle, as could be found in the furthest corner of Connaught. The Committee will remember that last year Dublin County was divided into two divisions specially to secure a seat for a Tory in a constituency which, taken as a whole, was overwhelmingly Nationalist. This attempt to safeguard the Empire was supplemented by the notion of those who actually drew the dividing line, for it was curious to notice that voters who were believed to be Nationalist were in all doubtful cases placed on the lists for North Dublin, which was strongly Nationalist, while the contrary rule was always adopted in the case of supposed Conservatives. I know of one case in which the owner of a villa residence, who is a Nationalist, and the gate-lodge keeper, who is also a Nationalist, were put in North Dublin; while the occupier of the villa, who is a Tory, was put in South Dublin. Those who are so anxious to maintain the integrity of the Empire were guilty of the most disgraceful partizanship in making up these lists; and if the hon. Gentleman the Member for Antrim will move for an inquiry into these matters, I will undertake to give him a score of instances even more scandalous than those I have mentioned.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I think, Sir, that there can be little doubt, after what my hon. Friend has said, that whatever may be the other qualities of the hon. Member for Antrim (Mr. Macartney) he must know very little indeed of the subject of the registration of voters. He complains that the Nationalists in the constituencies with which he is acquainted claimed three times. Well, the hon. Member in this matter has found a mare's nest. It is absolutely necessary, in order to properly work the business of registration, that these duplicate claims should be made, and they are not exclusively confined to any one political Party. The fact is, that the law regulating the registration of voters is so complex and so confused that it was practically impossible for the person working it to know under what particular qualification he should make a claim. In some cases it is quite im-

possible to know whether the claim should be made as a rated occupier, or an owner, or as a lodger; and therefore it is necessary to lodge all the claims, so that on one of them at least the claimant shall succeed. The last revision was the first time that special Acts of Parliament were applied in the counties of Ireland; and, having regard to that fact, it was quite important for everybody to be prepared for the way in which those Acts, as Revision Law, would be decided by the Courts. In one instance no less than 500 votes were lost in consequence of a particular decision. There is one other matter to which I should like to call the attention of the Committee—I mean the duplication of names, not on the voters' list, but on the Register itself. A considerable discussion has been raised as to the large number of abstentions from the poll in Ireland. Well, I can say that it was due, to a great extent, to the duplication of names on the Register. My attention was called to one case in which the name of one individual occurred on the Register no less than 60 times, and no less than five times on one page, the names being in close proximity to each other. I am aware that this was the case in a large number of constituencies in which no proper revision took place, in consequence of one Party being in such overwhelming force that there was no opposition made before the Revising Barrister. I certainly join in the appeal of the hon. and learned Member for South Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy) that the Government should take this matter into their consideration, and, when the proper time comes, they will, no doubt, receive suggestions from all parts of the House as to the way in which it should be dealt with. I do not mean to challenge this Vote; but I respectfully assert that there are two points on which the law ought to be amended.

Vote agreed to.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

(10.) £12,000, Inland Revenue.

MR. JACKSON: I do not rise to oppose this Vote, because the amount of it is already due to those who act as collectors and so on; but I desire to call the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) to what I think is the cause of a very large increase in this Vote, and the possibility of effecting a very

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considerable economy. It will be in the recollection of the Committee that these Supplementary Estimates arise from the poundage having been increased, not by reason of any additional labour having been thrown upon the collectors, but by the increase of the Income Tax from 6*d.* to 8*d.* in the pound; and it will be seen that although the Supplementary Estimate asked for is only £12,000, the actual additional poundage is not less than £26,000. Some time ago the question was raised as to whether an alteration should be attempted in the system, and whether the whole collection of the tax should be placed in the hands of the Inland Revenue. That was rejected by the House. I am not at present going to discuss whether that decision of the House was a wise one or not. It was the decision at which the House arrived, and it does not affect the point which I desire to bring before the Committee. It is at present collected partly by the Inland Revenue and partly by local collectors; and although the collection by the Inland Revenue shows a tendency to increase, the payment, as I say, varies not with the amount of the paper which is necessary for the collection of the tax, but it varies by reason of the increase or decrease—the rate of the tax itself. I merely call the attention of the Committee to the figures in order to show that it is desirable that some alteration should be made in the system. The poundage was settled by the House in 1880, and will be found in the Taxes Amendment Act (1st Schedule), 1880. In 1879-80—the Schedule which was then F is now E—the actual amount of poundage paid was £178,948; in 1880-1 it was £165,709; in 1881-2 it was £166,865; while in 1882-3 it was £214,570; the increase on that year over the previous year being £47,705, and was, I believe, mainly due to the increase in the tax from 5*d.* to 6½*d.* in the pound. The Expenditure for the year 1884-5 I have not, nor for the year 1885-6; but the Estimate for 1885-6 was £238,750, to which an additional £12,000 is now added, making together £250,750. The net result, therefore, is this—that the estimated Expenditure for the current year is £77,900 more than the Estimate for the preceding year. I ought to say, however, that of that sum about £34,000 of the increase is owing to the charge for the triennial valuation

of property outside the Metropolitan area. It is, however, £80,000 more than the sum paid in 1880, and it is £70,000 more than the amount of 1884; and I believe that the increase in the present year is due, in a great measure, to the increase of the tax from 6d. to 8d. I think it seems unlikely that the Income Tax, for some time to come, will be much reduced; and that, therefore, the time has arrived when the amount of poundage, as settled in 1880, might, with very great propriety, be revised, and a very large and material economy effected.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): This is a question which is of very great importance; and the Committee is very much indebted to the hon. Member for Leeds

Mr. Jackson) for having brought it before them. In 1883 my right hon. Friend the present Home Secretary Mr. Childers brought the question before the House, and showed how £30,000 a-year could be saved if the Income Tax was collected by the officers of the Inland Revenue, who are paid by salaries and not by poundage; but the Government was beaten, and we have gone on paying £30,000 a-year more than we ought to have done. The House preferred the interest of the tax collectors to that of the taxpayers. The statutory poundage is always 1½d. in the pound, whatever the rate may be, and it is payable at the time of collection. But, in addition to that, every year very large allowances are made, called extra poundage, which varies at the same ratio as the Income Tax itself—the extra poundage being reduced as the rate of the tax rises. For instance, the extra poundage for next year will be very largely reduced. For my own part, I believe that the Income Tax ought to be collected by the officers of the Inland Revenue, who are paid by salary; and I shall be only too glad if hon. Members on the other side of the House will co-operate with me, and give a reasonable chance of altering the law in this direction.

Vote agreed to.

(11.) £45,000, Post Office.

Mr. BARRY: In connection with this Vote I wish to call attention to the low rate of wages paid to rural postmen in Ireland. Strong representations have been made to me in regard to this

matter; and a great many cases of extreme hardship have reached me. The rate of wages to rural postmen in England and Scotland is very low indeed; but in Ireland it does not amount to one-half of what it is in England and Scotland. Since the introduction of the Parcel Post, moreover, the duties and the hardships of their position have greatly increased. But there is another point which I am also desirous of bringing forward. Irish people in England and Scotland are in the habit of sending over postal notes to their friends in the rural districts of Ireland; and it is not fair to allow men who are paid at starvation rates to be placed in such positions of temptation. In the last Parliament I drew attention to this question, and received assurances that something would be done to improve this state of things; but up to the present nothing has been done in the matter. I would urge on the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, who has charge of the Post Office Business in this House, that he should give this matter his attention, and see if something cannot be done to improve the position of this large body of public servants.

Mr. CONYBEARE: I think it my duty to add one word on behalf of the rural postmen of Cornwall, after what the hon. Gentleman opposite has said. I had intended to raise this question on this Vote; but I am glad it has struck others, as well as myself, as being important; and I am glad that the hon. Gentleman has referred to it. I wish, in addition to what the hon. Gentleman has said, to call attention to this important consideration, that rural postmen are almost the only class of public servants who have to do Sunday work, and who are paid at so low a rate as they habitually, and as a recognized fact, are paid. The Government, I think, should not fail to give the subject their best consideration. The hon. Member has said it rather strains the honesty of men in the humble position which many of these postmen occupy, to compel them to take charge of valuable securities in the shape of Post Office orders and so forth, without giving them a greater wage than they at present receive. I am happy to be able to bear testimony to the excessive honesty of rural postmen. I think it does great

credit to them that, under present circumstances, they accomplish their duty with such efficiency—with that efficiency which is almost invariably their characteristic. And that is all the more reason why we should urge this point, and why we should press on the Government that the rural postmen should have more consideration at the hands of the Department. They should have higher wages, not only in consideration of the larger duties they have to perform in connection with the Parcel Post, but in consideration of the large amount of Sunday work they have to do. I do not want to argue against a postal delivery on Sunday, although I am sure a great many people think it would be well if there were no Sunday delivery at all; but I do think this Sunday work should be borne in mind when we are considering the general question of the rate of wages paid to the rural postmen out of these Votes. I speak with some experience on this subject, because, just as in the case of Ireland, so in the case of my Cornish constituency, large sums of money are constantly being received through the Post Office by Cornishmen and their families—money transmitted to them by relatives and others in foreign countries. I would mention, further, a particular case which has come before my notice, and which I have had to bring to the attention of the Post Office in London. It appears that persons are allowed to continue acting as postmasters and postmistresses up to an age which completely disqualifies them for the proper performance of the duties which are incumbent upon them. The instance I refer to is the postmistress at Tuckingmill, a place close to Camborne, which is the principal town in the district I have the honour to represent—the town which gives its name to the Division. It is felt by the inhabitants of Tuckingmill, which is a large village, almost deserving the name of a town, that they should have extra advantages and conveniences in the way of a Money Order Office and a Telegraph Office established in the place. Well, one of the reasons given me by the Post Office Authorities for not carrying out the wishes of the population of that neighbourhood is, that the present postmistress is 85 years of age, and is quite incompetent to perform new duties, and that it would not be right to turn

her away, and appoint some younger person in her place. I do not want to turn her out; but I would ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, when a person has reached the age of 85 in the Postal Service, it is not time to consider whether he or she should not have a retiring pension, or, at least, an assistant, to help to do the work? At any rate, I feel it my duty to protest against the convenience of a large manufacturing district being overlooked and set at nought, in the interest of one individual, through economical considerations. The appointment of an assistant, or the giving of a pension to a person 85 years old, would be a mere bagatelle.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): In regard to the case the hon. Member who has just sat down has referred to, if he makes a representation to the proper Authorities, it will, no doubt, receive attention, and an answer will be given to him. For myself, I am neither conversant with the facts of the case nor the explanations.

MR. CONYBEARE: I have brought the case before the Post Office Authorities, and have been commenting on the answer I received.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): With regard to the reference made by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Barry) to the pay of rural postmen, a Question was addressed to me upon it the other day, and I returned an answer at the time. Any further representations that may be made will be duly considered, and any further Questions that may be asked I will reply to. In dealing with this matter, I wish to speak to English and Scotch as well as Irish Members. I would point out to them that there is one principle Mr. Fawcett used to enunciate on the Post Office Votes—namely, that applications for an increase of cost in the working of the Post Office are really applications for an increase to the taxation of the country; and while, on the one hand, no one is more opposed than I am to any attempt on the part of the Government to undersell the public labour market, on the other hand, I am of opinion that we are not entitled with public money to oversell the labour market. It would be most unfair to take advantage of the position of the Government to buy labour at a

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less price than the persons employed would receive elsewhere for the same service. But, at the same time, we are not entitled, as trustees of public money, from motives of generosity or liberality, to pay higher prices for an article than private purchasers will give. I do not dispute that there may be a great deal in what has fallen from the hon. Gentleman on this side of the House (Mr. Conybeare), and that it may deserve investigation, and ought to receive it. We may be underpaying the postmen and giving them less than what is right; but may I, without presumption, ask those hon. Members on this side, fresh from the hustings, who have pledged themselves to economy in the Public Service—to which pledge I am sure they will wish to adhere—to remember that all these applications for grants for increased wages, annuities, and so on, out of the public funds, means increased national expenditure, and increased expenditure means increased taxation. With reference to this Vote, I congratulate the Committee on the fact that, although this is a Supplementary Estimate, we are in a position to ask for it, because this £45,000 represents a large increase—almost unexpected—in the Post Office Business during the year. The Post Office Revenue is now decidedly improving, and the growth is greater than was expected by the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, or the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he looked at the finances in the course of the summer. In asking for this Vote, I am not asking for it to make up for decrease of Post Office Revenue; I am asking for it to pay for services that have been rendered, and in respect of which the State will receive a proper return. If hon. Gentlemen will favour me with the details of their complaints, I will take care that a proper reply is furnished them.

MR. BOYD-KINNEAR: I wish to add my voice, on behalf of the rural postmen of Scotland, to the claims which have been made on behalf of similar Post Office servants in Ireland and England. In regard to any increase in wages that may be granted, I think the postmen of the country districts of Scotland have fully an equal claim to those of England and Ireland, because they have to do their work under greater difficulties and disadvantages. The

climate in these Northern parts is scarcely so good as in other portions of the United Kingdom, and the country is a good deal more difficult to travel over. These country postmen have a good deal of work to do, and have to do it in all weathers, and that, I think, is a point which the Committee should not fail to consider. With regard to the remarks which have fallen from the Secretary to the Treasury as to the duty incumbent on the Government and the House of not paying more than the market rate of wages, I would venture to suggest that there should be some qualification to that. We are asking from postmen special service, not that of ordinary labour, though, no doubt, it is as hard. It is service as trying to the constitution as that of the ordinary labourer; but, in addition, it is service performed under circumstances of considerable temptation, and, therefore, I think we are bound to recognize that they deserve higher remuneration than that at which the cheapest labour can be hired in country districts. I would say, further, that it is not right on the part of this great and wealthy country to cut down the wages paid for its manual services—its lower class of labour—to the minimum amount for which they can be obtained. An hon. Gentleman recently gave Notice of a Motion which I very much regret was allowed to fall through—a Motion for a Committee to inquire whether the services of the country could not be benefited by an increase in the payments made to nearly all classes of public servants, the money to effect the increase to be obtained not by an increase in the taxation of the whole country, but by diminishing the salaries paid to the higher officials in the Public Service. I regret that he did not insist on that Motion, but yielded to an illusory suggestion that the question should be merged in one for appointing a Committee to deal with the Estimates for the service of each year. I only allude to it now in order to say that it seems to me incumbent on the Government and this House to increase the salaries of the servants it employs in lower capacities, and to exercise principles of strict economy and justice in dealing with the salaries paid to the higher servants in the Public Offices.

MR. DEASY: I desire to say a few words in support of the arguments of

the hon. Gentleman who spoke from this side of the House (Mr. Barry). I do not think the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury dealt with the case presented by my hon. Friend. I know it is usual for Members of the Government, under circumstances of this character, to say that particular instances of hardship should be furnished. It would be absolutely impossible for any hon. Gentleman to be able to ascertain with any degree of accuracy the many cases in which the postmen in rural districts are badly paid and the many instances in which their position deserves attention. My opinion is that the Government ought to deal with the matter in a broad and public-spirited manner as far as Ireland is concerned. In rural districts in Ireland, where the Post Offices are wide apart, it is no unusual thing for a man to have to walk 12 or 13 miles from one place to another and back again in a day, and that for the miserable stipend of 8s. or 10s. a-week. As to what the hon. Gentleman has said with regard to the pledges of economy given by hon. Members at the hustings, I would point out that cases of this kind could not have been included in those declarations, for the question here is simply one of fair play. Economy is all very well in its way; but it is not right to treat these unfortunate men in the manner in which they have been treated. There are cases where the roads are particularly bad, where the postmen have to travel long distances through districts where the weather is inclement for at least half the year. I put it to any hon. Member, is it right to require these men to walk many miles every day over mountain roads for, perhaps, 10s. a-week, when English and Scotch postmen are paid more for travelling much smaller distances?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I stated the other night, in reply to a Question put to me by an Irish Member, that the wages of rural postmen in Ireland are 16s. a-week.

MR. DEASY: In England it is 25s.

HON. MEMBERS: No, no!

MR. DEASY: The maximum in Ireland, I take it, is 16s.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): Not the maximum.

Mr. Deasy

MR. DEASY: Well, it is 16s., whilst in England it is 25s. At any rate, there can be no doubt about the circumstances to which my hon. Friend (Mr. Barry) has referred. I could, if I had time to do so, give numerous instances where rural postmen get considerably less than 16s. per week, and to earn it have to walk enormous distances every day over particularly bad roads. I have only one suggestion to make with regard to the Parcel Post. There can be no question that a great deal of extra labour has been thrown upon these men by the introduction of this system by the Post Office. Seeing that the custom of sending large quantities of goods by Parcel Post is growing, I would suggest that in many of the country districts, where large distances have to be gone over by these postmen, the Government should entertain the idea of employing horses and cars for travelling purposes. There is no reason why men should be required to walk 24 miles a-day, when you can keep a car for about 22s. a-week. It seems to me only reasonable that the Post Office Authorities should consider this question. Horses should be used instead of the present mode of conveying the Parcel Post and the ordinary letters. I should also like to ask the Government how it is that in Ireland individuals are allowed to waylay postmen and take letters from them in the road, and why, when these individuals have been brought before the magistrates, the cases have been withdrawn against them? In the district in which I live a case of that kind has happened. A man, who is an official of the Grand Jury, a land agent, and I know not how many other things, waylaid a postman, forcibly opened the post-bag, and abstracted whatever letters he wanted. The Solicitor to the Post Office was sent down from Dublin to prosecute this person; but, strangely enough, when the case came before the magistrates the prosecution withdrew the charge. So that, instead of having to undergo an imprisonment of two years, as a member of the National League would have had to do for a similar offence, the guilty person, who belonged to the Loyal and Patriotic Brotherhood, is walking about the county of Cork at this moment just as free as he was before he committed the outrage. I hope that under the present Government the

law will be meted out fairly and with an even hand, and that members of the Orange Society will not escape scot free in this way when members of the National League Association, for similar conduct, would be punished with the utmost rigour of the law. I shall put a Question in reference to this matter in the course of a few days; and I am sure the hon. Gentleman will give it his best attention.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA: I will give the hon. Member the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) an instance of the low rate at which some of the Irish rural postmen are paid. There is a postman in my own neighbourhood who travels 70 miles a-week, crossing an arm of the sea twice, and receives for it the magnificent salary of 12s. per week. He is breaking down in health, and I promised some friends of his that I would take the earliest opportunity of bringing his case forward. I believe that is not the worst example of what occurs by any means. Scotch Members are always very keen to have a full share of any public expenditure. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Boyd-Kinnear, has not let this opportunity for proving the claims of Scotland to escape; but I would ask him to apply the sharpest edge of his intelligence to this proposition. The entire area of Scotland served by the Post Office is less than the entire area of Ireland, and yet the outlay in Ireland is only £127,857, whereas in Scotland it is £202,000—a proportion of 12 to 20. Will the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) apply his mind to this matter? I do not say the Scotch postal servants receive too much money; but I wish those of Ireland to get paid on the scale that prevails in Scotland and England. On the whole, the Scotch service is as well paid as the English; but I know the Irish service is worse paid. With regard to the competition for employment under the Post Office and the low rate of wages paid, the Secretary to the Treasury has said that the Government has no right to obtain the services of these men at too low a rate, compared with the ordinary rates in the labour market, nor at too high a rate. But it must be remembered that Post Office employment is *ex officio*. There is no comparing it with the ordinary labour, upon which market rates of wages are

fixed. In estimating its price or quality we must judge of it as a private employer would judge of faithful service on the part of men placed in positions of trust. I feel confident that if increased wages were paid to these rural postmen in Ireland the Department would not have to complain of excessive expenditure, but would find that its receipts would grow sufficiently to recoup it amply for the outlay.

Mr. JOHN WILSON (*Edinburgh, Central*): If the hon. Member who has just sat down will kindly look at the net results as well as the gross amount for Post Office services, he will find that the Government has more benefit for the £202,000 given in Scotland than for the £127,000 given in Ireland. [Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA: I quite admit that.] The hon. Member put it as though the Scotch services were higher paid. I contend that the Scotch service is much more extended, and is much more productive in its net results. Hon. Gentlemen must look at net results, and not at gross sums; and if they do they will find that the amount of work done in Scotland is greater than the amount done in Ireland. I agree with what has fallen from some hon. Members on the other side of the House to the effect that the payments made to rural postmen are inadequate. In Scotland we have post-runners. They are very hard worked; they have to go out every day, no matter what the weather is—be it good or bad, sunshine or rain. They have to travel over very heavy roads and very long roads; and I think it is a circumstance well known to the Post Office authorities that these men, on an average, are short-lived. Many of them are frequently laid up from sickness caused by the hardships they have to undergo. I agree with the Secretary to the Treasury that we are all on this (the Ministerial) side of the House pledged to economy; but, at the same time, it is clearly false economy to underpay any class of public servants, more especially hard-working and poor men, who discharge an important service to the State—a class whose pay is small, whose work is hard, and whose lives are comparatively short. I agree with the hon. Member who says that economy may be reached by devoting attention, when we revise the Estimates, to the reconsideration of all

salaries, in order to see whether, as the higher class posts become vacant, we cannot curtail the higher salaries—those, I mean, from £500 to £1,000 and £1,500—and eke out a little more the salaries of such public servants as these rural postmen with whom we have so much sympathy.

COLONEL NOLAN: I cannot regard it as altogether a satisfactory state of things that the Secretary to the Treasury should have in this House to attend to the business of the Post Office as well as do his own work. I know he has a great deal to do in his own particular Department; therefore, when I see that he has to deal with all the grievances which are raised in the House of Commons in regard to Post Office matters, I must say I think we ought to have someone here especially to represent the Post Office. However, as the hon. Member is so efficient in other Departments, perhaps he will be able to set right a matter which I will proceed to bring under his notice. After a great deal of pressure £6,000 was given for the purpose of accelerating the mails in Ireland. That was a handsome sum to grant; but, at the same time, it has been so granted that two-thirds of my constituents—

THE CHAIRMAN: I must call the hon. and gallant Member's attention to the fact that this increase refers only to the salaries of postmasters.

COLONEL NOLAN: I think I am speaking to the point, Sir; for I imagine the salary of the postmaster or postmasters ought to be reduced for not properly attending to this matter, or possibly ought to be increased. The point is a very obvious one. I cannot, as a private Member, propose an increase of the Vote; but I would, on the principle laid down by the hon. Gentleman who spoke last, suggest that if the officials concerned were properly paid we should find this work much better attended to. Again, perhaps it is rather a question of organization than of payment; and of course, Sir, if you rule me out of Order, I will not press the question. I wish to explain that the district of Tuam and North Galway generally is suffering from this grant of £6,000 a-year. It is suffering from this acceleration of mails, and in this very simple way. There are two cross lines of railway, one of which gets money for the purpose of

accelerating the mails, whilst the other does not; and the result is that the district I refer to loses a post—

THE CHAIRMAN: I must again call the hon. and gallant Gentleman's attention to the fact that he is wandering from the Question before the Committee.

COLONEL NOLAN: In that case, Sir, I will not press the subject further.

MR. JOHNS: We are here to look into the public Expenditure; and I would ask, therefore, is this not a question of supply and demand more than anything else? Where there is one vacancy under the Post Office there are a dozen men anxious to fill it. Although it may appear ungracious to disagree with Irish Members opposite, seeing it is now the fashion to agree to all they desire, I am bound to say that this seems to me simply a question of supply and demand. I therefore think it would be a bad policy to vote for any Public Department, either in Ireland or Scotland, paying higher wages than the men are prepared to take.

MR. T. C. HARRINGTON: I sympathize very much with what has been said as to the necessity of increasing the salaries of some of the rural postmen and postmasters. I am aware that there are considerable complaints in some districts in Ireland in regard to postmasters having the option of delivering letters on Sundays or not, as they please, and that many people desire to see new regulations made for dealing with this matter. Considerable inconvenience is occasioned to the public by the postmasters possessing the option I refer to; because in many cases persons only come into the rural towns to which their letters are addressed on Sundays; and if they do not get their letters on that day they have to go without them for a considerable time. The present regulation is a very objectionable one, though it seems to me it will occasion very little inconvenience to the postmasters if it is altered. The authorities ought to remedy the evil. There is a point in connection with these rural postmen which I think the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury has not grasped. He has said that their minimum salary is 16s. per week. There is an entire misapprehension as to that. If these men were regular officials of the Post Office, no doubt 16s. would be the minimum; but many

Mr. John Wilson

of them are not. They are regarded as *employés* of the postmasters and sub-postmasters. The postmasters and sub-postmasters, of course, have a reason for practising economy which they would not have if they were dealing with the money of the Post Office. Although it has been stated here that the minimum salary of these postmen is 16s. per week, in many cases it is 10s. per week, or less.

MR. HARRY: I am glad, at all events, to hear that the salary of the regular *employés* is not less than 16s. per week. I think, however, that what has been said has been sufficient to induce the Post Office authorities to make a general inquiry into this matter. I agree with the principle that the payment of State servants should be according to the laws of supply and demand; but whilst I agree with that principle, I object strongly to its being rigorously enforced against the lower grade servants, whilst it is not applied to the higher grade servants. I happen to know that in the Dublin Post Office there are a number of gentlemen with salaries ranging from £300 to £1,500 a-year, who, if we applied this principle of supply and demand to them, would be receiving much less salaries. I hope the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury will have a hand in framing the Estimates for next year; and if he has, I trust he will take care to apply the principle laid down to-night, and apply it impartially, both to the higher and lower grade servants.

Vote agreed to.

NAVY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-6).

(12. 2,500 Men and Boys, Navy.

(13. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £304,400, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, to meet additional Expenditure for Navy Services."

DR. CAMERON: Mr. Courtney, the Vote now before the Committee contains an item of £32,200 as a Supplementary Grant for Naval Dockyards at Home and Abroad. I propose the reduction of the Vote by this amount. Some weeks ago a statement appeared in one of the leading newspapers to the effect that another deficit, amounting to £200,000,

had been discovered in the accounts of the Admiralty; and that statement was supplemented by another statement to the effect that it had hitherto been the practice of the Construction Department of the Admiralty to minimize the work done by contract, so as to insure a balance on the Contract Vote, with which balance they made up any deficiency that might arise in the Dockyard Vote. Now, the meaning of that statement, if it were true, would be that this House had been asked, year after year, to vote more money for work to be done by contract than was wanted for that purpose; that, systematically, less work than had been agreed to by the House was done by contract in private yards; that the work was kept back in order that each year there might be a balance; and that that balance, instead of being handed into the Exchequer, had been appropriated to the purposes of another Vote altogether; that the Dockyards had been conducted in such a way that a much larger sum had been spent in them than was authorized by Parliament; and that the deficiency in them was made good by money which was saved off the Contract Vote. I asked my hon. Friend the late Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Ritchie) a Question in reference to the subject, and I ascertained from him that the statement as to the deficit of £200,000 was not quite correct. As a matter of fact, the hon. Gentleman had so pushed forward the contract work that £170,000 worth of work had been done more than had been estimated for and voted for by Parliament. I am not going to challenge the wisdom of pushing the work on. It would doubtless have been more regular had a closer estimate been made; but I am of opinion that it is much more profitable to the country to have its shipbuilding pushed forward rapidly. It is anything but an economic system to keep a ship on the stocks for six, seven, eight, or nine years, when it could be turned out in three years; therefore, I do not at all challenge that portion of the matter, and I do not intend in the least to find fault with my hon. Friend Mr. Ritchie, for pushing forward the work by contract. But he went on to say, in reply to the second part of my Question, that for some years past the whole amounts inserted in the Estimates for contract work had not been so expended; but considerable

sums had been utilized for the purchase of stores and for Dockyard wages. He added that in five years a sum of £300,000 voted by this House for work to be done by contract in private yards had not been used for that purpose, but paid to make good deficiencies in the accounts of the Dockyards. Now, that appears to me to be a very improper system. It was discovered, apparently, only accidentally. Had the permanent officials been allowed to keep back the work done on contract as usual, we should have had a similar excess in the Contract Vote forthcoming this year also to pay for the excess of expenditure in the Dockyards, and this sum now before the Committee would not have come under our cognizance. It is lucky that the energy of my hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) was the means of his discovering this irregularity. When we have this sort of thing occurring year after year—and it appears to have amounted to a system—I think we should take cognizance of the matter, and mark our disapprobation of the system by a reduction of the Vote. There can be no doubt we cannot have the smallest control over the expenditure so long as this kind of thing is allowed to go on. I do not mean to say that the transfer of this money from one Vote to the other has been illegal. I believe that the formal sanction of the House is asked every year; but it is asked at a time when no one knows anything about it. I am certain the statement of the hon. Gentleman the late Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Ritchie) must have been a revelation to most Members, even to old Members of the House; and I have no doubt that the discovery must have been a revelation to the hon. Gentleman himself when he made it. I move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £32,200.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Item of £32,200, for Dockyards at Home and Abroad, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT): I do not find fault with my hon. Friend (Dr. Cameron) for raising this question; at the same time, I think that he has made rather more of the complaint than he is justified in doing, considering that no excess is transferred from one Vote to another without the matter going through a very

careful process of examination. In the first place, the Department cannot apply money which has been voted for contract work to any other work without the consent of the Treasury, and then the transfer has to be passed by the Public Accounts Committee, and placed in the Appropriation Account. Therefore, there are three different processes through which the matter has to go before it can receive public assent. At the same time, I quite agree with the principle my hon. Friend has enunciated—namely, that it is not a desirable thing, supposing it is done intentionally, that the Department should put down for any particular Vote a larger sum than they know will be employed, with the intention of using the surplus for other purposes. It is desirable that, with regard to every Vote, the fullest information should be obtained by the Department, and that the Estimate should be prepared in accordance with that information. Now, upon the particular point to which allusion has been made, and which has given rise to the application to the House for the payment of £32,000 upon the Contract Vote, I must say that I do not find fault either with the Admiralty Department for any mistake they have made to cause this excess—I do not find fault either with the late Liberal Government or with the late Conservative Government in respect of it, and for the very reason that I believe the whole cause of this increased demand for contract work is entirely owing to the depression in trade which exists in the country. There are very few of the shipbuilding yards to which these contracts have been given where there is much work going on except Government work; and I am informed that it has been necessary for the different contractors to push on our work more rapidly than they would have otherwise have done owing to the fact that they have no other work, or very little other work, in their yards. Well, I do not think we should find fault with the contractors for getting through the work as rapidly as they can; and I do not think that it is anything but in the interest of the nation that the ships which are being built should be completed as soon as possible. Of course, it is very unpleasant not to have calculated or taken a sufficient amount for what we require. Now, the facts are these. For the machinery of the various

Dr. Cameron

ships which were given out by contract—the large ships of the *Scout* class—there was estimated a sum of £72,000, and for the first-class torpedo boats it was reckoned that £55,000 would be spent. The expenditure has turned out to be—on the first class of boats £126,606, an excess of £54,606; and on the second class £64,000, an excess of £9,000, showing a total excess of £63,606. But there are surpluses upon the machinery contract for other ships which brings the deficiency down to a sum of £14,000. When we come to the hull of the ships we come to a very much larger question. We find that in building the hulls of five different ships—five large ships—the contractors have earned during the year £176,625 more than it was estimated they would earn; and, therefore, we have been obliged to come to the Committee for an increased grant to make good the contractors' demands. Well, now, it may be said that when the tenders were accepted we might have calculated what the amount would be which would be earned in the year. I have taken a great deal of trouble to inquire into the matter; and, as far as I can gather, no accurate information as to the earnings upon the ships in course of construction was obtained at the Admiralty till the month of November in last year. When the amount earned was discovered the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton), who was then the First Lord of the Admiralty, very properly approved of the payment of this excess, and decided that the progress of the ships, though this excess was being earned, was not to be impeded. I think it is quite right that no attempt should have been made to check the progress of the ships, if we consider first of all the desirability of having the ships completed as soon as possible, and, in the next place, the undesirability of placing the contractors in the position of having to discharge a large number of their workmen. On these grounds, as I have said, I have no fault to find either with one Government or the other; but place the whole fault, if there is any fault at all, upon the unfortunate state of the trade of the country. Well, owing to the suddenness with which the information in regard to the earnings on these ships was sprung upon the Admiralty, I inquired as to what was the system which was adopted to ascertain the earnings on the ships

which were to be built by contract; and I found that we have overseers in all the yards of the country; that it is the duty of these overseers to report, from time to time, to the Admiralty what amount of work has been done; and also that in the month of October it is usual for the Admiralty to send down an officer to inspect and report upon the amount of money which has been earned. Well, this year that was done, and the Admiralty received a Report from their officer, which showed that this large additional sum was due to the contractors. Now, what I have to say upon the system is that the Controller has very properly laid down a more stringent system of report with respect to the earnings on ships, a system which will enable him to know from month to month, more accurately than he has hitherto been able to do, the amount of money which is earned. But I do not think it ever will be possible to estimate closely the exact amount which the contractors will be able to earn during any particular year. You can only do it by making a contract subject to the condition that the contractor shall only do work in each year which amounts to a certain sum of money. If you make a contract for the ship to be completed not later than a certain date you must leave the contractor at liberty to work rapidly or slowly according to the state of business in his yard. I do not think that unless we have a very stringent contract—a contract very different to that we have been accustomed to make—we can with any certainty say what is the exact amount earned from one year to another. At the same time, if you put contractors under very stringent conditions the probability is that in the end you will have to pay more for the building of your vessels. The more liberty you grant your contractor as to the rapidity of the work, the cheaper you get the work done, and that is an object which the Admiralty and the nation should have in view. I have only one thing more to say. My hon. Friend (Dr. Cameron) was quite right in saying that for five years previous to the present there had been surpluses in the Contract Vote. I find that there was a surplus in 1880 of £86,000; in 1881 of £16,000; in 1882 of £81,000; in 1883 of £103,000; and in 1884-5 of £199,000. Therefore, I think the fact that there have been these surpluses in

past years shows that the Department were quite justified in not estimating for a larger amount than they did. I should have thought my hon. Friend would have been pleased that the Department had not estimated for a larger amount, because it has been the means of bringing this matter under the notice of the Committee. I can only say, in conclusion, that this matter is one which entirely depends on the state of trade, and that I do not blame the Department, and I do not blame any person who has had anything to do with the building of the vessels.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: Mr. Courtney, I desire to offer a correction to the statement of my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert), in regard to the form in which Treasury sanction is given to the transfer of surpluses on some Votes to meet deficiencies on other Votes. I admit sanction to be officially required. I also allow that without Treasury sanction the Auditor and Comptroller General would refuse to pass accounts of the Army or Navy in which transfers have been made. I, however, say that the mode in which this sanction is given is delusive. In former Parliaments I endeavoured to expose these defects; but, having failed, I have of late years been silent. In now again urging my views, I do so in the hope that the present Parliament may contain financial reformers more numerous and more earnest than those found in former Parliaments. I therefore respectfully request the new Members to study the Reports of the Auditor General on the accounts of the Army and Navy. There they will find that not a year passes without transfers of large surpluses on some Votes being allowed by the Treasury to cover excesses on other Votes. This sanction was a check established 40 years ago, intended to enable the Treasury to enforce correctness in estimating. But in recent years it was neutralized by the War Office and Admiralty applying for transfers towards the end of the year. Indeed, at times the application is made after the close of the financial year. This facility of obtaining at the end of the year funds to cover the expenses incurred in previous months led to laxity in calculating at the beginning of the year. And thus the Treasury has been deprived of the power of enforcing ex-

actness in the provision of stores and ships, by pointing out the incorrect estimating. Another objection to this delay in applying is the opening given for under-estimating the charge for some Votes, in the full expectation of covering deficiencies from over-estimating other Votes, which may be expected to be readily passed by the House of Commons. A tabulation for some years of such excesses and deficiencies might be usefully furnished to expose the bad practice. We have just heard of serious defects in the Naval Accounts, where the outlay on ships built by contract has largely fallen below the estimated amount, and that the surplus has been used in covering excesses on other Votes. This is a source of great danger, because the country has been deluded into the idea that the Naval Estimates provided more vessels than were paid for by the accounts. In alluding to this serious defect in the Naval Accounts, I wish to express approval of the useful reform initiated by the noble Lord the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), and carried out by the late Secretary to the Admiralty, the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie); and if I venture to allude to a defect in the new system, I am confident the noble Lord will believe that I fully appreciate his good work. The defect I alluded to is not clearly defining the respective amounts of the outlay, or the respective liabilities in the current and coming official year. In carrying on the business of two great Departments of the Army and Navy, it is not only essential that the greatest possible freedom should be allowed the heads of branches, to issue orders for work or supplies of stores, but that the amounts to be expended should be clearly known. To this end, these heads should be required to specify as closely as possible the extent of the orders to be in force for and the sums to be expended in current and coming years, and thus enable the Accountant General to calculate the funds needed in the respective years. In this way the danger of having financial blunders, in the form of surpluses and excesses on Votes such as we so often hear of, would be in part guarded against, or at least lessened. This full freedom to heads of branches to open orders for expenditure ought, however, to be exercised with care. This can

Mr. Hibbert

best be done by specifying clearly the data as to the amount of work or stores to be provided, and within what period, and the Accountant General can thereby estimate the liabilities of the year, and be able to bring to the notice of the First Lord and Parliamentary Secretary the sums falling due on certain dates in excess of the grants. The next reform I have always advocated at home and in India has been in requiring all surpluses of Votes to be relinquished, in the same way that surpluses on the total Vote are given up at the close of the financial year. And on any Vote requiring additional funds for meeting this necessity immediately it is discovered, a Supplemental Estimate should be prepared, and submitted for the sanction of the Treasury, with a statement of the dates on which the amount previously granted by Parliament had been expended. But, like all other official arrangements, success or failure will depend on the mode of carrying out these conditions. A close and functional scrutiny by the First Lord and Parliamentary Secretary over the monthly or weekly statements of financial results and Estimates of the Accountant General can alone secure correctness in accounting.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) has explained so much with regard to this Vote that it is not necessary for me to supplement to any great extent what he has said. But the hon. Gentleman did not explain one point. There is a natural reluctance on the part of the House of Commons, which I assure hon. Members that I fully share, to assent to any large sum, either in the Original or in the Supplementary Estimates, which will lead to a permanent addition to the annual expenditure. Now, this sum of £200,000 which is under discussion, so far from being a permanent addition to, is an absolute reduction of, existing liabilities which will have to be met in a subsequent year, and which have not in any way during the current year been replaced by a sum of corresponding amount. What was done was simply this. Members of the late House of Commons will recollect that the Earl of Northbrook, on behalf of Mr. Gladstone's Government then in Office, undertook, in order to bring up the strength of the Navy to the requisite level, to spend in a period

of five years the sum of £3,160,000 in the construction of ships put out to contract, and that he and his Colleagues made an Estimate of the sum which for five years would be incurred under contract. Well, Sir, their Estimates were carefully made at the time, no doubt; but they had no accurate calculation of the cost of similar contracts which had been made before by the Admiralty. And in the first year, owing to the unusual depression of trade, there was £200,000 worth more of work done by the contractors than had been contemplated—in other words, they have reduced the liabilities which would have had to be met in another year by £200,000. Again, by this the contractors were enabled to keep a larger number of men employed during a time of pressure, while the Naval Service and the nation gets the benefit so much sooner of the ships in course of construction; and it should be remembered, in these days of rapid improvement, that this is a most important point, because a new ship, with all modern appliances, is in the early years of existence a most formidable fighting machine. I agree very much with the remarks of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron). He alluded to the fact that he had the result of three years' Estimates of the Admiralty to show that there had been a considerable surplus on the sum of money devoted to contract work, which surplus was devoted to meet deficiencies in Dockyards. I agree that if you wish anyone in the capacity of an official at the Admiralty or in the House of Commons to exercise proper control over the expenditure, the Estimates should be framed with the utmost care, and that no new Estimates should receive the sanction of the House or Committee until the consent of the Treasury is obtained to the transfer of the money from one Vote to another. But the excess in this year is easily accounted for. The Estimates were based on the assumption that the contractors would be able to earn in a given time all the money to which they were entitled. It was unusual for them to perform all the work which would entitle them to claim all the money. Now, however, for the first time, the circumstances are reversed, and the contractors are very considerably in advance with the work. The Admiralty had to consider the question

whether they would sanction that excess, or insist on the contracts being more slowly executed, which would have involved the discharge of a certain number of men, and added to the number of unemployed men at the present moment; and, inasmuch as there was a call for ships to add to the strength of the Navy, we decided that the extra work should be done, having confidence that, when it was explained that the sum of £200,000 would be deducted from the liabilities of future years, the House of Commons would come to the conclusion that we were right in the judgment at which we had arrived. Well, Sir, the alterations made in the last few months will, I hope, insure more accurate Estimates in future. I do not say that they are perfect; but the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert), as is well known, is a man of business; and if any defects in the system were found by him there is no doubt that he will do his best to remedy them. The Inspectors of the Admiralty used to report every three months; but the Board under the late Government altered that arrangement, and required them to report every month; and if they think that the work done in any of the yards is in excess of that contained in the Estimates they are at once to report. I do not think a similar error is likely to occur again; but I believe that the present Board of Admiralty will find that they under-estimated the cost of arming the ships, and the sums of money necessary to meet contracts already entered into. I think it only right that they should have a distinct warning of this, because, although I cannot tell what may be the ultimate sum which the present Board of Admiralty may decide upon in presenting to the House the Estimates for the forthcoming year, I am certain that they will find large liabilities hanging over them which must be met sooner than they anticipate, and which will cause a temporary increase in the Naval Estimates for the next two or three years. But I do not think that increase will be permanent, and I trust it will be succeeded by some considerable reduction.

Mr. RYLANDS: I am sure that the explanation given by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert), and by the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex, is perfectly satisfactory. Allow me to remind the Com-

mittee that in this case we have absolutely reversed the policy of former years. Government has before come down to the House with the Naval Estimates, which provided for considerable expenditure for the purchase of vessels, and, instead of insisting upon those vessels being completed in the shortest possible space of time, have allowed the contracts to hang fire, so to speak. We have paid very large sums of money upon unfinished vessels which it has seemed to me are, until completed, useless to the country. I have from time to time urged upon successive Boards of Admiralty that the great and most essential point in dealing with moneys paid for construction of ships for the Navy should be, that we should construct our vessels in the Dockyards in a shorter time, and that in giving contracts we should bind down the contractors by heavy penalties with regard to the time of delivery; and rather than have delay I would give them a bonus for completion before the time. You had formerly several million pounds worth of property which in the event of war would be utterly useless. During the long periods in which the vessels are building, discoveries are made which render our arrangements obsolete; and so, after spending seven years perhaps in building, we find ourselves in possession of vessels which are not at all equal to the vessels purchased by foreign Governments, and built in a much shorter time than they can be by us. But I understand the matter of which the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) complains is that large sums of money have been used for purposes not contemplated by the Vote of Parliament. I think it an objectionable, although it is a legal arrangement, that these sums should be so diverted with the consent of the Treasury. But there was a greater mischief than that; and my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty knows as well as I do that when this sum of money was in hand at the close of the financial year the Admiralty anticipated claims from contractors. What for? Not in the interest of the public; but this money to the extent of, perhaps, £250,000 was paid to the contractors at an earlier period, because if that had not taken place before the end of the financial year, it would have had to be surrendered to the Exchequer. My hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty

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tells us very correctly, no doubt, the case of these vessels. The late Board of Admiralty found that the contractors were getting on more rapidly than was expected with work which it was considered would extend over several years; and it would have been simply an act of idiocy to say to the contractors—"We will not allow you to get on with the vessels sooner than we contemplated." As I have said, it is better that in making contracts the Admiralty should bind the contractors to finish the work as speedily as possible; but even then, if the contractors are able to complete the ships sooner than the time fixed, they should be encouraged by a bonus to do so. If my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow goes to a division I shall be bound to support the Government.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: My hon. Friend seems to imply that in former years the Admiralty systematically over-estimated the amount of work to be executed under contract. I can assure my hon. Friend that the greatest disappointment was felt when the contractors failed to perform their duties as rapidly as was expected. In consequence of the enormous expansion of the shipping interest of the country, the contractors were formerly placed in great difficulties, both as to the supply of materials of shipbuilding and the supply of labour. Last year, owing to the condition of the shipbuilding industry, the conditions were entirely reversed, and we found ourselves necessitated to deal with the excess expenditure by means of a Supplementary Estimate. My hon. Friend will now, I think, admit that there was no intention to exaggerate the amount of work to be done by contract with a view to transfer portions of the money to the Dockyard expenditure.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY: I think the point of my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) has been entirely misunderstood. The hon. Gentleman (Sir Thomas Brassey) speaks as if my hon. Friend complained that a large portion of the money voted was paid over to outside contractors. That is not his complaint at all, and he did not propose to reduce that item in the Vote. It is the sum of £32,000 for the increased cost of Dockyards that my hon. Friend objects to; he complains that the increase is not exceptional, but that

it has been going on for the last five or six years. Not only has the Admiralty every year over-estimated contracts; but they have, at the same time, under-estimated the expenditure on the Dockyard Establishments, and the money voted for building new ships under contract has been diverted to pay for the increased outlay on Dockyards. Now that cannot be done this year, because the contractors have executed a larger amount of work than has been expected, and the Vote for work done by contract has not been available for Dockyard work. That is the reason why the Board of Admiralty come to the House for this increased sum of £30,000. My hon. Friend objects to and challenges this permanent increase of charge for Dockyard expenditure. There is no challenge of the amount for payments to contractors for building vessels under contract; the amount objected to is, as I have said, £32,000, for a permanent increase of the Dockyard Establishments. I hope hon. Members will show their appreciation of the principles of economy by calling this Vote in question. The increase has been going on for years, and I think the Committee ought to show their opinion on the subject by going into the Lobby against it.

MR. RITCHIE: I think that the object of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) is thoroughly understood by the Committee. I imagine that the hon. Member, in moving his Amendment, was not seriously challenging this Vote, but that he wished to call attention to the practice which has been followed during many years of paying less money to contractors for contract work than was put down in the original Estimates. If the course proposed by the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) be adopted, and the Committee were to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Glasgow, it would practically amount to a censure on the Government for having decided to employ in the Dockyards of the country a number of men whom they found there when they came into Office. Looking at the importance of expediting the building of ships and of not throwing out of employment a large number of men during a time of great depression, I am satisfied that the Committee will consider that the late Board of Admiralty did right in follow-

ing that course rather than keeping within the Estimates of the year. I am sure that all those who desire the efficiency of the Navy will be pleased to have heard the remarks of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) to-night. The hon. Member has been for many years one of the staunchest advocates of economy in this House; and, therefore, the fact that the hon. Member has risen to support the extra payment we have made to contractors during the current year must be a great inducement to the Government to maintain the present policy, that whether our ships are being built under contract or in the Dockyard of the country they should be completed as quickly as possible. It is evident that what the hon. Gentleman states is correct—namely, that the sooner necessary and desirable works are completed, and the sooner the money spent is brought into fruitful operation, the better it is for the country and the economy of the Public Service. I desire that there should be no misunderstanding with reference to the particular sum of £200,000, which has been spoken of by some hon. Members as a mistake, and by others as a sum required owing to a discovery made by the late Government that the money had been spent. But, Sir, it was neither the one nor the other. When the subject came to our notice the money had not been spent. It would have been in the power of the Board of Admiralty, if they had chosen, to take extreme measures, not to have spent the money. In the month of November it was known that if the work were to go on at the same rate as before, the liability at the end of the year would be in excess of the amount estimated; and, looking at the fact that it was not desirable to have the men discharged, and that it was necessary to have the ships built, we felt we should do what we believed the House would justify—namely, allow the shipbuilding to go on. With regard to the practice during the past two or three years, no doubt every year has shown that the whole amount voted had not been paid to contractors. In some years the amount has been extremely large; in others it has not been so large; but always considerable. Now, Sir, I admit that the fact of this occurring looks rather as if very little effort was made by Boards of Admiralty to see

that contractors proceeded with due rapidity to execute the work they had in hand, and that they were not unwilling that they should be provided with a surplus on one Vote in order to meet a deficiency on another. I say that in a matter of finance that is an unsound principle—it is distinctly so. Of course, it cannot be contended that the prophecies at the beginning of the year as to the amount of money to be earned by the contractors should always be fulfilled; but it certainly has an awkward look when they are never fulfilled in one particular direction, and it would rather look as if contractors regarded the work of the Government as a sort of convenience, and that they felt they were justified in taking whatever work came to their hands, even though they retarded the work of the Government. Now, I am of opinion that this is a principle which ought not to be admitted. The work at the contractors' yards ought, in our opinion, to be inspected monthly; and not only do we think that the Admiralty Inspectors should report, month by month, to the Government that the contractors are proceeding with the work, but that the contractors themselves should be called upon to proceed with the work as rapidly as they ought; and I believe, by the arrangements made at the Admiralty by the late Government, that it will be in the power of future Boards to keep more within the Estimates than has hitherto been the case. In conclusion, I venture to express a hope that the policy of the present Government with regard to the Navy will be the policy of their Predecessors, the cardinal point of which was that all work necessary for the country, whether executed in public or private Dockyards, should be proceeded with as expeditiously as possible.

Mr. LANE: On this Vote I wish to call the attention of the Committee for a few moments to another branch of the Dockyard question. At Question time this afternoon I asked the Secretary to the Admiralty for information with reference to a particular Dockyard in course of construction. In reply to my Question the hon. Gentleman stated that the Dockyard, which was comparatively small, had been in course of construction for 22 years; that upon it there had been expended already the sum of £490,000; and that the work was intended to be

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completed about the end of this year. The hon. Gentleman supplemented that information by stating that there were originally plans and estimates for the erection of workshops in connection with the Dockyard, but that it had been discovered that the plans required alteration, and that it was not the intention of the Admiralty to proceed with the construction of the workshops until the Dockyard was completed.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must call the attention of the hon. Member to the fact that the item under discussion relates to work in Dockyards, and not to work in connection with them.

MR. LANE: I was under the impression that I might be out of Order in raising the question on the present Vote; and I asked an hon. Friend, more experienced in the House than I am, whether I should discuss it on Vote 11. If I shall be in Order in doing so on that Vote, I will postpone my observations until it comes forward.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will be in Order in referring to the subject on Vote 11.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Brunner.*)

CAPTAIN VERNEY: I think the Committee is very much indebted to the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) for having recalled them to the real point of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron).

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: Mr. Courtney, I rise to Order. I understand that we are on a Motion to report Progress.

THE CHAIRMAN: I did not understand that the hon. Member moved.

CAPTAIN VERNEY: I was about to point out that hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House who represent and have represented the Admiralty have praised one another for their exceedingly good administration when they were in Office; and yet the Secretary to the Admiralty Mr. Hibbert tells us that arrangements have now been made to prevent such slipshod management as has occurred taking place at the Admiralty in future. A large sum of money seems to have been wandering about, so to speak; no one seems to have been

able to identify it, or to say where it came from or where it was going, and we are told that the Board of Admiralty were not aware that this large sum of money would come from a Supplementary Vote. I believe that the hon. Member for Glasgow, after the discussion that has taken place, would be perfectly satisfied if some assurance were given him, that the Admiralty Accounts would be so kept in future that a vagrant sum of £32,000 will not hereafter be found wandering about.

MR. BRUNNER: In moving to report Progress I only desire that the Prime Minister's undertaking with regard to the introduction of the Crofters Bill shall be fulfilled, or, if not fulfilled absolutely, then fulfilled as near as it can be.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (MR. HIBBERT: I hope that the hon. Member will not press his Motion for Progress. The introduction of the Crofters' Bill is a very important matter which we all want to hear; but I think in a very short time we shall be able to dispose of this Vote.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

DR. CAMERON: If I had got any assurance that the state of things of which I complain will be remedied in the future I should not have pressed this Motion. But I have got nothing of the sort, although an attempt has been made to draw a red-herring across the path, and therefore I intend to take a division. My complaint is that for the last five years—and, in fact, every year—the contract work has been over-estimated systematically, and that the over-estimated money has been taken to meet increased Dockyard expenditure. That was a most vicious system, and it has been exposed simply by an accident. We are told that there are safeguards against it such as the appropriation on Public Accounts Committee and the audit. Well, Sir, for five years this most vicious system has been going on unchecked by any check, and I propose now to introduce another check in the form of a division in this House.

MR. JACKS: There is one cause for the deficit, which, as one connected with shipbuilding, I rather wonder has not been referred to; and this is the alterations which are made at the instigation

of the Government officials after the work in the shipyard has been proceeded with. I would like an assurance that none of this deficit has arisen in this way. There should be some undertaking that such expense should be clearly stated, and not made up out of the over-estimate for contract work.

SIR DONALD CURRIE: In reference to the five years spoken of, I should like to point out that it is well known what difficulties contractors have had to deal with. It need not be a matter of surprise if estimated contract work was not delivered in those five years. Every shipowner knows the difficulties of that period. Why, I have had steamers nine months behind time in being delivered; and I consider that the pressing forward of contract work, and the speedy delivery of that work during the last year, is very largely to the credit of the Admiralty and of the shipbuilders. When we had doubts last year as to the efficiency of our Navy in the event of a naval war it was urged in that Admiralty that they should increase our Fleet with as little delay as possible. The country is now in a much better position as a Naval Power; and I think the late Administration of the Admiralty deserves praise for what they have done. The present Administration also deserves the best thanks of this House for the energy they have displayed.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 67; Noes 246: Majority 179.—(Div. List, No. 11.)

MR. DEASY: I should like to ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) what is the intention of the Government with regard to the erection of workshops and houses at the Haulbowline Dockyard?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (MR. HIBBERT): There is nothing in the Vote before the Committee in respect to Haulbowline; but it is due to the hon. Member to say, in answer to what he has stated on the subject, that it is not the intention of the Government to lose sight of the workshops referred to. As soon as the works now in operation are completed plans will be prepared for the workshops, and the work will be carried out. Provision

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will probably be made for the work in the Estimates next year.

MR. LANE: I understand that it is not intended to erect these workshops just at the present moment, but that when the Dockyard itself is finished then they will commence to erect them. The question is of great importance to my constituents. There are a great number of shipwrights in Queenstown and thereabouts, and who are in the greatest distress at the present moment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Allow me to point out to the hon. Member that although this Vote deals with Dockyards there is nothing in it with regard to Haulbowline; and, therefore, the observations he is making are not in Order.

MR. BRUNNER: I do not profess to be the Keeper of the Conscience of Her Majesty's Ministers; but I wish to remind the Committee of the undertaking of the Prime Minister, and I beg to move that we report Progress.

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Brunner.*)

Motion *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*;
Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. W. E. GLADSTONE): For the convenience of the House I may be allowed to state that on Monday we propose to take the Votes relating to Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Mission and Bechuanaland.

NOTIONS.

CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (MR. TREVELYAN): Sir, in this House, which, so far as I can judge from the experience of last Wednesday, likes short speeches, I shall introduce this great subject as briefly as I can, consistently with my desire to give the House a very clear view of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government, in

order that hon. Gentlemen who follow me may utilize the evening for their criticisms. This is a subject which is very familiar to the House. It is familiar to Members of the last Parliament, not so much for the great number of debates which took place with regard to it, but on account of the great interest which those debates excited. The unanimity of the interest which was felt in the crofters was very striking. In no case has any Resolution, the most favourable to the crofters, been rejected. In no case has it even been seriously opposed. Everybody has spoken kindly of them, and has united in calling for very strong and decided legislation with regard to them. The latest of all these calls for legislation is, I venture to think, the strongest and the most remarkable that ever was made by a unanimous House of Commons. (On the 14th of November, 1884, it was resolved—

“That, in the opinion of this House, it is the duty of Her Majesty’s Government to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the condition of the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, or to apply such other remedies as they deem advisable; and that this House concurs in the opinion expressed by the Royal Commission, at page 110 of its Report, that ‘the mere vindication of authority and repression of resistance would not establish the relations of mutual confidence between landlord and tenant, in the absence of which the country would not be truly at peace, and all our inquiries and counsels would be expended in vain.’”

That, Sir, is the Resolution of the House of Commons; and it is a very serious thing to think that that Resolution was passed 18 months ago, and has not been carried into effect yet. The population referred to in the Resolution—a population which, the House will remember, all the while we have been engaged on other subjects of great interest, have all that time been thinking of nothing else except this question. This population would naturally say, as month after month passed away, that Parliament had forgotten the first and remedial part of the Resolution, and had fallen back upon that mere assertion of the majesty of the law which is openly and statelierly repudiated by Parliament as being insufficient in itself to meet the wants of the occasion; and they would consider, as I am sorry to say many of them are considering, that

their civil obligations are weakened. I do not wish to paint in too dark colours the social condition of some portions of the Western Highlands; but I do say this—that both as regards the payment of rent and the payment of poor rates and education rates, that condition is such that the present Government would not be justified, and the late Government would not have been justified, in leaving it without the most serious attention, if it had not been for the Resolution of November, 1884, and the state of the conscience of the country and the Parliament which that Resolution implies. But it is high time that this state of things should stop. It is high time that Parliament, having expressed so strong an opinion, should carry that opinion into action. The words of Parliament should always be made good, and if I were a private Scotch Member I should feel a responsibility in this matter; but as Secretary for Scotland I cannot consent to delay any longer—I cannot be a party, I should say, to delay any longer dealing with a matter which we are bound to deal with now, not only for the sake of the crofters, but for the sake of the landlords, and for the sake of the local administration of this country. I hope hon. Members will realize to themselves that we have come to a very serious stage of the question. Up to this time Parliament has been expressing sympathy with the crofters in such a manner that the crofters, on their part, have been led to the belief that something very real is going to be done for them. The time has now come to carry that sympathy into action, and hon. Members must make up their minds that there is no use in the Government making any proposals which will not effectually deal with the question. I can imagine Parliament saying to the crofters—“We are very sorry for you; we consider you a very interesting population; we thought you had been ill-used; we promised to do a great deal for you; but when we came to look at the question practically we saw it was so thorny and difficult that we did not venture to attack it seriously, and we gave it up as a bad job.” That would be one way of getting out of our engagements, and I do not think it would be a good way; but there is still a worse way—that is, for us to propose to Parliament to pass a Bill which professes to do a great

deal for the crofters, but which the Government who brought it in and the Parliament who passed it knew quite well did not deal with the point of the situation. What is the point of the situation? What is the reason that Parliament is interested in this population? It is partly from respect for their character; it is partly from the interest which everyone who travels and reads takes in them and the country in which they live; but it is, above all, that as a population they suffer from a very great grievance, which I hope is not irremediable. That grievance is that, taking the population of the Highlands as a whole, they were originally a population under circumstances entirely different from those which now exist, and that those circumstances were altered by no fault of theirs for the benefit of others, and that, owing to that alteration of circumstances, they are now in a very depressed and, what is more serious, in a very hopeless state. If we take the Highlands as they were when this population was collected—and I am not going into any questions of facts—I am not going into any questions of a semi-literary character which are so much debated—but I state what nobody has ever denied, that the mountains, whenever there was pasture, were grazed by sheep, and especially by the black cattle that formed the wealth and sustenance of the people. Those cattle are now elsewhere—on the Northumberland moors, which are not a whit more fitted for grazing cattle than many of the Scottish hills, where they are in great numbers. They thrive well, and Northumbrians thrive very well by their means. But in the Highlands there are 2,000,000 of acres over which, as pasture, cattle used to graze, but which now are devoted entirely to the artificial maintenance of deer in a wild condition. Now, that is one cause, and the other cause is the consolidation into large sheep farms of the superior class of pastures which used to be grazed over by mixed sheep and cattle of the smaller owners. These small owners have been crushed into a corner, and are now in a very helpless condition, owing to the new uses to which the grazing ground of the Highlands have been put. This is an operation which has put a great, and, in some cases, an enormous increase of income into the pockets of the proprietors, and, of course, of the

mass of the population, whom I am sure no people feel more deeply for and sympathize more with than the descendants of some of those very proprietors who in their day so greatly benefited by the change. The period during which the great uprooting of the crofters took place, and especially the time when they were deprived of their pastures wholesale, was between 1780 and 1820. That change was made for the sake of sheep walks. The devoting of the country to deer forests came later. It came at a time when tenants could be found to pay for turning into desert those tracts of the country, on account of the growth of the enormous wealth of the United Kingdom and of the United States of America. But of late years the sheep farms are not so profitable, and, indeed, in many cases are said to be of no profit at all, partly from the fall in the price of sheep and of wool, which may be called a fall of 30 and 40 per cent respectively, partly from the extremely complicated system of the valuation of flocks, which renders every successive large tenant less and less able to take over the flocks of his predecessor, and partly, it is stated—and this is an important fact—from the belief in the deterioration of ground on which sheep unmixed with cattle have grazed, and especially with sheep that cannot be wintered on these low grounds, which the crofters, to a very large extent, still occupy; and now the deer forests are spreading fast at the expense of the sheepwalks, and also, unfortunately, at the expense of the poor remains of the crofters' holdings. In old days the Highlands were very much, in a humble way, like what Switzerland and the Tyrol are now. People used to go up in summer to the higher lands—the younger members of the family, at all events—and there live a life of a very healthy kind both for mind and body, and this kind of life is admirably described in a pamphlet entitled *The Crofter in History*, published lately by one who is notoriously as little likely to be prejudiced against the present state of things in the Highlands as any man who lives. I speak of Lord Colin Campbell. The utter extinction of this life is the real grievance of the Highlands, and side by side with this grievance the crofters are conscious of this fact—that the land which they still hold is held under con-

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ditions resembling, not those of the rest of the Island, but resembling very closely those which obtained special legislation in Ireland. Their little holdings are not like the rest of the holdings in England and Scotland; they are not equipped by the landlord with all that makes them fit for habitation and for cultivation. The improvements in their holdings and in their houses are made by the crofters themselves; and there is nothing but a sense of duty and honour, which is very widely prevalent there—as among landlords, I believe, in all parts of this Island—there is nothing except the sense of duty or honour which can prevent a landlord from getting rid of a crofter by raising his rent to an impossible sum, or simply by evicting him, and so depriving him of all the money and all the labour he has put into the land. But though the great majority of landlords have behaved admirably of late years, there are very serious cases of landlords who have raised their rents to an enormous extent—in one case, it is believed, for the purpose of selling the estate for a higher purchase value—and there are other cases in which crofters have been turned out neck and crop in considerable numbers to please certain tenants of the deer forests—not purchasers of deer forests, but tenants who could not be satisfied without infinitely more land than any man can reasonably want for use. Therefore it was that the present Lord Advocate introduced, last year, a Bill, and admirably and fully explained it, which proposed to give the crofters fixity of tenure and the means of obtaining a fair rent. I shall not attempt to repeat—if I tried it I should only spoil it—the Lord Advocate's argument. It appeared to meet the approbation of the House. No one Member of the House, as I read *Hansard*, complained of the provisions of his Bill, except that there was a certain amount of complaint of their deficiencies. We now propose to renew those provisions, and to renew the proposal of giving the crofter compensation for permanent improvements, such as dwelling-houses, farm-offices, subsoil and drains, walls and fences, deep trenching, and clearing the ground in case of removal. We have fenced this by stating that these improvements must be suitable to the holding; but likewise the danger to the landlord is fenced round by the nature

of the case, because there is no chance of the crofter making those sort of buildings that are extremely expensive, either for the purpose of amenity or speculation, which the landlords are naturally very much alarmed lest an enterprising tenant should make and throw on their hands. These provisions we once more recommend to the House, and we propose they should be applied to the same area and the same population as we proposed before. We do not propose to give, any more than last year, the right of free sale, and for this reason—that, as far as this Bill is concerned, from the first line to the last, we do not wish to give the crofter anything which he and his ancestors had not, and undoubtedly had not, in old days. The crofter, unlike the Irish tenant, never had by law or custom this power of selling his croft; and we regard it not for the present, still less for the future, advantage either of him or the district in which he lives that he should have it now. But fair rents and fixity of tenure by themselves will go a very long way towards meeting the claim of the crofters as recognized by Parliament. When Parliament passed a Resolution in favour of remedial measures, the Resolution, as far as I read it to the House, specially and pointedly referred to the Report of the Royal Commission, and the whole gist of the Report of the Royal Commission lies in the recommendation that the crofter shall have an extension of land. We sent out, at great expense to the country and at great inconvenience and sacrifice to themselves, a Commission of experienced and responsible gentlemen most representative of all interests—we sent them to the Highlands, and, of course, we may treat their Report as waste paper; but if we do not treat it thus we must find out some means to carry into practice its most vital recommendations. These recommendations are, first, that the holding of the crofter should in no case further be arbitrarily diminished; and, in the next place, that, under certain conditions, the holding should be considerably and compulsorily increased, and the method of that increase is very carefully and minutely pointed out. I will trouble the House to listen to a few passages from the Report of the Commission, which I shall condense as far as possible. These are the important recommendations—

"The occupiers in an existing township should have the right to claim from the proprietor an enlargement of the existing townships in regard to arable land and common pasture in virtue of a resolution adopted by not less than two-thirds of the occupiers, and to record their claim with the Sheriff Clerk of the county in which the township is situated.

"In case the proprietor should not, within the period of one year from the presentation of the claim, come to a voluntary settlement with the occupiers claiming enlargement, the Sheriff Substitute should investigate the grounds of the claim; and if he finds it to be well founded, he shall record the township as an over-crowded township, and the claim as a reasonable claim.

"In this case the proprietor should be held liable to grant to the existing township an increase of arable ground, or hill pasture, or both, subject to the following conditions:—

"The enlargement should only be claimed from lands contiguous to the existing townships, or contiguous to another township, or other townships contiguous to the first, which shall combine to make the claim for the benefit of all. The land claimed shall be in the occupancy either of the proprietor or his tenant.

"No holding should be subject to diminution for enlargement of a township unless it exceeds a certain stipulated amount in annual agricultural value—say £100—without the voluntary assent of the proprietor. The aggregate value of the land assigned for the enlargement of a township or townships should not amount to more than one-third of the annual agricultural value of the holding from which it is taken when the annual value of the diminished holding is below £150; to more than one-half when the annual value is above £150, and below £300; and to more than two-thirds when the annual value of the holding is above £300, without the voluntary assent of the proprietor."

Then this is most important—

"The enlargement awarded to an existing township shall not be used for the creation of a greater number of holdings than existed in the township previously, but only for the development, improvement, and transfer of existing holdings."

Then they go on to say—

"In no case should the claim of the existing townships to enlargement extend to the acquisition of more land than would be sufficient to raise the average annual value of holdings in the townships to a specified sum—say £15—without the voluntary assent of the proprietor.

"The claims of an existing township to an enlargement of area should not be allowed unless satisfactory proof be adduced before the Sheriff that the occupiers of the townships concerned are able to use the additional area of arable ground profitably, and can stock the additional area of hill pasture.

"The rent of arable ground, and of common pasture assigned to an existing township by way of enlargement, should be paid by valuation, one valuer being nominated by the proprietor, and the other by the township, reserving to the Sheriff the power to nominate an overseer when the valuers fail to agree."

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The last essential recommendation is that in assigning land for the enlargement of an existing township there should be no infraction of an existing contract or lease without the free assent of the parties concerned; but in future such contracts or leases should be framed subject to the statutory claims of townships. The Commission then goes on to argue that, economically as well as socially, this would be to the advantage—very slightly indeed in any case to the pecuniary disadvantage—of the landlords, and ends by saying that in most cases—

"Our proposal, translated into practice, would simply mean a moderate restoration of the hill pasture which the grandfathers of the existing hamlet enjoyed 60 years ago."

Now, this is the idea of the Royal Commission, and the manner in which the practical recognition should be made of the right which the crofters once enjoyed. If the Commission had prepared such a measure as this with regard to extensive common grazing grounds for the Lothians, or for the Eastern Counties of England, it would have been a restitution in no sense, as they call it; it would have been an expropriation, pure and simple, in the case of these common grazing grounds; but, as applied to the parishes of the Highlands of Scotland, these parishes were, to use the words of this Bill—

"There are at the commencement of this Act, or have been within 80 years prior thereto, holdings consisting of arable land, held with the right of pasturage in common with others."

The proposal of the Commissioners is, if ever there was one, based on, and limited to, the special and local circumstances of the districts to which this Bill is intended to apply. Well, Sir, this proposal has been before the world for two years, and there is no sign of any great body of public opinion against it. Everybody—almost everybody—seems to agree that the crofters should have more land; but how is it to be carried out? The best mode of all would be by agreement between the landlord and the tenant, and that has been pointed to by the meeting of landlords, to which such frequent reference has been made; but, in order to bring this about in the case of all landlords, good and bad, there must be in the background some compulsion on the part of the State, and the real test of the virtue of a compulsory Bill is the extent to which it encourages and leads

to voluntary agreements. Now, as regards such compulsion, the first method that occurs to people who have touched this question is that of compulsory sale to the State, which they shall proceed to let to the crofter; and the next is compulsory sale to the crofter, who should borrow money from the State, which he is to repay by instalments. But I am bound to say that I, for one, do not feel justified in calling upon the general taxpayer to pay money or to risk his credit for the sake of a Highland population any more than for any other section of the population of any part of the United Kingdom. The proceedings which have placed the Highland crofter in his present position are not the work of the State. ["Hear, hear!" and "Oh!"] I do not agree with hon. Members who cry out. They were not done for the benefit of the State. The State may or may not have done wrong in permitting them, but they were individual acts done for individual profit. It would be just as hard to tax the labourer of Warwickshire in order to give common grazings to the crofter of Inverness-shire, as it would be to tax the crofter of Inverness-shire to establish compulsory allotments for the labourer of Warwickshire. Then we come to another matter which has been brought into a feasible and intelligible shape by the labours of the noble Marquess the Member for Sutherlandshire the Marquess of Stafford, and my hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson). The noble Lord proposes to give to the Local Authority the power of expropriating pieces of land which, in their judgment, it may be of advantage to add to the holdings of the crofters, and to make advances to the crofters for the purpose of buying out the landlord or compelling him to sell from moneys raised on the security of the rates. That is a very inadequate description of the Bill of the noble Marquess, which is as carefully and ably elaborated as it is inspired by a great, humane, and broad spirit. It is very unfair to criticize the measure which the noble Marquess has not the opportunity of explaining and defending. So I will say nothing whatever about that Bill except in its praise, and I will state to the House, as a general argument, why we do not propose to call on the Local Authority, at any rate, at pre-

sent. The existing Local Authorities in the North of Scotland seem to us entirely unsuited for the purpose, and the Local Authority of the future is still in the future, while the needs and the claims of the crofters are in the present, and the Resolution of Parliament by which we are bound is already 18 months old. The existing Local Authorities are the Commissioners of Supply, the Parochial Boards, and the School Boards. They are all Bodies constituted for special purposes, with funds appropriated to special purposes, and thoroughly unfitted for the duties which important and extensive land operations entail. The Commissioners of Supply, who are the nearest approach to a Local Authority for general purposes, are in the Highlands, roughly speaking, all landlords, and they deal with the assessment which is raised from landlords alone; and to ask them to pay for the carrying out of these operations, and to superintend the carrying out of these operations, would be a proposal the refutation of which does not require serious argument. The nature of the Body that will replace the Commissioners of Supply is still, as I say, hidden in the future; every hon. Member of the House knows quite as much as I do as to what it will ultimately be. In order to deal with this question we cannot wait for the reform of Local Government, and we are not prepared to rely on the existing Local Authorities, nor are we prepared to burden the rates, or the credit of the rates, with the financial operations of a system of compulsory purchase. Whatever may be done in other districts, we cannot take that course here. These Highland parishes have in many cases a very low valuation per head indeed. The rates are paid with extreme difficulty, with a difficulty which excites grave anxiety in the Board of Supervision and in the Education Department at Dover House. Now, there are Highland parishes in which the valuation per head is 16s. 4d., 14s. 2d., 19s. 4d., £1 9s., and £1 10s. In Skye the average valuation is, I suppose, about 50s., and meanwhile the rates in two parishes in these parts amount, in one case, to 6s. 7d. in the pound, and in the other to 9s. 4d. in the pound. Well, in four Lowland rural parishes which I take at mere hazard, I find the valuation per head is respectively

£11, £9, £14 and £10, and, obviously, an operation which can be discussed with regard to such rich parishes as these is beyond all discussion when we come to the poor parishes in the Highlands. There is no middle class, there is no general public there. The rates fall, either upon the landlord who is to be bought out, or upon the crofter for whose benefit the landlord is to be bought out, or upon other crofters who are more lucky than their fellows. We cannot ask Parliament to still further burden these overburdened and not very highly-organized districts with a financial operation which it is quite beyond their power to deal with. Now, one course, and one only, remains, and that is to carry out the recommendations of the Commission in the manner in which, after reading and re-reading the Report with all the attention I can give, I am satisfied that the writer of those paragraphs must have had in mind. Those paragraphs point to compulsion, and they point to leasing; and, after thinking the matter over and over again, we have come to the conclusion that under strict conditions, and within strict limitations, compulsory leasing will alone meet the case of the crofters and settle the question in a manner that can be called a settlement. This is a Bill, as I said, founded strictly on the historical and local circumstances of a very peculiar district. We do not want to make the crofter a possessor or landed proprietor. He and his ancestors never have been landed proprietors or possessors; but they claim the right of grazing a certain number of sheep and cattle on the higher pastures on payment of a certain rent. Without that right neither he nor they could live, and we propose to put the genuine crofter, with a genuine holding, in possession of that right. The operation of the Bill is strictly confined to those parishes where that right existed within the lifetime of persons many of whom are still alive. In those parishes it shall be competent for an authority which I shall describe, to accept the application of a certain number of crofters who cannot obtain the right of grazing by agreement with their landlord, and arrange with them a right of common grazing on the payment of an adequate rent. We surround this operation with all the safeguards proposed by the Com-

mission, by which the interests of the landlord and others are guarded, and the benefit of the crofter is strictly limited. I do not propose to repeat those safeguards to a House which has listened to me with such kind attention. I will simply ask the House to call them back by an effort of memory; but they are all inserted in the Bill. We propose, however, to apply one very important safeguard and limitation besides those applied by the Commissioners. The Commissioners proposed to apply compulsory powers to arable land; but we stop before that point. We propose to leave the crofter's potatoes, barley, and oats just where they are now, unless the landlord voluntarily enlarges his arable holding. Diminutions of separate crofts have undoubtedly occurred in too many instances; but the system has not been general and what I may call wholesale, like the deprivation of the grazing rights. Those grazing rights we feel bound to do our best to re-establish, and that is as far as we feel justified in going. Well, Sir, what are the authorities to whom these complicated and extremely onerous arrangements will be committed? In their Bill of last year, the Government placed the fixing of rent and the ascertaining of tenure in the hands of valuers. The noble Marquess the Member for Sutherlandshire (the Marquess of Stafford) proposes a Land Court which, roughly speaking, is, he will allow me to say, nothing more or less than the Sheriff. The Government is of opinion that the important administrative and executive powers which are created by this Bill could not be intrusted to a judicial officer appointed for general judicial purposes; and, indeed, highly as I rate the public spirit and industry of the Scottish Sheriffs, some of whom I am proud to know intimately, I doubt if they would or could be expected to undertake the duties imposed by the Bill in addition to their present duties. The mere number of the cases relating to tenure and rent would be great. In Ireland there are 500,000 tenants, and 125,000 fair rents have already been fixed, and there have been 85,000 agreements out of Court. In the Highland district to which this Bill refers there are about 40,000 holdings, and I should think that of these about 25,000 are held by crofters who would come under this Bill. On the Irish

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analogy it is probable that 6,000 fair rents would have to be fixed, and that would be far too large to lay upon the Sheriffs. Now, we propose to institute a Commission of three members who may sit separately, thereby avoiding the greatest practical inconvenience of the Irish Courts. The Commissioners would call in valuers as assessors, in order to give them the advantage of local knowledge; but these valuers would not have a voice in the decisions. We have an earnest hope that, with so fair a tribunal in prospect, the landlords and tenants may in a great number of instances come to an agreement which will be satisfactory to both parties without going before the Commission, and the 5th clause of our Bill will give every facility for this spontaneous operation. We propose to appoint this authority for a limited time; and when the Local Authority is set up it will be well to consider whether the administrative duties should be transferred to it; but it is quite obvious that the fixing of rents cannot possibly be intrusted to an elective body, however constituted. I have carefully studied the speeches which were made in the last Parliament by the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) and the other Members who took exception to what they thought the defects of the Bill of last year. There was complaint that no means had been taken to put a stop to the arbitrary extension of deer forests at the expense of what remains of the crofters' grazing grounds. Now, the best guarantee against that in most cases is the kindly and generous character of many—certainly of all those owners or occupiers of deer forests with whom I have the honour to be acquainted, who have spent enormous sums of money for the benefit of the population by whom they are surrounded. But all the tenants and owners of forests are not of the same character; and in some cases, undoubtedly, there have been very grave and cruel encroachments. But anyone who has followed my explanation will allow that in this Bill no such provision is necessary. When an effective tribunal exists which is to give compensation for rights taken away in old days, I think we shall have heard the last of those "pet lamb" cases which have been the scandal of the Highlands of late years. But, undoubt-

edly, the present condition of these forests, which are in some cases the greatest abuse that ever was perpetrated under the name of authority or law, has largely necessitated the legislation which we now have before us. I speak as a sportsman—not a very skilful one, perhaps, but certainly as keen a one as any man in the House of my years—and I am bound to say that the selfish absorption by one man of all the pleasure, all the happiness, all the advantage which is to be got out of seven deer forests, covering a space of at least 135,000 acres—and I think I have understated the fact—with all the degradation and humiliation of his small neighbours, and the humiliation of the servants whom he employs—and I am speaking of a particular man—excites in me feelings which I certainly very much prefer not to express in words, but to embody in the proposals of legislation which I now lay before the House. It is not as if I was asking the House to set up an ideal state of society. Those who have seen the village of Garth, in Glen Lyon, which is the property of an hon. Member of this House, and which is the old Highland state of society, with the hillside above, the valley of green land below, with not a stone loose upon it, and the cattle and sheep grazing up to the sky-line as far as they can be seen from the holdings, and above those holdings a ground where you can shoot 20 brace of grouse a-day as a minimum, following them with dogs—those who have seen this may justly compare it with the most beautiful objects that one sees in the valleys of the Oberland in Switzerland. And if they compared this scene with those vast tracts in Inverness-shire and Ross-shire, with its population of hired gillies, on which no tourist, no shepherd, no Revenue officer, can set foot, they might well ask whether legislation comes one hour too soon to save the most beautiful part of our Highlands from desolation and demoralization. With regard to the interest of the landlord I wish to say one word. One great cause of the failure of the sheep walks is that it is almost impossible satisfactorily to graze the land in summer unless you have the wintering below. Well, that wintering below belongs to a very great extent to the crofters already, and evidently cannot now be taken from them, and land-

lords are beginning to see that it is for their interest that the same people who have the wintering below should have the summer pastures above. The noble Marquess the Member for Sutherlandshire (the Marquess of Stafford) mentions the rating of deer forests and grouse grounds in the hands of owners, and he likewise proposes to make deer ground game, so that the crofter may shoot them when he finds them on his arable land. I do not want to argue those questions now. We have not introduced them into our Bill, because we wish to make our Bill strictly applicable only to the crofter parishes, and not to introduce into it any measure of general application. And now I should like to say one word as to the other recommendations of the Commissioners, and as to the way in which they have been met both by the late Government and by the present Government. In those districts to which the population, from no fault of theirs, have been pushed, it is by fishing, and by fishing alone, that the best friends of the Highlander know that he can be made a man of, and to make fishing profitable an improvement of communication, postal and telegraphic, is quite essential. The Commissioners say—

"The defects of the mail service are most apparent in North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist, and Barra."

In order to remedy some of these defects, the following arrangements have been sanctioned by the Postmaster General as from the 1st of March:—A mail packet service will be established from Oban to Coll, Tiree, Lochboisdale, and Castlebay; the packet will make three trips a-week, and will leave Oban at 1.15 p.m. (after the arrival of the London night mail), from May 15th to August 31st, and at 7.30 a.m. during the remainder of the year. Should the Company for trading purposes hereafter extend the voyages of the packet to Lochmaddy, the Department will have the right of forwarding mails to and from that port. In regard to telegraphic extension, the Commissioners recommended that a wire should be carried at once to Castlebay, Sutherland, Lewis, Shetland, and South Ronaldshay, in Orkney. Since this recommendation telegraphic communication has been extended to Castlebay, Barra; St. Mary's, Barra; St. Margaret's Hope, Orkney; Reaywick and Vaila Sound, Shetland. As it is impos-

sible to obtain the ordinary guarantees from these poor localities, the Treasury give a special grant in aid of £500 for a period of two or three years, in order to enable the Post Office to complete this important and necessary work, in addition to the annual sum of £1,000 provided in the Fishery Board Estimates out of the surplus herring brand fees. In illustration of the usefulness of this telegraphic communication, the Fishery Board mentioned in their last Report that the fishermen of the South Isles, where no fishing was going on, got information by telegram that herrings had appeared in the North Isles, and, proceeding there, landed in one week £1,800 worth of fish. Without the telegraph this fish would not have been got. Likewise, for the purposes of scientific investigation by the Fishery Board, the Treasury have given during the last two years the sum of £1,500; and this year they have given £2,000, to include experiments as to beam trawling for the benefit of the fishermen. Now, there is one form of assistance to a fisherman which is preferable to any other, and when we are in Committee we shall be ready to consider it carefully. Everyone who has been connected with Scotland, knows that there are many ways in which public money may be given and lent, which brings no benefit either to him who gives or to him who receives. I learned very much in Ireland; and the pleasantest lesson which I learned was that the small loans to the honest and experienced fishermen are better paid than any other of any sort or kind, and do more good to those to whom they are lent. While I was there I was able, with the assistance of the Irish Members, and especially of one hon. Member whom I am glad to see back in the last day or two—the hon. Gentleman the Member for Carlow (Mr. Blake)—to put these funds in a more accessible shape. The Irish Reproductive Loan Fund and the Sea Fisheries Fund served between them all the maritime counties of Ireland, with a capital of not more than £70,000 or £80,000. The money is lent on short terms for the purchase of good boats and the equipment of nets. The amount of good done is enormous, and the arrears outstanding are quite insignificant. If the fishermen of the Western Isles and Coast had access to such a fund, they

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would not see the fish taken before their very eyes by people from a distance. I should have liked to have supported my observations with a statement of what has been done by the attentive and judicious benevolence of Sir Reginald and Lady Cathcart in the Highlands, in which they own property, which is a most remarkable proof of the enormous benefit which judiciously-disposed loans will do to bold, enterprising and industrious fishermen. Well, when we get into Committee, the Government would like to discuss and would be glad to see their way to placing, under the charge of the Fishery Board, under certain conditions, a fund, it may be small, resembling closely those funds which have succeeded so well in Ireland, and which will enable the fishermen of the West to utilize the best source of wealth which their region offers. And now, Sir, the House is in possession of the proposals of the Government as far as I am competent to explain them, and I am only doubtful in what direction I should appeal in order to recommend them to hon. Members. If I apologize for them as too sweeping, I know there are many Members who will say they do not go far enough, and if I claim that they are the very utmost we can be expected to give, I shall be told by others they go a great deal too far. I do not apologize for them. They are not intended to be a political compromise. They are presented to the House as proposals which, according to our earnest and humble conviction, are right in themselves, and which, if accepted all round in the spirit in which they are offered, will settle, and ought to settle, a burning question. I think that the more hon. Members examine all the alternative proposals the more they will admit that none of the alternatives are really worth adopting. There are other schemes which look better on paper and sound better in speech; but I believe this, and this alone, will work, unless Parliament is prepared—which I hope it is not—to buy up this district of the Highlands out of the taxes, and divide it amongst the masses of the Western Highlands. We have adopted the spirit, and almost the letter, of the plans and recommendations of the Royal Commission, a Commission which was appointed at the instance of Parliament; and we have put those

plans into a shape in which alone, as we maintain, they can by any possibility be brought into practical operation. The Commissioners say—

“The land agitation of the Highlands is not likely to pass away without some adjustment of the claims of occupiers acceptable to the greater number who are not yet possessed with extravagant expectations.”

And their opinion is amply confirmed by the police and the official Reports, which it is frequently my duty very carefully to read. Such an adjustment, in our opinion, we offer to the House; and as a Minister who, by dear-bought experience, knows the nature and the symptoms and the conditions and the consequences of agrarian agitation, and who has now command of exceptional sources of information about the social condition, present and prospective, of the Western Highlands, I solemnly warn and intreat hon. Members not to reject our Bill without very careful consideration. On my responsibility as Minister for Scotland, a very different responsibility from what I was aware of when I took that post—though that only makes the post more acceptable in my eyes—I ask the House to approach this measure in the belief that when they have given it a calm and thorough consideration they will discover it to be a just measure, a practical measure, and, what is almost as important, a measure not one whit stronger than is necessary to effect the objects which we have all so long had in common.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to the tenure of Land by Crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for other purposes relating thereto.”—*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

Mr. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I have, in common with all other Members of the House, listened with the greatest interest to the able and lucid speech just made by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan). In the concluding words of his speech he begged hon. Members who are interested in this question not to reject the Bill without serious consideration. I can assure him that I, for one, will not reject any Bill, however small, without very serious consideration. It is neither usual, nor is it desirable, that on the stage of the introduction of a Bill there should be any-

thing like minute criticism of its provisions. I rise only for the purpose of saying that while I am able to express some satisfaction, I am sorry I am also obliged to express extreme disappointment at the measure proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman has tried to draw a distinction between the position of these poor tenants in Scotland and the poor tenants in Ireland. Now, I am not able to recognize any distinction except in favour of the case of the Scottish tenants. If there is a difference it is a difference in favour of the rights of the tenants of Scotland. I am sorry to see the right hon. Gentleman proposes to adopt the proposal of last year to confine the operation of the Bill to what he is pleased to call certain crofting parishes in the Highlands of Scotland. This is, to me, patchwork legislation. First of all, certain parishes are to be selected, and the Land Act is to apply to them and to no other parishes. It is not my duty to speak on behalf of the Lowland districts of Scotland—they have Representatives of their own; but I can see no reason in the world why an Act which is to apply to Argyllshire, Inverness-shire, and Ross-shire should not be equally applicable to Aberdeenshire, Ayrshire, and Perthshire; indeed, to the whole of Scotland. But it is for the hon. Gentlemen who represent these constituencies to press their claims to be included in the Act. I understand there are more of the class of population commonly called crofters in Aberdeenshire than even in Inverness-shire; but, as the right hon. Gentleman has stated, he proposes to limit the operation of the Bill to the counties enumerated in the Schedule of the Bill of last year. In that Bill Aberdeenshire, Ayrshire, and Perthshire were omitted. Let hon. Members who represent those constituencies bring their case forward when the Bill gets into Committee. Special reference has been made to deer forests, and the right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to show that it was by the operation of natural laws, over which human beings have no control, that the Highlands had been brought into the condition in which they are now. I deny that proposition, and maintain that it is by the action of wicked human laws that the Highlands of Scotland have been brought to that condition. The right hon. Gentleman

says that the general taxpayer is not responsible; but I say that the taxpayer is a continuing quantity, and that he is responsible; so that if the right hon. Gentleman is prepared to put his hand in his pocket I shall support him. I am glad to hear that he is so careful of the fishing population of the Highlands. Why is he not so for those who work on the land? Assistance is as essential for them as it is for the poor tenants of Ireland; and, although there are points of difference, I deny that there is any just distinction to be made between the claims of the two. I am glad, however, that something is being proposed; but I wish it was a more thorough and complete measure, for I assure the right hon. Gentleman, with the deepest regret, that I am perfectly certain that the measure he has proposed, passed even in its integrity through this House and "another place," will not satisfy the Scottish people nor settle this question.

MR. RAMSAY: I am sorry that the first duty of the Secretary for Scotland has been to introduce a Bill which, so far as the distressed districts of Scotland are concerned, must prove illusive. It contains no provision fitted to alleviate the distress of the population in those districts, and that they are deeply distressed no one knows better than I do. That the right hon. Gentleman should have made no provision for removing part of the people from the congested districts, nor any suggestion as to how their distress can be alleviated, constitutes, in my opinion, a very grave defect in the proposal now made to the House. The right hon. Gentleman cannot be expected to be intimately acquainted with these districts. But I have been long acquainted with them; I am an owner of land within the area affected by this measure. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the fact that grazing lands were held in common in the Highlands. But I can assure the right hon. Gentleman, that if he has leisure to investigate that question farther, he will find that there was not a county of Scotland in which, at the beginning of the present century, grazing lands were not held in common by several tenants as they are now in the Highlands. I think provision should be made in the Bill for the alleviation of distress in places where the population has largely increased

Mr. Macfarlane

beyond the means of subsistence, and where no new industry has been introduced. It is in those districts where the distress prevails. The population of Lewis is 25,500 at the present time, and the whole net agricultural rental does not amount to more than £10,000, or about £2 per family, amongst about 5,000 families. If I am correct in this—and I challenge any man who knows the district to say I am not—I say it is impossible that there can be anything like comfort for the population on that area. I do not wish to take up the time of the House now. We shall have an opportunity of discussing the Bill in detail when we get it into Committee, and I shall then bring under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman suggestions, which I shall make as Amendments, for the relief of the distress which prevails among the people of Long Island and Skye. The condition of the people there is deserving of earnest consideration, because they lie under peculiar difficulties produced by their exclusive knowledge of the Gaelic language—difficulties of a kind which no man who has not been among them can form any accurate opinion. I have great respect for the Gentlemen who now constitute Her Majesty's Ministry; but I know not one among them who has any knowledge of these districts, or any knowledge of the condition of agriculture there, or who has ever been practically acquainted with them. I think, therefore, my right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland is under a great disadvantage in having to deal with this question; and if my right hon. Friend has been guided by information in this matter, I feel that he has obtained it from tainted sources, and legislation upon that foundation cannot be of service.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: Sir, I have listened with great attention to the speech in which my right hon. Friend introduced this measure—a measure which, so far as concerns the people of Scotland and the Members of this House who have undertaken to represent them, is second in importance to no measure which it is probable will occupy the consideration of the present Parliament. Sir, I do not wish to enter into any criticism of the Bill, which I have not yet had an opportunity of examining. I have said that I listened with great

interest to the speech of my right hon. Friend, with a great deal of which, especially the closing part of it, I most heartily concur. I most heartily concur with my right hon. Friend in the opinion which he indicated rather than expressed, that the rights of property were more in danger from those who abused than from those who attacked them. I have regretted as much as anyone can possibly regret the course which has been pursued by some so-called sportsmen in my native land. They have assumed to themselves the title of sportsmen; but I think the more appropriate description of them would be that of game dealers. They descend even a little lower in the social scale than that, because, if all the tales are true of the dark deeds perpetrated in some of the Islands, they have descended to the level of butchers. As I said, I intend no criticism of this measure to-night; but as my right hon. Friend has founded his arguments in support of the Bill almost exclusively upon the recommendations of the Royal Commission—and I agree with him that it would be most unfortunate if those recommendations were not followed speedily by legislation—I should like to ask him why he omitted from his speech all reference to one of the recommendations upon which the Commissioners laid especial stress—I mean to that remedial proposal which is contained in their Report for dealing with those districts where the population has for some time past exceeded the means of support? In the matter of emigration the Commissioners speak in no dubious terms; they refer, of course, to the unwillingness of the crofter to emigrate—and, Sir, attachment to one's home and native land is always creditable to the people of a country—but from the time when our common father, Adam, left the Garden of Eden, in obedience to behests which had to be obeyed, emigration has been the lot of man. The Commissioners say that however much they may deplore the necessity which compels from time to time portions of the population of a country to leave that country, still they recognize that it is inevitable, and a law which must be obeyed. At the same time, the Commissioners said that they recognized that emigration was a hardship, and that it is not resorted to without compulsion. But we must also take

this into account. They say that they are—

“Inclined to think that the prevailing land agitation has not been without considerable influence in prompting the expressed dislike to emigration, and they hope that when overpopulation is clearly shown under any distribution of land that can take place, and when they are satisfied that those who remain at home will be cared for, the aversion to emigration will disappear.”

The Commissioners dwell upon this question at considerable length, and they conclude their recommendation as to emigration by saying that they believe that emigration, properly conducted, is an indispensable remedy for the condition of some parts of the Highlands and Islands; and they strongly recommend that, in connection with any measures which may be framed for improving the condition of the crofters and cottars, such provision should be made as they have indicated for assisting emigration, both by State advances and by State direction. Well, Sir, when we have a recommendation couched in such very strong and clear terms, it is somewhat puzzling to know why no reference to this portion of the Report is made in the speech of my right hon. Friend. When we consider that there are large portions of our Colonies which are crying out for population—Colonies whose Governments are willing to give every facility, pecuniary and otherwise, to Colonists, why is it that we insist on the remaining at home, to their own detriment, of the surplus population? We have by our adoption of an unrestricted system of Free Trade—and that is a question upon which I am very far from wishing to enter at present—brought to bear upon the population of this country, who depend upon agriculture, conditions which are very different indeed from those in which agriculture was first adopted in these regions; and when the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland avows that his case is based, first upon the Report of the Royal Commission, and next upon the history, nay, almost upon the archæology, of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, I want to know why it is that these conditions are left entirely out of sight—the new conditions and the keen competition to which agriculture is exposed, and the recommendations which are contained with reference to emigration in the Report of the Royal Com-

mission? I will not ask the House to listen to any further remarks of mine upon this subject to-night; but I trust that it will not be lost sight of, in the consideration of this question, that emigration, not necessarily State-aided, but State-directed emigration, has presented itself to those who performed the duty of examining this great and pressing question, as one of the most ready, one of the most beneficial, and one of the most accessible means of relief to a population distressed by no fault of their own.

DR. CAMERON: Sir, I shall not occupy the attention of the House for more than a few minutes with the few observations I have to make. I must say, after listening to the speech of the Secretary for Scotland, that if my right hon. Friend is under the impression that the measure he proposes will be a settlement of this question for all eternity, or even for a few years, I think he is much mistaken. I think we who are interested in seeing justice done in this matter should take all we can get; but as to regarding the Bill as a settlement, that, I think, is altogether illusory. In the first place, I should like to know whether my right hon. Friend does not intend to do something to prevent the further appropriation of commons in Shetland? There is no reference in the Bill to that subject, although it is dealt with in the Report of the Commissioners. Then with regard to deer forests. I listened with great pleasure to the remarks of my right hon. Friend; but it appears to me both disappointing and illogical that both my right hon. Friend and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) should last year have denounced the evil, and now take no steps to remedy it. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the conduct of certain proprietors with regard to deer forests. I do not know whether it was owing to a slip, but I hope so, that he omitted to tell the House what legislative measures are to be taken to deal with that subject; but I trust that he intends to take some steps, and not merely to allow his indignation to evaporate in empty words. Is it proposed that nothing shall be done for the crofters so far as arable land is concerned? If you leave them in their present condition, they are liable to evictions, and in that case they have no means of keep-

Sir Herbert Maxwell

ing themselves. I should like to have some information on that point, as also upon others of great importance. I ask my right hon. Friend what is intended to be done about the right to notice, and in the matter of arrears? And I point out that the whole of the subjects have been fully touched upon in the Report of the Royal Commissioners. Then, again, there is the case of the cottars. The Report contains a number of suggestions for the benefit of the cottars, and I have not heard throughout the whole of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that one suggestion for their benefit has been adopted. Sir, I imagine that the discontent in the Highlands can never be removed until the case of the cottars is, to some extent, grappled with in the same way as that of the crofters. Then there is another matter quite within the scope of the Bill, and which seems to have received no attention—that is the improvement of communications. The Report of the Commission contained numerous references to instances in which crofters are compelled to pay high rates for the maintenance of roads, when they live, perhaps, 20 miles from the roads. This, I say, is a point which, in any Bill entitled to be regarded as an efficient measure, must be dealt with. Then I must remind the House that the right hon. Gentleman has told us nothing about the right to heather, sea-ware, and things of that sort, which are required by the people of these districts. I should be very glad also if the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate Mr. J. B. Balfour will give us some information as to when it is proposed to go on with the second reading of the Bill. Of course, we shall have Notice of that; but, at the same time, I would say that our experience is not favourable to the postponement of the second reading stage of such Bills; and, therefore, I trust that the period of delay which will elapse before the second reading is taken will not be so long as to jeopardize the tardy instalment of relief which the Bill offers, and which, in a very much improved and extended form, we hope soon to see on the Statute Book.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Sir, I am sure that all hon. Members have listened with great interest to the sympathetic terms in which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland

described the great evil with which he proposed to cope in the measure now before the House. I also acknowledge the great difficulties which surround this question, and the very great difficulty of dealing with it. At the same time, I am compelled to express my opinion, in common with other hon. Members who have spoken on the question, that the remedies suggested in the Bill are hedged around with so many limitations that I fear that it will have comparatively little effect. But, Sir, I will not go into details at the present moment. There is only one question to which I will refer. I gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that it is not proposed that any public money should be given in order to remedy the great evils which he has depicted. The right hon. Gentleman says there is no more reason why public money should be given to the Highlands of Scotland than to any other parts of the United Kingdom. I am under the impression, however, that large sums of money have been given in aid of various parts of the country; and it seems to me that schemes are in the air in connection with which, so it is said, large sums of money are to be asked for for the purpose of getting over difficulties in Ireland. I am not one of those who have tried to press upon Her Majesty's Government that they should make new demands upon the taxpayers of the country; and I will only say now that if we are to be called upon to assist the tenants in Ireland out of the public funds, it should be borne in mind that the people in the Highlands of Scotland are in no less need of assistance, and that I hope their claim in this respect will have the attention of Her Majesty's Government.

DR. CLARK: Sir, I desire to express my thanks for the tone of sympathy in which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland has spoken with regard to the crofter population. I think that the principles which underlie the Bill will solve the land questions, if they are carried out as they ought to be. The Bill contains all the principles which those who agree with me desire to see carried out. If we get a fair rent fixed by a competent tribunal, we shall be satisfied so far as that question is concerned. If we can secure a durable tenure, compensation to tenants for improvements, and more land for the people

—if all these principles are fairly carried out, then I say that this measure will go a long way to solve the Highland difficulty. But I do not think that the Bill goes far enough in its provisions to carry out these principles. The restrictions it places on the action of the crofter are very unwise; they will even prevent him improving his dwelling-house. What the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) ought to do is to stimulate the crofters to improve their homes by erecting new dwellings, and induce them to give up their old black houses in favour of more modern white ones. Every inducement ought to be given the crofters to improve their dwellings. This is a very important question; and although I do not intend to take up the time of the House to-night, I desire to give an idea of the way in which the present system works. I was in the Island of Arran four years ago, and I lived with a crofter who had torn down his black house and erected a comfortable white building with windows in it. He had a lease from the landlord, who was a certain noble Duke, and while I was there his lease expired and his rent was raised from £18 to £80 a-year, which was the result of his having improved his house. Fortunately, however, the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) has a paper which is very largely circulated in the district I refer to, and its influence prevented the full raising of the rent from being carried into effect. I am sure, however, that the poor man would not have been able to get £18 out of his croft that year, for the deer of the noble Duke, his landlord, had come down and eaten nearly all his crops. I have said that there are four principles in this Bill which will go far to solve this question; but we expected the provisions of the Bill to have gone much further than we have had explained to-night. The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) told his constituents during the Election that the next Crofters' Bill would be a much more Radical measure than that introduced last year; but it is simply the old Bill over again, *plus* the compulsory leasing of pasture land. The right hon. Gentleman—one of the Members from Birmingham—(Mr. J. Chamberlain) also told us that this Bill would be much more drastic than the old one; but I do not see that it is more drastic.

Dr. Clark

The other measure was drastic enough if it had been carried through logically; and the Scotch crofters will not be satisfied with less than has been given to the Irish cottiers. If the Government is not prepared to give an increase of arable land as well as pasture land, there is no use in dealing with the question at all. The "three F's" will not settle it; even to give the crofters their present holdings free from both rents and taxes—even then they will not solve this Highland question. The crofters have not forgotten their rights, as the farmers of England and of the Lothians have done; but they believe that they have been defrauded of their rights, and they will not be satisfied until they have regained them. I must say that I am very much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for the sympathy which he has expressed towards these poor crofters; but I am bound to say, also, that what he has given with one hand he has taken away with the other, and that is a proceeding which the hard-headed crofter will be well able to see through, and will refuse to accept as a settlement.

Mr. H. G. REID: I should not have ventured at this late hour to detain the House if it had not been for the challenge thrown out by an hon. Member, who said that no one personally acquainted with the facts could accept the statements of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan), and insinuated that his statements were based on information received from tainted sources, and on superficial observation. Allow me, as representing a great industrial constituency in the Midlands, and as one who has risen from the ranks of the Scottish crofters, to repudiate these insinuations. From early and bitter experience I can testify to the deplorable condition of the crofters, and the imperative need that exists for finding a speedy remedy. The speech to which we have listened in support of the proposed Bill will send a thrill of joy through the hearts of thousands in Scotland—more, perhaps, from the spirit it evinces and the hopes it inspires than from the specific remedies suggested. I do not undervalue these remedies. They go very far in the right direction, and it may be possible to give them at a future stage a wider scope. The Royal Commission, to which reference has been made, admitted that

in the North of Scotland an "economic crisis" has been reached. The time has come when the grievances must be dealt with in a thorough and practical form. They are the upgrowth of generations of misgovernment and oppression. I shall not go so far back as an hon. Gentleman opposite, and begin with our venerable ancestor, Adam; but, were this the time or occasion, I could tell how my ancestors, like thousands more, were within the past generation driven from their homes; how, when returning from church or from market, they found their dwellings unroofed and their bedding in flames; how they were driven out to people and make prosperous Upper Canada and other distant domains. Someone whispers that their leaving was for their own good. ["Hear, hear!"] I readily admit that the change was for their own good, and for the good of their adopted country; but that is certainly no excuse for the system under which they were expatriated, to the serious detriment of their native land. And as to the complaint uttered by an hon. Member opposite, that the crofters are reluctant to emigrate, let me just ask—Who peopled Upper Canada? I regret that the Government Bill is not more comprehensible in its scope, and that the discussion seems to imply that the only people who are suffering in Scotland are the Highland crofters. I am intimately acquainted with the Lowlands, and, if time permitted, I could show that the suffering there is equally severe, and in some respects more harassing and hopeless than in the Highlands. The small holders in the Lowlands are, for the most part, under 19 years' leases. During past years rents have been increased, and to-day there are multitudes being subjected to a process of eviction as cruel and exacting as that which exists in the Highlands. Behind with the rents, which they are unable to pay, their stock and furniture are being sold off, and they themselves reduced to the point of starvation, whilst remorselessly bound by the terms of their leases. Something, I trust, will yet be done for them—something to rescue an industrious and honest and long-suffering race from the worst form of extermination. Let us, then, accept the proposals of the Government in the generous spirit in which they are made.

They assert and embody the fundamental principle that justice must be done to this class—that fixity of tenure, fairly-adjusted rents, compensation for improvements, and extended holdings, shall be conceded; and when the Bill comes before us, let us wisely and firmly try to amend and extend it, so as to render it as largely beneficial as possible.

DR. R. McDONALD: Like the rest of my hon. Friends, I am very pleased that the Bill goes so far—that is, if the principles it contains are carried out to their logical conclusion, which is not the case at present. In my opinion, half-a-loaf is better than no bread; and, therefore, I am prepared to accept the measure which the right hon. Gentleman has introduced; but I hope it will be extended to some extent in Committee. We have been asked why was emigration not going on? Well, we know that it has been the policy of the landlords for some time past to emigrate the people away from the Highlands. We know that the landlords feel that the only way to make the Highlands pay is by turning them into deer forests and clearing the crofters away altogether; but I hope that we shall hear nothing more of that now. As a matter of fact, the Highlands are very thinly populated at present, and it will be time to talk about emigration when we have properly populated them. There is one point in the Bill which I am pleased to see, and that is that we are not going to have the land bought up from the landlords; and I hope that we shall never see anything more of that sort, and that the same principle will be applied to the Sister Isle. We have a right to make them let the land at a reasonable rent; but we have no right to make them sell out, and purchase their property out of the rates of our country. There is one other matter to which I should like to call attention, and which I consider to be one of the great blots on the Bill, and that is the question of arable land. The right hon. Gentleman said that it is not necessary to put a provision in the Bill to extend the arable land which the crofters had, because they had it all already; but I beg to challenge that statement, because it is well known that the arable land is mostly in the hands of the large farmers. What is the good, therefore, of

giving the crofters a bare hill side? Unless we give the crofters the power of enlarging their one or two acres of arable land, no good whatever will be done. That, in my mind, is the greatest point in connection with the Bill. And why should we not extend the power of acquiring arable land? Why carry out a principle in regard to one sort of land and not another? I hope that this matter will be reconsidered; and I hope that no one knowing the Highlands will say again that the crofters already hold the greater portion of the arable land. Whenever we see good arable land in the Highlands we find that it is mostly in the possession of the large farmers; and unless means are taken to increase that in the possession of the small crofters, the Bill will not go as far as it should do. We have been told, also, that gentlemen having deer forests spend a large amount of money among the people. Well, that is all very well; but we who know the Highland mountains know that that is not so. When they do spend money they spend it for their own purposes, and amongst their own people, who are amongst the most demoralized portion of the whole of our Highland population. I am very pleased also that there are no proposals in the Bill in regard to game, because I think that every man ought to have the right to shoot what game he can. I am glad, moreover, to see the provisions as to fishing; but there is another point in connection with fishing which the Government must consider, and that is with reference to the construction of suitable harbours. The crofters must have more piers and harbours, or they cannot carry on the fishing industry satisfactorily. At present they cannot use large boats, because they cannot get them up out of the sea; and in bad weather they can do nothing with the small boats at their disposal, because there is every chance of their getting drowned. Another point is this—that the Government should make some provision for giving these people money to enable them to stock their farms, for what is the good of giving them land if they have no stock to put on it? The Government lend money to promote the fisheries industry, but they do not do so to promote the better cultivation of the land; and I think this is a point which might well be considered at some future period.

Dr. R. McDonald

SIR DONALD CURRIE: I think that the scope of the Bill might very well be extended to other parts of Scotland, and I hope, at least, that the right hon. Gentleman will consent to make its provisions embrace Perthshire.

MR. PICTON: There is only one point which I should like to call attention to; but I cannot help expressing my pleasure at hearing the words of sympathy which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) spoke in regard to the crofters. I could not help wishing, when I heard him express his indignation in regard to deer forests, that the provisions of the Bill came up to the right hon. Gentleman's indignation. The point to which I desire to call attention, however, is the possibility, or more than possibility, of extensive evictions. Nothing has been said as to the intention of the Government in regard to the grievance which may arise on this score. Possibly the matter does not properly arise on this Bill, yet it may be that this Bill will do incalculable mischief. It must certainly tend to increase the evictions, because, in view of its passing, the landlords may endeavour to get rid of what they will call a troublesome class as soon as possible.

DR. FARQUHARSON: I wish to extend the right hand of fellowship to the very excellent measure which has just been brought in, which I think carries out many of the best principles of agricultural legislation. I think, however, that my right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) should give a favourable ear to the Bill which some of my hon. Friends are going to bring in, which meets a great many of those points which have been mentioned by hon. Members in this discussion. In regard to what has fallen from my hon. Friend, who pointed out that the Bill might be made to apply very much more widely than it did, I wish to point out that in Aberdeenshire, which I represent, there are a great many small holdings, and I hope that the provisions of the Bill will be extended to that county.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): In reply to the question which has been put to me by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) as to whether the Bill will apply to Shetland or not, I have to say that that will depend upon whether the crofters' rights

of grazing there will be covered by the Bill. I do not know the particulars of that case; but my hon. Friend can draw his own conclusion from what I have said. In regard to arable land, it appears to us that there would be great difficulty in allowing extensions of arable land in one part of the country and not in others. The reason of our dealing with pasture land is that the deprivation of pasture has been a serious inconvenience to the crofters, because they have not been able to keep cattle or sheep; but now they will be in a position to do so. But that matter has been fully explained by my right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan). With regard to the question of notice, that matter has not escaped the attention of the Government, and we have, in Clause 3 of the Bill, given a greater length of time during which the arrears are not to constitute a ground of removal from the farm. The provisions as to security of tenure will apply to tenants of arable land as well as to tenants of other kinds of land. The question of arrears, of course, raises an enormous question, and I do not think the Crofters' Commission have suggested any legislation on that point. With regard to the cottar, we propose to deal with him very much in the same way as in the Bill of last year. I have had very many cases of hardship brought under my notice in some of the Highlands, of the people being obliged to pay a road rate, when in some cases there is nothing in the nature of a road within three miles of their holdings; but I am afraid that that question does not come within the scope of this Bill. It is an incidental question which really falls under the heading of road administration. There are no advantages derived by any resident from a main road such as there are from such roads as a rate will enable to be made. Still, a person who is made to pay without any advantage from the rate will feel the hardship. With regard to sea-ware, no doubt there are some provisions or recommendations it is difficult to work out by legislation; but I should hope, as time passes, that there will be fair tolerance on the part of proprietors to allow sea-ware to be used. Another point was referred to by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), who said there was no provision for fisheries. There is pro-

vision for certain money being devoted to fisheries, and all who have studied this question look to that as one of the greatest sources of amelioration for the crofter population. Then the hon. Member for Caithness (Mr. Clark) rather lamented that there was no adequate inducement to the crofter to give up his bad house and build a better. Well, we think we have given a very material inducement on that question, because we have provided, in a scheme much more liberal than the Agricultural Holdings Act, that a crofter, when he removes, shall be entitled to fair compensation for what he has built on his holding, always subject to the reasonable provision that it shall be suitable to the holding. I do not think he is likely to be too extravagant in this matter. When we propose to provide here that without any antecedent notice to the landlord, or subsequent consent, there shall be fair compensation given, that does seem the most practical inducement that you can give to any man to build the best kind of house that his money will enable him to build. I have no doubt that that will prove a great amelioration of the character of the dwellings inhabited by this class of the population. Something was said about comparison with the Irish Land Act; but I would point out that there are some things which will be given by this Bill which have never been given in Ireland. The tenure will be a more enduring one, and the provision for enlargement of pasture is more extensive than anything which has ever been suggested for Ireland. Something was said about allotments, by way of reference to the cottage provisions of the recent Irish legislation; but it must be borne in mind that these were only provisions to give half-acres as adjoining a house. There was no provision for making farms for anyone; therefore, it will be found, on reflection, that there has been no want of regard to small interests in Scotland as compared with Ireland. One remark was made in regard to harbours. I am quite sure that all who know the Islands will be desirous of seeing better harbours made in numerous places, because it is generally known that one of the great difficulties of prosecuting fishing successfully is that the existing harbours cannot be used by the boats on account of insufficient depth of water. The

boats have to be drawn up on the beach, and, of course, a boat that can be used in that way is not one that can withstand rough weather and proceed with safety to the more distant fishing grounds. The Piers and Harbours Committee, on the testimony they received, thought that money should not be spent by way of advance for harbours that are of mere local importance—that unless they are of national importance advances should not be made. No doubt, however, there are provisions by which it is possible to obtain loans for these local harbours; but then, of course, the main difficulty in many of the Islands and Highlands would be to find persons to take on themselves the liability for the expenditure. That matter, however, has not been overlooked, because within the last few years we have made some provision under which one harbour at least has been made, the surplus of the herring fishing brand fees having been taken in towards the expense. I should rejoice if any other funds were put at the disposal of those concerned in this matter in Scotland. I do not think at present it is possible to do any more than take these herring brand fees; there has not appeared any disposition that any more should be done. I do not think any other points were referred to by way of question. I am not going into the details of the Bill, which, when it is before hon. Members, they will have an opportunity of studying for themselves. Something has been said as to when it will be possible to take the second reading. It will be a day or two before it will be in the hands of Members; therefore, probably it will be to the convenience of the House that it should be read a second time about 10 days hence.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH: Will it be put down as the first Order of the Day?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I shall only be too glad to get as good a place as possible for the second reading among the Orders.

THE MARQUESS OF STAFFORD: I desire to explain that the Local Authority referred to in the Bill I have introduced is meant to be the Local Authority to be appointed under the Local Government scheme, and not the Commissioners of Supply. With reference to the question of keeping deer, my intention is that

everyone who has a deer forest should fence it properly so as to prevent the deer trespassing. I am glad the Government are going to help these people in regard to fishing, as I am sure assistance granted in that direction will be one of the most important ameliorations possible.

MR. McCULLOCH: I am very glad to be able to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland on the spirit which has pervaded the introduction of this measure. But the Bill is by no means clear of defects. I think there is a want of scope in locality, and in some other of the provisions the right hon. Gentleman indicated—for instance, in the distinction drawn between arable and pasture land; but I will say that he laid down a principle which this House cannot too widely endorse—namely, that it is impolitic to take public money for the purpose of buying land for any section of the community. That is, I think, to more advanced Liberals the most valuable of principles that have been held by this House. There was one proposition, however, which the right hon. Gentleman asked the House to affirm, to which, on my part, I can give no assent—that the landlords in Scotland have in all cases been considerate and wise. I maintain that the rents have been screwed up by legal machinery, and that they have had, by the very nature of the land itself, a monopoly. The thin end of the wedge is now put in, and I think some of the principles of tenant right will have to be extended to every section of tenants in Scotland. Why? Because the rents now are such that the tenants cannot pay them out of the surplus after the charges of production have been met. A remission of rents is, consequently, as necessary to large tenants as to the crofters; and at the proper time I shall move an Amendment to the effect that the same principle which is applicable to the crofters should be extended to those who have, in consequence of laws unjust and impolitic, been forced into paying more than the natural rent of the land, and into positions which are just as full of vicissitudes as that of the crofters. When this measure is again brought up, I think we should go further and do something for those who have entered into long leases under circumstances that do not at this moment continue. I

The Lord Advocate

say, again, that the landlords of Scotland have not, in their relations to the larger tenants, as well as to the smaller, been wise and considerate.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: Before you put the Question from the Chair, Mr. Speaker, I should like to say one word. I should have liked, had it been possible, to have expressed my opinion on the Bill like other hon. Members opposite; but as it is not desirable to protract the debate further, it will be well that what remains to be said should be said on the second reading. I think we have to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland for a most lucid and clear statement; but the very lucidity and clearness of his statement have brought out most forcibly that when we come to read the measure which has been prepared by himself and the Lord Advocate, it will be found to be different to a very great extent from the one that was before the House in the early part of this year. Therefore, it will be desirable to have it discussed on the second reading, when the whole terms of it will be before the House. I must say that, from the debate which I have listened to with great interest and attention to-night, I think it desirable, as the Lord Advocate has suggested, that one should have some time for preparing for the debate on the second reading. I myself have taken a great interest in this question, because, having held the Office that the right hon. Gentleman now holds for some time, I was busy in preparing to meet the crofter difficulty to the best of my power. But I have also an interest in it as being myself a Highlander and the son of a Highlander. I do trust, if it is possible, by any means, that we shall be able to bring to an end this difficult and distressing subject, which at present is disturbing so many minds. But, as I said, I do not think it desirable to protract this debate any longer in a rather thin House. The subject will have to be taken up pretty fully on the second reading, and I should like to reserve what I have to say to that occasion.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *ordered* to be brought it by Mr. TRAVELMAN, The Lord Advocate, and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 118.]

ORDER OF THE DAY.

LUNACY (VACATING OF SEATS) BILL.
(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Fuleston, Mr. William Corbet.*)

[BILL 85.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

DR. CAMERON: I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair. I simply want to get into Committee on the Bill, and propose at once to move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Dr. Cameron.*)—put, and *agreed to*.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday* next.

MOTIONS.

RIVERS POLLUTION (RIVER LEA).

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR. CHARLES RUSSELL): My object in giving Notice of the Motion which appears on the Paper in my name was to call attention to the existing law for the prevention of pollution in rivers, and the defects therein with reference especially to the River Lea; and to move—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the condition of the River Lea, and to make such recommendations as may appear necessary."

But I am glad to say it will not be necessary for me to trouble the House at any length upon this subject. I prepared this Motion as a private Member, and then had an opportunity of consulting the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) and President of the Local Government Board (Mr. A. J. Balfour), and I received the assent of these right hon. Gentlemen, who agree in the desirability of this Committee being appointed. Similar assent was given by the present Home Secretary Mr. Childers and President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain), and, with the permission of the House, seeing that there is a general concurrence as to the desirability of the Committee, I am content to move for its appointment without further observations.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the condition of the River Lea, and to make such recommendations as may appear necessary."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

MR. SOLATER-BOOTH: It would be ungracious and unreasonable to complain of the statement of the Attorney General being short and unsatisfactory. At the same time, I would venture to remark that, according to my experience, the duties of a Select Committee on a particular subject are facilitated very much if something like guidance and light is given to them in the discussion accompanying the Motion for their appointment. This appointment is in connection with the River Lea. I should like very well to see the provisions of the Rivers Pollution Prevention Act examined by a Committee, especially in connection with such an important matter as it proposed to refer to this Committee. However, at present, I only wish to guard myself in this way by saying that whenever a subject is brought before a Select Committee without any particular guidance on the part of the House, there is apt to be a little confusion or delay, and perhaps some unsatisfactory result, which might have been prevented by more full and complete discussion.

SIR LEWIS PELL: I would venture to occupy the time of the House for one moment on this subject. I submit that it is most desirable that this Committee should be appointed. I represent the Division of Hackney through which the River Lea takes part of its course, and I have been communicated with by my constituents on the subject of the condition of the stream. I also have had the honour of presenting a Petition on the subject.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR. CHARLES RUSSELL): I wish to say, in answer to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Solater-Booth), that I am obliged to him for not being hard on me for my reticence, as the Motion was unopposed. I desired to save the House the trouble of listening to a statement hardly necessary under the circumstances. I trust that this Committee may have the benefit of the services of the right hon. Gentleman, who took such an important part in the legislation on the subject, and in connection with the Bill of 1876. Any-

one with experience of the working of the existing law and of the condition of the River Lea, must see that the law requires considerable amendment.

MR. HASTINGS: It is rather unfortunate that the subject actually referred to this Committee is so restricted. I am aware that the River Lea is in a bad condition, and that it is urgent that something should be done; but I think there are other rivers which require to have something done to them. The river that flows through my own county—the River Severn—is being more and more polluted every year by the amount of sewage poured into it. It seems to me, therefore, that the Committee should not be entirely restricted to the Lea. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Solater-Booth) must be well aware that while the Act, the passage of which he facilitated, is excellent, so far as its provisions go, there is this great defect in the state of the law—that it is exceedingly difficult to put it in force. What is wanted is something to enable the law to be put in force, and if the hon. and learned Gentleman (the Attorney General) should be able to throw some light on that question, so far as all rivers are concerned, I, for one, should be glad.

Motion agreed to.

NATIONAL PROVIDENT INSURANCE.

Select Committee appointed, "to inquire into the best system of National Provident Insurance against Pauperism."—(*Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Educational Endowments do consist of Seventeen Members:—Committee nominated of,—Mr. H. G. ALLEN, Mr. L. L. COHEN, Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Mr. COLENS-HARDY, Mr. DILLON, Mr. J. E. ELLIS, Lord FRANCIS HERVEY, Mr. STAVELY HILL, Sir HENRY HOLLAND, Mr. ILLINGWORTH, Mr. COUNTEY KENNY, Mr. MACKELTNE, Mr. C. S. PARKER, Sir LYON PLAYFAIR, Mr. F. S. POWELL, Mr. STANHOPE, and Mr. J. G. TALBOT, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir Lyon Playfair.*)

WATERWORKS (RATING) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Gerald Balfour, Bill to amend the Law relating to Waterworks Undertakings belonging to Local Authorities, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Gerald Balfour, Mr. Dodds, Mr. Coddington, Sir H. Roscoe, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Picton.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 117.]

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 26th February, 1886.

MINUTES]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, appointed and nominated.

PUBLIC BILL Committee—Freshwater Fisheries (Eels) ^o, 15-23.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

COLONIES—IMPERIAL AND COLONIAL DEFENCES.

ADDRESS FOR RETURNS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising to move for—

“Returns of the number of naval and military officers now employed in the service of the Colonies by the permission of the Board of Admiralty and of the War Office; of officers who have, in addition to the above, applied for permission so to serve, of assistance given to the Colonial Governments in ships, guns, or other military stores.”

and to ask, whether Her Majesty's Government intend to propose to the Colonial Governments any scheme by which the Naval and Military Forces of this country and of the Colonies may be made interchangeable for the purposes of Imperial or Colonial defence, or by which, if deemed preferable, the services of officers and men may become available for the protection of the Colonies and their commerce without detriment to their prospects in the Imperial Navy and Army? pointed out that this Motion had been some considerable time before their Lordships and the public. Growing importance had been attached to the subject every year, and the desirableness of associating ourselves with the Colonies and they with us for the purposes not only of Colonial, but of mutual defence had been gradually recognized. Any scheme of this kind was calculated to be beneficial, not only to this country and the Colonies, but to the officers of both Services and the taxpayers as well. He had recently made inquiries as to the number of officers in both Services who were compulsorily retired, and who had expressed their willingness to serve in the Colonies. After a close investigation he had found that a very large number of military and naval officers had applied, in most in-

stances in vain, for employment in different branches of the Public Service. The majority of these officers were men who were still capable of doing good service to the country or to the Colonies, though they had been obliged to resign their appointments in consequence of the Rules of the Service. Out of 114 officers who had applied for some kind of work, the average age was 50; among those who had been compulsorily retired in the Army alone there were 280 officers of various ages, ranging from 41 to 60. When the country considered the amount of useful public work which could be got out of men in other professions between those ages, it must seem absurd that the taxpayers should be willing to pay these men, in the shape of pensions, for doing nothing—for living in compulsory idleness. At the present time it was almost impossible for officers of the rank of Major General, Colonel, Admiral, or Captain of the Navy, to obtain employment in the Civil Service; but there was a large field of employment open to them in the Colonies, and there they were very largely needed. The men were only willing to obtain employment; but when they applied at the different Offices for an engagement they were told that they could not be employed because it was against public feeling to employ men of their rank, even although they were competent to do the work required. In that connection, he would refer to the fact that Sir Cooper Key had been retired in the prime of life; that Admiral Sir John Hay was retired 10 years ago—and, since his retirement, had served his country in Parliament, when he was well able to serve it in another way—both men being in the full vigour of mind and body; that Sir R. Stopford conducted operations with great success at the age of 73; and that Sir W. Parker was employed in China after he had attained the age of 60. At a time when the House of Commons was carefully scrutinizing the Pension List, it was advisable, he thought, to point out that the Pension List of the officers on retired pay in the Army alone amounted to £1,300,000. Before the abolition of purchase that Pension List did not cost the country more than £60,000. While they were clearing the list in order to promote young officers they were removing able men, some of

whom were more fitted by experience to discharge the duties required than those who received promotion. He, therefore, asked the Government whether the time had not come when, considering the strong opinion expressed in many quarters out-of-doors, they might form some real and tangible scheme which the Colonists could accept, and which would be for the advantage of all? The opinions he had expressed were not the vague opinions of the public outside, but such men as Mr. Forster and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (the Earl of Rosbery) had expressed views to a similar effect. He did not think a more patriotic object could be urged on the attention of the country, or that there was one more deserving the attention of any Government which did not seek popularity, but which was desirous of strengthening the military and naval defences of the Empire.

Address for—

"Returns of the number of naval and military officers now employed in the service of the Colonies by the permission of the Board of Admiralty and of the War Office; of officers who have, in addition to the above, applied for permission so to serve; of assistance given to the Colonial Governments in ships, guns, or other military stores."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Earl GRANVILLE): I entirely agree with the noble Viscount as to the great interest of the subject on which he has put Questions. The subject is one which applies to other Departments besides that of the Colonial Department; but I can give an answer to the Questions he has put. The Return of the number of naval and military officers now employed in the service of the Colonies by the permission of the Board of Admiralty can be given. The number of officers who have, in addition to the above, applied for permission so to serve cannot be given. No record is kept of the unsuccessful applications for particular vacancies. With regard to the assistance given to the Colonial Governments in ships, guns, or other military stores, the noble Viscount has specified no time. It would be useless to go into ancient history on this subject—*e.g.*, as to what was left in New Zealand when the Imperial troops were finally withdrawn many years ago. The Parliamentary Return issued by the War Office last year (Army, Colonies, No. 69 of 1885) gives

Viscount Sidmouth

a general statement showing the Army Expenditure under certain heads in the Colonies. With some limit of date the War Office and the Admiralty could supply a Return of the amount of ships, guns, and stores supplied to the large responsible Colonies, distinguishing what were given and were paid for. They are accustomed to pay for what they want, and the large Colonial Governments would object to applications *in forma pauperis*. The High Commissioner for Canada and the Agent General for Victoria have drawn the attention of the Secretary of State to some of the arrangements under which officers of the Army and Navy are lent to Colonial Governments. A Committee was accordingly appointed to consider the subject, in conference with the Agents General. The Report of the Committee has been received, and Her Majesty's Government hope shortly to communicate their view to the Governments interested in the question.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE: I am glad this subject has been brought forward, and I am pleased to hear the answer given by the noble Earl (Earl Granville), for there is no subject of more importance to the general interests of the Empire. There has been a recent opportunity of seeing what the Colonies could do. They came forward in a most handsome and proper manner, and evinced not only an excellent spirit, but also produced a very good result in placing their forces at the disposal of the Crown. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that in the opinion of your Lordships every facility should be given for improvement in that direction; and depend upon it this is not only a very valuable object in sentiment, but it will also be of immense importance to us to know that the distant parts of our great Empire have reliable forces to enable them to take care of themselves. If we have large Possessions to defend, we must have large forces to undertake that defence, and the possession of such a Colonial Force is, besides, of great economical value. In order to facilitate that state of matters there is no doubt of the importance of the view urged by the noble Viscount (Viscount Sidmouth). It so happens that there is considerable difficulty in finding employment for compulsorily retired officers. What the Colonies want is officers. The Colonial

Forces provide a good field for their employment. The Colonies have an abundance of material for junior officers; but they want tried and experienced officers. We have a considerable number of retired officers here who are very efficient, but who, according to the Rules of the Service, have been obliged to retire. These officers, I think, should be encouraged to serve the State in the Colonies. It is said that officers so employed ought not to retain their retired pay. This is a mistake, I think, because they have earned it. You do not stop the retired pay of officers who go into civil occupations or professions, and I do not think it would be fair to stop it in cases where they go into the Colonial Service. This is a small matter, but still it is an important one; and I am sure the Government will feel the force of the observations of the noble Viscount. I think the more intimacy there is between all our Services, and the more the Colonies are supported and encouraged in that way, the better it will be for the interests of the Empire at large.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, he should be quite content to accept the Return in its amended form.

Return amended, and agreed to.

SALE OF POISONS—LEGISLATION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether, considering that a Bill upon the subject was read a second time in this House last Session and referred to a Select Committee, it is their intention to introduce this Session a Bill for regulating the sale of poisons? The noble Earl said, that a feeling of very considerable uneasiness had existed in the public mind for some time in consequence of the great laxity of the regulations prevailing with regard to the sale of poisons. This laxity gave not only great facilities for the committal of crime—murder and suicide—but also, in many cases, led to accidental death. His feeling in the matter had been considerably intensified of late by a case of a very remarkable nature now before the public. All he intended to say about that case was, that it disclosed the extraordinary facility which persons, who were absolutely unknown to the vendors, had for obtaining the most deadly poisons. His noble Friend Lord Car-

lingford) introduced a Bill on this subject last Session, and after Petitions had been received from nearly every town in England praying their Lordships either to reject the measure or refer it to a Select Committee he agreed to adopt the latter course. For some reason or other the Committee was not appointed, and the Bill was allowed to drop. He ventured to hope that the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council (Earl Spencer) would re-introduce either the Bill of last Session, or a similar Bill, which would contain provisions regulating the sale of poisons by apothecaries, general practitioners, and veterinary surgeons, as well as by chemists.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (EARL SPENCER) said, he must confess that he was relieved by the speech of the noble Earl of a difficulty in which he found himself placed when he took up the newspapers that morning and read that the noble Earl (the Earl of Milltown) had last night introduced a Bill dealing with poisons, and that it had been read a first time. He felt as if he were to blame personally for not having, while sitting on the Front Ministerial Bench, heard the noble Earl's speech, nor the announcement that he introduced such a Bill. With regard to the Question of the noble Earl, he might say that the Government were now considering the subject; and in a very few days he hoped to be able to inform him whether they intended to introduce a Bill. He would undertake, if they did introduce the Bill, to give a convenient time for its consideration.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, that the Bill which he ventured to present to their Lordships yesterday evening and which was read a first time had nothing to do with poisons. Quite the reverse; it was a Bill for the prevention of the sale for building purposes of the sites of City churches. No doubt he had been indistinctly heard in the Reporters' Gallery.

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS AND OFFICE OF THE GENTLEMAN USHER OF THE BLACK ROD.

APPOINTMENT AND NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE EARL OF REDENDALE moved the appointment of the Select Com-

mittee on the Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod; and that the Lords following be named of the Committee:—

Ld. Chancellor.	E. Camperdown.
Ld. President.	E. Granville.
D. Richmond.	E. Kimberley.
D. Saint Albans.	E. Redesdale.
D. Bedford.	E. Lathom.
M. Salisbury.	V. Hawarden.
M. Bath.	V. Hardinge.
Ld. Steward.	V. Eversley.
E. Devon.	Ld. Chamberlain.
E. Tankerville.	L. Monson.
E. Carnarvon.	L. Colchester.
E. Belmore.	L. Ker.
E. Harrowby.	L. Aveland.
E. Bradford.	L. Colville of Culross.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK said, he hoped that the Committee that would be appointed would pay some attention to the ventilation of the House. Before their Lordships entered the House this evening not only was the atmosphere bad, but it was foul and fetid. The system by which the House was ventilated was so extremely scientific that no one could understand it. The mode of ventilation was by pumping up cold air under their Lordships' feet, while their heads were swimming in an atmosphere of a very disagreeable character. That was a state of things which he did not think could be beneficial to anyone but their Lordships' sons; but, in his opinion, changes in the constitution of the House ought to be made gradually. He hoped, therefore, it would be part of the duty of the Committee to take some steps to improve the ventilation.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, he observed that he was proposed as one of the Members of the Committee. If he found that the subject came within the jurisdiction of the Committee, nothing would give him more satisfaction than to press on the attention of the Committee, or of any other authority, the question to which the noble Earl had called attention. It would be his lot to sit in that House for many hours of the day besides those during which their Lordships were present. He had had some experience of that atmosphere, for he had spent many hours and many days, year after year, at one end of the Chamber, and he never spent a day there without returning home with a headache which he had never felt when he had been

The Earl of Redesdale

before any other tribunal. Therefore, the question of the ventilation of the House to which the noble Earl had called attention was deeply impressed upon his mind. So far as he had any say in the matter, attention would be paid to it.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 26th February, 1886.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—considered in Committee Resolutions [February 25] reported.

PRIVATE BILL (by Order)—Second Reading—Glasgow Bridges, &c.

PUBLIC BILLS—Ordered—First Reading—Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order * [119]; Compensation for Damages * [120]; Marriages (Attendance of Registrars) * [121].

Second Reading—Sporting Lands Rating (Scotland) [86].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

GLASGOW BRIDGES, &c. BILL.

(by Order.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. CRAIG-SELLAR: This Bill proposes to transfer the management of the Glasgow bridges from the bridge Trustees to the Local Authority, which is the Corporation of Glasgow. It further proposes to widen Glasgow Bridge, and to expend certain sums of money, for the purpose. These provisions do not prejudicially affect my constituents, and with them I shall not trouble the House. But there are other provisions, which, in my opinion, not only prejudice the interests of my constituents, but interfere with the authority of Parliament. My constituents are grouped in certain burghs in the county of Lanarkshire, outside the municipal boundaries of Glasgow; and the nearest point in

these burghs to the Glasgow Bridge, which it is proposed to widen under this Bill, is some two miles distant. All these burghs oppose this Bill through their Local Authorities; and the chief ground of their opposition is that this Private Bill will vitally interfere with the provisions of a Public Act of Parliament still in full force. In 1878 an important Act was passed by Parliament, called the Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act. That Act was the result of protracted and important negotiations between the public Boards and others interested in the maintenance and repair of the roads and bridges in Scotland, and a special inquiry was directed to be made into the relations which existed between the town of Glasgow and the adjacent counties of Renfrew and Lanark, together with the police burghs which are situated in those counties. As the case was a peculiar one a Special Commission was appointed to inquire into the circumstances connected with it, and the result of the protracted negotiations which followed the inquiry was that the Act to which I refer was passed, and a special provision was inserted in that Act applicable to the relations of the City of Glasgow with the counties of Lanark and Renfrew and the police burghs. There are some general provisions in the Act; but the special provision I wish to call attention to is to this effect. It is provided that if there be any contention as to whether the bridges across the Clyde afford accommodation for the traffic of the counties and burghs outside Glasgow, in such a case it would be necessary to settle the portion of the burden to be borne by the City of Glasgow, by the counties, and by the police burghs outside. For that purpose elaborate machinery is provided by the Act. The case has to be investigated by two Special Commissioners appointed by the Secretary of State, who was formerly the Home Secretary, but is now the Secretary for Scotland. The two Special Commissioners so appointed are to conduct an inquiry in the locality; they are to report to the Secretary of State; the Secretary of State is then to determine as to whether the burden shall be laid upon the adjacent burghs and counties for the support, management, maintenance, and repair of these bridges; and, if so, how the burden is to be allocated

among the burghs, counties, and Glasgow respectively. It is further provided that the determination of the Secretary of State shall be laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament for 40 days, and that it shall not be effective until it has so been laid upon the Table. All the machinery for deciding questions in reference to the accommodation of the traffic and the allocation of the burden is elaborately provided in this Act; and, as I have explained to the House, any contentious question is to be determined under this Act by a series of public transactions. And now, Sir, what does the present Bill—the Glasgow Bridges Bill—propose to do? It proposes, by a stroke of the pen, to sweep away all the elaborate machinery which is provided in this important Act of Parliament; it authorizes the Local Authorities to fix a sum for widening the Glasgow bridges, and to apportion the burden not only for managing, maintaining, and repairing the bridges, but for watching, lighting, and cleansing them; and having fixed the sum to be charged upon the counties or the police burghs, as the case may be, the portion of the burden to be borne by each is to be determined by a single Commissioner without any review by Parliament or by any other authority at all, and the police burghs are to be bound to pay what this single Commissioner chooses to say they are to pay. I think the House will agree with me that this Private Bill proposes, in an irregular way, to override an Act of Parliament only recently passed, and still in full operation. It overrides it in the following particulars:—The Act of 1878 vests the determination as to the liability for these burdens with the Secretary of State. This Private Bill takes the determination away from the Secretary of State and vests it in a single Commissioner. In the second place the Act of Parliament provides for a local inquiry on the spot. The Private Bill dispenses with the local inquiry on the spot. In the third place the Act provides that the determination of the Secretary of State shall be subject to the review of Parliament, but the Private Bill dispenses with the Secretary of State and his determination, and does not allow Parliament to have any voice in the matter whatever. Fourthly, the Act limits the purposes for which the expenditure is to be allocated to the counties

and police burghs to three—namely, the management, maintenance, and repair of the bridges, whereas the Private Bill, while preserving those three purposes, extends the liability still farther to the watching, lighting, and cleansing of the bridges. We maintain that it is unnecessary, inexpedient, and unjust, to interfere in this way, by private legislation, with a Public Act of Parliament. We say that it is an evil precedent for Parliament to establish, that those who are interested in Private Bills are to override Public Acts by Private Bills. The result will inevitably be that Private Bills will be constantly coming into collision with Public Acts, and we shall be liable to all sorts of mischief which must arise therefrom. These being the facts of the case, we have had to consider what course we ought to take under the circumstances. We are convinced that this House by a very large majority would refuse to sanction the overriding of an Act of Parliament in the way I have pointed out, if I were to ask hon. Members to do so, because I am satisfied that they would not submit to have the authority of Parliament interfered with in this manner. But I must say that there are some valuable provisions contained in the Bill—not valuable to my constituents or to the counties generally, or to the police burghs outside Glasgow, but valuable to the City of Glasgow; and we, therefore, do not wish to ask the House to reject the Bill summarily. When the Bill has been read a second time it will be necessary to refer it to a Committee upstairs, and the Committee to whom it is referred will know how to deal with these objectionable clauses, if the measure gets so far as the consideration of clauses. Under these circumstances, I shall not object to the second reading; but I wish to enter a very serious protest against this dangerous innovation of allowing a Private Bill to interfere with public legislation. I shall reserve to myself the right when the Bill comes back again from Committee, if it ever should come back, with these objectionable clauses in it, to ask the House to take the provisions of the Bill into consideration at a future stage; and I have very little doubt that if these objectionable clauses re-appear the House will have no hesitation in rejecting them.

Mr. Craig-Sellar

SIR ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL: I happen to represent one of the counties interested in this Bill; but I do not think it is necessary for me to detain the House at any length after the admirable manner in which my hon. Friend the Member for the Partick Division of Lanarkshire (Mr. Craig-Sellar), has described the provisions of the measure. But there is one point which I should like to lay before the House, and it is this—that if the Bill is to pass in the shape in which it is presented to the House it will give exceptional powers to the Commissioners of Supply of the Counties of Lanark and Renfrew—powers which are not at present enjoyed by any of the Commissioners throughout the rest of Scotland. The Commissioners of Supply can assess the owners of property in the county, but they cannot assess the occupiers. By the Roads and Bridges Bill all roads and bridges are kept up specially and provided for by a Road Board, composed of the Commissioners of Supply and the representatives of the ratepayers. In that way it is provided that taxation and representation should go together, and in all cases in which taxation is imposed it falls both upon the owner and the occupier. But if this Bill is to pass in its present shape the Commissioners of Supply for the counties of Renfrew and Lanark will be called upon to provide funds from the owners for purposes which both owners and occupiers hitherto have been called on to pay. I certainly think that that is a very strong point against the provisions of this Bill, seeing that it places the Commissioners of Supply for these two counties in a totally different position from the Commissioners of the rest of Scotland, and confers upon them most exceptional powers. With regard to the other provision of the Bill, as my hon. Friend has said, some of them are valuable, no doubt, to the City of Glasgow, and I have no wish to interfere with them as far as Glasgow is concerned; but I hope the House will not allow the objectionable provisions to which its attention has been called to pass, if for no other reason than that they involve the upsetting of a Public Act of Parliament which is working well. I trust that the House will carefully consider the matter, and, personally, I propose to take the same course as my hon. Friend (Mr. Craig-

Sellar —namely, not to challenge a division at the present stage of the Bill, but to allow it to go up to a Committee with the understanding that if it is sent back to the House with these objectionable clauses still in it, it will be strenuously opposed.

MR. BEITH: The object of this Bill is, in the first place, to transfer the control of the Glasgow bridges from the Trustees acting under the Glasgow Bridges Consolidation Act of 1886 to the Glasgow Local Authority. The promoters of the Bill have been advised that very serious questions may be raised as to whether, under the Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act of 1878, the bridges and undertaking of the Trustees were transferred to the Local Authority of Glasgow, as defined by that Act, and the administration of the bridges has consequently been continued by the Trustees. It is deemed essential that all uncertainty upon this point should be removed. When the Roads and Bridges Act was passed the promoters of the present Bill were advised that by that Act the bridges of Glasgow were not transferred from the Trustees, who then acted as they are now acting, so far as the bridges are concerned, for the Glasgow Local Authority. This Bill provides that the transfer shall now take place from the Trustees to the Local Authority—who are the Magistrates and Town Council of Glasgow. The next object contemplated by the Bill is the widening of Glasgow Bridge. This has been found to be absolutely necessary. Not only have the foundations of the bridge given way, from various causes, but the bridge itself is wearing down, and is becoming altogether unequal to the vast amount of traffic which passes over it. It has, therefore, become essential that the bridge should be enlarged and strengthened. There are other considerations of a subsidiary character in connection with the Bill. One is that the sum of £31,639, paid to the Trustees by the Caledonian Railway Company, under an Act passed in 1875, and directed to be applied to the widening and strengthening of Glasgow Bridge, should be handed over to the Glasgow Local Authority; but the money cannot be applied and the work set about without an Act of Parliament. The promoters of the Bill do not say that the Burgh of Patrick and other burghs re-

ferred to by my hon. Friend (Mr. Craig-Sellar) are to contribute towards the widening and strengthening of Glasgow Bridge; they simply ask that the Secretary for Scotland should nominate a Commissioner to inquire into the circumstances of the case, to determine whether or not money should be contributed by these burghs, having regard to the extent to which the bridges accommodate the traffic of the burghs and of the counties of Lanark and Renfrew. The object of this mode of procedure proposed by the promoters of the Bill is to save expense and time, and in the simplest manner possible to enable the Corporation of Glasgow to take possession of these bridges. They are now administered by a Trust which is a Mixed Commission consisting of Commissioners of Supply and Commissioners appointed by the Corporation of Glasgow. That Mixed Commission was appointed many years ago when the bridges were maintained by tolls. They are now maintained by the city rates, and it is most desirable to ascertain clearly and put beyond all question that they are placed under the control of the Local Authority of Glasgow. It is also essential to ascertain in the shortest and cheapest way possible what portion of the burden should be borne, if any, by the counties and police burghs, and what portion by the City of Glasgow.

MR. PEARCE: One of the objects of this Bill is to obtain the appointment by the Secretary for Scotland of a Commissioner to ascertain whether the counties of Lanark and Renfrew and the police burghs outside the City of Glasgow shall contribute towards the widening and strengthening of Glasgow Bridge. Now, it appears to me that the districts and burghs round about Glasgow ought not to be liable to contribute towards the maintenance of the whole of the bridges in Glasgow, seeing that, by the passing of the Roads and Bridges Act in 1879, the ratepayers of Glasgow have to maintain them. The same Act also provides that the ratepayers of Govan and other suburban burghs should maintain the bridges and roads in their own districts. We think that as a matter of simple justice, if the inhabitants of the outlying districts are to contribute towards the maintenance of the Glasgow bridges, that the inhabitants of Glasgow should, on their

part, contribute towards the maintenance of the bridges in the suburban districts.

Mr. FINLAYSON: Allow me to say a word on behalf of the Division which I represent—East Renfrew. I think that the Town Council of Glasgow are pressing forward a measure which certainly affords an instance of how the public money may be spent, and absolutely thrown away. They have, I am afraid, acted throughout this matter in a very high-handed manner; and I am convinced that if they had consented to unbend themselves to a small extent, and had seen the different parties interested, many of the objections which have been urged by the last three speakers would have been unnecessary. What is the effect of the action of the Corporation of Glasgow in the matter? They have introduced a Bill in which they are attempting to impose rates for the maintenance of the Glasgow bridges upon the suburban burghs, and upon the constituency which I have the honour to represent. Their intention is to levy the rates upon the burghs and county of Renfrew; and they propose that my constituents shall keep up, maintain, light, watch, and cleanse the bridges in the centre of the City of Glasgow. Now, Sir, the Roads and Bridges Bill of 1878 underwent full discussion in this House; and this question was settled at that time, both in regard to the police burghs and the counties of Renfrew and Lanark, as well as the City of Glasgow. So far as the roads and bridges of the county of Renfrew are concerned, the existing arrangement was not arrived at until after a very searching investigation, which extended over many years. It was begun in the time of Mr. Bruce, now Lord Aberdare, who was then Home Secretary, and it was continued during the time that Sir R. Assheton Cross held the same Office. It was ultimately settled that in order to place the counties of Renfrew and Lanark in a fair and just position the City of Glasgow should contribute £12,500 a-year as some sort of compensation for the heavy traffic, chiefly in building material, which went from those counties into the City of Glasgow. But what does this Private Bill propose? It provides that the counties which the Roads and Bridges Act enacted should be paid so much a year—£12,500 I think

—shall be taxed for the maintenance of bridges which, by the Roads and Bridges Act, were made over to the City of Glasgow. If the only wish of the City of Glasgow was that the Trustees should transfer their rights to them there would have been no difficulty; but such rights would have been freely accorded to them. My constituents object, and very properly object, to be taxed in order to keep up the bridges within the City of Glasgow; and you might, in my opinion, just as well tax a man in Edinburgh, or Liverpool, or Newcastle who may send goods to Glasgow for the cost of maintaining these bridges, as tax the county of Renfrew. I may also inform the House that, so far as the traffic from the county of Renfrew to Glasgow is concerned, the road traffic is diminishing rather than increasing. A large and fine station—the Great Ennoch's Station—has been opened in Glasgow, and another extensive range of buildings has been constructed at the College Street Station, so that the traffic of the county of Renfrew does not now pass in anything like the same amount over the bridges of Glasgow that it did before the passing of the Roads and Bridges Act. Taking all these matters into consideration, I think that this Bill is most unjust, and I am quite sure that when it reaches a Committee upstairs it will be thrown out, or, at all events, divested of the objectionable provisions which it at present contains. To-day we simply enter a protest against it, in a desire to prove to the House of Commons that even on general principles the practice of bringing in a Private Bill which would, if passed, impose a heavy expenditure upon small suburban burghs and county communities is most objectionable. And I wish it to be understood that this course has been taken by the Town Council of Glasgow even before an attempt was made to make an arrangement with those who are vitally affected by the provisions of the Bill. I therefore second the proposal which has been made by my hon. Friend the Member for the Partick Division of Lanarkshire (Mr. Craig-Sellar). [An hon. MEMBER: No proposal has been made.] Then I join my hon. Friend in the protest he has made against the Bill, and I hope that the House, when it comes back from Committee, will signify its disapproval of its provisions, and will

Mr. Pearce

do justice to the parties who now complain of them.

MR. E. R. RUSSELL: The hon. Member for Renfrewshire (Mr. Finlayson) has raised a much larger question than that which properly belongs to the Bill; and yet, if that question were discussed, I believe it would be found that the case of Glasgow against the counties is a very strong one. The chief allegation of the hon. Member—in fact, it was the only remark he made which was pertinent to the present question—was that the county authorities had not been approached properly in the matter before the Bill was entered upon. Now, I am able to say that that is altogether an incorrect statement. Every effort was made on the part of the Corporation of Glasgow to obtain proper co-operation from the county authorities; and it was very largely because they have not been met by the county authorities that this Bill has been introduced.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS.—RESOLUTION.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. BROADHURST): I beg to move—

"That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee not exceeding Nine Members, to whom shall be referred all Private Bills promoted by Municipal and other Local Authorities, by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations which deviate from, or are in extension of, or repugnant to, the General Law:

"That Standing Order 173a shall be applicable to all Bills referred to the said Committee.

"That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.—That Five be the quorum."

MR. SEXTON: I think the House is entitled to some explanation from the hon. Gentleman who has made this important Motion. I am afraid that it is simply following in a direction which has been taken by the House on previous occasions—namely, that of withdrawing more and more from the jurisdiction of the House an important class of Private Business. Before the Motion is assented to, I should like to hear from the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary what number of Irish Members he pro-

poses to place upon this Committee; or whether, as has usually been the case, it is intended that there shall only be one? Then, again, in regard to the application of Standing Order 173a to all Bills referred to this Committee, on looking at that Standing Order I find that its powers are most important; and I think the House should not consent hastily to the appointment of a Committee which is to exercise such large and important powers without a distinct statement of the object with which the Committee is to be appointed. I take it that a large number of Private Bills which have not yet passed a second reading will, if the Resolution is passed, be referred to this Committee. Among them may be the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, in which the Irish Members are much interested, and in regard to which I propose to move an Instruction to the Committee on Tuesday, so that it may not go to the Committee in the ordinary way. I entirely object, therefore, to pass this Resolution until we have had a full explanation with regard to it, which we are entitled to have; and I think we have a right to hear whether this particular class of Bills has increased in number, or whether the ordinary Committees of the House have failed to deal with them in a satisfactory manner. I think the most convenient course would be to give the hon. Gentleman time for a fuller explanation; and I beg, therefore, to move that the debate be adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That the Debate be now adjourned."
—(Mr. Sexton.)

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. BROADHURST): I think the hon. Member ought to remember that this is merely following the course which has been adopted in other Sessions. This Committee was originally appointed in the last Parliament after a discussion, and by a Resolution in this House; and I can assure the hon. Member that in the constitution of the Committee a proper and fair representation will be given to Ireland. I feel that I am justified in saying that if any Bill affecting the Irish people is submitted to the Committee, it will certainly not be necessary, in order to secure its due consideration, to add an Irish Member

to the Committee. With regard to the object of appointing the Committee, I may inform the hon. Member that it is rather to secure the protection of the public interests than any delegation of the power of the House. The Committee is appointed to see that the powers sought for by Corporations and Local Bodies are not in excess of the general law of the land. I think the House will agree with me that that is a very desirable object; and I trust that the House will, therefore, assent to the Resolution. The one function of this Committee is to see that the usual regulations are adopted. With regard to the loans, that is a very important matter; and I am given to understand that it is one which makes a frequent appearance in the Private Bills submitted to this House. An important function of this Committee will be to see that the usual regulations in regard to loans are not exceeded for the repayment of the loan. If I remember aright, in some of the Bills which have been introduced into this House that period has been very considerably exceeded. Further than that, the Committee will be empowered to see whether the nature and extent of the works contemplated justify 60 years' grace for repayment, or whether even a shorter time should not be insisted upon. I hope, after this explanation, that the hon. Gentleman will not press the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. The case was fully stated to the House last year; and the hon. Member will see that if the Resolution is now affirmed the number of Members of the Committee, instead of being seven, as in last year, will be raised to nine, in order that all sections of the House may be properly represented upon it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary has not replied to my hon. Friend's chief point, which is this—is it proposed that the Belfast Bill shall be referred to this Committee? That question has never been answered at all. If the Belfast Bill is to be referred the Irish Members will feel very much dissatisfied, because there are a number of very important questions which arise in connection with that Bill, and we are afraid that this Committee has been hurriedly set up for the purpose of shunting upon it the consideration of the Belfast Bill. The

hon. Gentleman says that the Committee is proposed to be raised in number from seven to nine. If that be so, I think the Irish Representatives are entitled to have two Members on the Committee. What we should like to know, therefore, is whether it is intended that we should have two Members upon the Committee? I think that would be a reasonable way of settling the question; and therefore I will ask the hon. Gentleman these two questions—Is the Belfast Bill to be referred to this Committee; and shall we have two Members upon it?

MR. J. G. TALBOT: Having had the honour of acting as Chairman of a similar Committee for the two last Sessions, I may inform hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway that, in case of all Bills referred to that Committee, the purpose for which they were so referred was simply to ascertain that no powers were proposed which would override the provisions of the general law. The object of the Committee was to prevent any such powers being allowed to slip through without being brought to the knowledge of the House and receiving its direct sanction. I know nothing about the Belfast Bill; but I presume that it will take the same position as any other Private Bill. If it contains any such provision it certainly will have to go before this Committee. May I say a word as to the question of Irish representation which has been raised. The hon. and learned Member for South Londonderry (Mr. T. M. Healy) says that he is very anxious that Ireland should be fully represented upon the Committee. Now, I remember that the same question was raised last year; and, on the Motion of some Gentleman below the Gangway, an hon. Member from Ireland was placed on the Committee. I am sorry to say, however, that the Gentleman so appointed gave a very scanty attendance to the meetings of the Committee; and if the Committee this year is to contain Irish Members I hope they will justify their nomination.

MR. DILLON: I am not going to oppose the Resolution; but I think very important reasons have been given in favour of the adjournment of the debate. I do not clearly understand yet what the object of the Motion is; and I think we ought to have the assurances which my hon. Friend desires. First of all,

Mr. Broadhurst

whether the Belfast Bill, in which we take a very particular interest, is to be referred to this Committee. I think the Under Secretary ought to be able to answer that question. In the second place, are we to understand that two Irish Members will be placed upon the Committee? Of course, our interest in a Resolution of this kind is largely increased by the fact that the Bill affecting such an important city as the City of Belfast is about to come on in this House. What strikes us is this—that if only one Irish Member is to be put upon the Committee it might naturally suggest itself to those by whom the Committee will be nominated to appoint one of the Members for Belfast. Now, that is exactly what we are afraid of. I would point out that there exists in Belfast a very large population indeed, consisting of nearly one-half the population of the city, whose interests are not represented in this House. *A laugh.* Hon. Members may laugh at that statement; but it is an absolute fact, and the interests of that large body are entirely unrepresented by the present Members for Belfast. Every Member of the National Party is in the daily receipt of letters from citizens in Belfast, urging upon them to guard their interests in various matters. This is the reason why we desire the adjournment of the debate until we are in a position to see that we are not sacrificing the interests of the people of Belfast who have applied to us, not being represented by their own Members, to look after those interests. I would, therefore, earnestly press upon the Under Secretary the propriety of postponing this Resolution, so that if he is not able to give the information we ask for to-day he may be in a position to do so on some future occasion.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS. Mr. COURTNEY: The question which has been raised on the opposite Bench has come upon me rather by surprise; but I think there ought to be no real difficulty in allowing this Resolution to pass. In the first place, in regard to the Belfast Bill, I believe that it has no connection with the present question at all. As far as I can gather, there is nothing contained in that Bill which is repugnant to the provisions of the general law.

Mr. SEXTON: It contains an extension of the general law.

Mr. COURTNEY: I think not; but, however that may be, it is not necessary to decide either one way or the other now. In my opinion, it is not a Bill which extends the general law; but the Bill itself will have to be examined, and if it is found that it contains anything which is at variance with the general law it will, no doubt, have to be referred to this Committee. As to the composition of the Committee, that is a question which will have to be considered by the House when the Members of the Committee are nominated; but it cannot be a good reason for rejecting the appointment of any Committee at all. What is now proposed by the Under Secretary is to appoint a Committee of nine Members; and whatever view may be entertained as to the names of the Committee can be argued at the proper stage before an ultimate decision is arrived at. At the present moment, nothing can be done in that respect. What is now before the House is only the re-appointment of the Committee; and I do not think that hon. Members have any real objection to its re-appointment. Of course, the question of its composition will be reserved until a later period; and if the names appear to require any addition, or are not thought large enough, it will be competent to make a proposition to that effect. It would not, however, be regular to do so now.

Mr. CLANCY: The Chairman of Ways and Means says that this is not the time for naming the Committee; but this is precisely the time for extracting an assurance that two Members from Ireland, whoever they may be, will be placed upon it. In the absence of that assurance, I hope that my hon. Friend will go to a division upon the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. I see from the terms of the Resolution that the names will not be submitted to the House at all, but that the Members of the Committee should be appointed by the Committee of Selection. That is an additional reason why we should get an assurance now from the Under Secretary that two Members of our Party will be placed upon the Committee.

Major SAUNDERSON: The hon. Member who has just spoken requests that two Members of the Irish Party should be placed on the Committee. But what is the Irish Party? Her Majesty's Government must clearly understand that

the Irish Party is not confined to the Gentlemen below the Gangway.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT): I do not think that the House can enter into a controversy of that kind on a Motion of this nature, and I would appeal to hon. Members who object to the constitution of the Committee not to oppose this Resolution now. It is impossible to give any assurance now, because it is doubtful whether this controverted Belfast Bill will ever go before the Committee at all. All that I can say is that if hon. Members opposite will allow this Motion to pass, which only declares that a Committee shall be appointed, I will promise that, before the names are given or the matter finally settled, there shall be a careful inquiry. Hon. Members will, consequently, not be compromised in any way by assenting to this Resolution; and when the time comes for nominating the Committee it will be competent for them to move that an additional Member be added to it. That is the regular course; and I hope that, as this is a Motion which may not affect the Belfast Bill at all, but which does affect a great number of questions in which the large towns and other places in England and Scotland are interested, hon. Members will not, on the mere hypothesis that the Belfast Bill will go before the Committee, prevent this Resolution from being passed. At the proper stage, when the names of the Committee are proposed, hon. Members opposite will have a full opportunity of suggesting any alteration.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY: It would be very much to be regretted if there should be any warmth displayed upon a subject of this kind, or if it were to lead to any lengthened discussion. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not quite right in the opinion he expressed that the proper time for considering the composition of the Committee would be when the names are submitted to the House. I can give the only assurance to hon. Members below the Gangway that can be given at this moment. It will be the duty of the Committee of Selection to name the Members of this Committee. Our object will be to secure that the composition of the Committee shall be as strong as possible, and that the Committee itself shall be presided

Major Sanderson

over by an impartial Chairman, so that no interests, either public or otherwise, will be neglected. I know nothing whatever of the provisions of the Belfast Bill; but if it is necessary to bring it before the Committee I am certain that it will receive a fair and impartial consideration. I hope that, under these circumstances, the hon. Member will not press the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SEXTON: I am satisfied that the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of the Committee of Selection (Sir John R. Mowbray) will act up to any undertaking he may give, both in regard to the spirit and the letter, and therefore I beg to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Main Question put.

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee not exceeding nine Members, to whom shall be referred all Private Bills promoted by Municipal and other Local Authorities, by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations which deviate from, or are in extension of, or repugnant to, the General Law.

Ordered, That Standing Order 173a shall be applicable to all Bills referred to the said Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(Mr. Broadhurst.)

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENT OF SURVEYORS' CLERKS.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, How many officers from English Post Offices were, during the past ten years, appointed to the position of permanent or temporary surveyor's clerk in Ireland; how many officers from such offices are still in such capacities in Ireland; and, whether these promotions in the Post Office service are reciprocal between Ireland and England; and, if so, how many Irish officers have been transferred to England as permanent or temporary surveyor's clerks during the same period, and how many Irish officers are at present in such positions in England?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): The

answer to the hon. Member must be very much the same as that given him by the late Postmaster General last summer, when he asked a similar Question. The question of nationality in no way affected the selection of officers for employment on surveying duty in either England, Scotland, or Ireland, those officers being chosen who are considered best qualified, without any regard to the land of their birth. During the last 10 years eight officers had been sent from England to Ireland for employment on surveying duty, and one from Ireland to England. Of these, three are still employed in Ireland.

**PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—
SPEECH OF MR. G. H. SMITH AT
NEWRY.**

Mr. ALEXANDER BLAINE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether by the direction of the Judge of the Court of Probate in Ireland, Mr. George Hill Smith was a speaker on the platform at the Scriptural Schools, Downshire Road, Newry, on Friday, February 19th, 1886, where he is reported to have said that—

"He was glad of the opportunity in Newry, where they had assembled in public meeting, to send to Mr. William Ewart Gladstone, our answer to his recent request not upon a postcard (laughter), but in the shape of resolutions which would be passed there that night."

and further he is reported to have said—

"these eighty-six Parnellite Members were the representatives of the moonlighters, the murderers, and the cattle maimers;"

whether Mr. George Hill Smith is the district registrar of the Court of Probate at Armagh; and, whether his conduct will be taken into consideration?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY : Mr. George Hill Smith is the District Registrar of the Court of Probate at Armagh. The attention of the Judge of the Court has been called to this question, and he states that the attendance and speaking of Mr. Smith on the occasion referred to were not by his direction, and without his knowledge or sanction. The Judge has applied to Mr. Smith for an explanation, and he has written disclaiming the accuracy of the report.

**LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—
FIRING AT THE PERSON—CASE
OF ROBERT COOPER AND J. G.
BLEAKLEY.**

Mr. ALEXANDER BLAINE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at the Winter Assizes held at Omagh, 12th December 1885, before Baron Dowse, two prisoners, named Robert Cooper and John G. Bleakley, were indicted for firing at District Inspector Bigley and a police patrol; and, secondly, with unlawful assembly; whether the Law Officers of the Crown agreed to withdraw the first indictment, prisoners having pleaded guilty to the second, upon which they were sentenced to a month's imprisonment with hard labour; whether, at the Belfast Winter Assizes, 11th December 1882, Thomas McCann, of Lurgan, was indicted for firing at the police and sentenced to seven years' penal servitude by Mr. Justice Harrison; and, whether, in view of the difference of procedure in the similar cases by the Law Officers of the Crown, Her Majesty's Government will terminate, after nearly four years, the imprisonment of Thomas McCann?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY : The circumstances mentioned in the first and second paragraphs took place in the time of the late Government; and I have no precise information on the subject. The facts, I assume, are correctly stated. Thomas McCann was convicted, as stated; and I am informed that the circumstances of the case, and of the other case mentioned in the Question, are by no means analogous. A Memorial was presented by McCann to Lord Carnarvon, and Lord Carnarvon is said to have carefully investigated the case, and decided that he could not interfere with the sentence.

**PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—
HARBOUR WORKS AT DONEGAL.**

Mr. B. KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has had his attention drawn to the report of Mr. Stevenson, C.E. on the Donegal Harbour Works; whether he is aware that the local fishermen at Poolhurrin complain of the damage to their nets from rocks and stones left in

the pool, and suggest remedies; whether Mr. Stevenson has stated—

"These requirements are all reasonable and desirable, and could be easily carried out;" and, whether he will direct immediate steps to be taken with that object?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): Mr. Stevenson makes no references to damage to nets in his Report, and no complaint upon that point has been made to the Government since 1881, when steps were taken to remove the causes of complaint. He suggested improvements in these and other works, and I believe the recommendations generally are being considered.

COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS—PENSIONS OF SERVANTS.

MR. B. KELLY asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether there are any situations under the Board of Irish Lights filled by persons who have been in the service of the Royal Navy, and who have received therefrom a commutation allowance or pension on retirement; and, if he will grant a Return showing how many, what their ages are, and what is their present pay; why they left the Navy, what rank they held in the Navy, and what rank they hold now; under what circumstances, on what qualifications, and by what authority they were re-appointed to the public service; and, will they receive any further commutation allowance or pension on giving up their present appointments?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. MUNDELLA): The Commissioners of Irish Lights inform me that there will be no difficulty on their part in preparing such a Return, though it will necessarily take time; if the hon. Member wishes to move for it, it can be given.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—BUNDORAN, CO. DONEGAL.

MR. B. KELLY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he is aware that the design now being carried out at Bundoran, county Donegal, by the Board of Works, for a pier and harbour for the fishermen, will be practically useless to them when finished, as the pier will be too short to break the heavy seas coming over the rocks, being about fifty yards above low water; whether it is a fact that a chasm exists between the pier and a large rock, through which the sea

rushes with such violence that no boat could come in without great risk of being swamped, and that the channel being now cut to the sea is in a wrong direction, as it does not go towards the deep water; whether the wall built at the landward end of the boat-slip interferes with the public right of way; and, whether he will cause inquiries to be made into these complaints by some Engineer who is thoroughly independent of the Board of Works, and, if found substantial, direct such an alteration in the design as will prevent the expenditure of a large sum of money being thrown away?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): The pier-head will be more than 100 yards from the present low water line. The present channel will be widened and deepened to low water. It is in the right direction. The work will not be practically useless when finished. There is a rock about four yards from the pier-head, which rises about nine feet above low water; but the space between will be filled with concrete. The Board of Works approved, on the 18th September last, of the construction of a flight of steps to preserve the right of way to the shore.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE IRISH MILITIA.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for War, When will officers from the Regular Forces be appointed to those Irish Militia Regiments which are still under the disadvantage of having Adjutants under the old system, some of whom have left the service over twenty years, and are therefore unacquainted with the new principles of drill?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN): The Irish Militia adjutants, of whom nine remain attached to Irish Militia battalions, will be replaced, as vacancies arise, by regimental officers on the active list; but they are not liable to compulsory retirement till they reach the age of 55 years. Only two will reach that age during the next five years.

COLONIAL ECCLESIASTICAL APPOINTMENTS.

MR. HENRY CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies,

Mr. B. Kelly

Whether, according to the Colonial regulations, a clergyman can be removed from the Ecclesiastical Establishment of the Island of Mauritius only upon the commission of some offence, or for a dereliction of duty; whether the head of the Ecclesiastical Department has asked him to deprive two clergymen of their appointments; whether the reason given for this course by the Chief Ecclesiastic is that these two clergymen were not incorporated in his diocese, or were only accepted for three years; whether it is true that the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda, to whom an appeal was made in this case, has delivered to these two clergymen the highest certificates of good conduct and fitness for the discharge of their ecclesiastical functions; whether, in the case of one of these Reverend gentlemen a medical certificate was supplied to the Government before his appointment stating that he was fit for ten years' service in a tropical climate; whether this certificate was supplied by the Rev. Mr. Spencer, the representative of the Bishop in England; whether he, some time since, thought it his duty to inform the Bishop of Mauritius that, instead of removing these gentlemen from the Ecclesiastical Establishment, he was obliged to protect them from the persecution to which they were subjected; and, whether the Government intend taking any, and, if so, what steps to protect clergymen in the Mauritius holding a commission under Her Majesty's Government?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE Mr. OSBORNE MORRIS: The Colonial regulations relating to the removal of public officers do not apply to clergymen on the Roman Catholic Establishment of Mauritius. If the Roman Catholic Bishop of Mauritius deprives a clergyman of his spiritual functions in the Island, he is removed from the Establishment unless the deprivation is reversed by a superior Ecclesiastical authority. The Civil Government does not review the decision of the Bishop. The Bishop recently deprived two clergymen of their spiritual functions. They were retained on the Establishment pending an appeal to the Court of Rome; and as the appeal did not result in their being reinstated in the diocese, they have been removed from the Establishment. The reason assigned to the Government by the Bishop for the removal of the

clergymen was that he "could no longer conscientiously employ them in the sacred ministry." It appears, however, to have been held by the Court of Rome that they were not affiliated to the diocese, but only taken into the service of that Mission for three years. The clergymen have produced copies of certificates, from the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda, of good conduct and fitness for the exercise of spiritual functions. A certificate was produced by Mr. Spencer, the Bishop's representative in England, upon the appointment of one of these clergymen, that he was "fit to undergo a lengthened service in a tropical climate." The Government are not aware that such clergymen require any protection, nor do they hold any commission under Her Majesty's Government.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—BUNNATROOHAN PIER, CO. DONEGAL.

MR. B. KELLY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he is aware that a large body of fishermen who frequent Bunnatroohan Pier and Harbour, county Donegal, applied to the Board of Works by memorial to have certain additional works carried out so as to make the harbour useful and safe to the fishermen; whether any report has since been received as to the necessity for such works; and, if there be any likelihood of their being carried out to prevent the great damage and injury to the boats frequenting the harbour?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY Mr. H. H. FOWLER: A Memorial numerously signed was received for additional works at this harbour under the Sea Fisheries (Ireland) Act, 1883. The Commissioners appointed under that Act not having allocated any funds for works at Bunnatroohan, no Report has been made. The proposed works would much improve the harbour.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—COURT OF BANKRUPTCY—MR. L. H. DEERING, OFFICIAL ASSIGNEE.

MR. PETER McDONALD asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If the 245th General Order of the Irish Court of Bankruptcy, which provides that—

"Each Official Assignee shall account once at least in every six calendar months in every matter of bankruptcy or arrangement to which he

shall have been nominated as aforesaid, and oftener if so directed by the Court,"

has been complied with by Mr. L. H. Deering, Official Assignee of said Court, since his appointment; if not, can any reason be assigned for its disobedience, and if its non-observance has ever been reported to the Court by the responsible officer of the Court, the Chief Registrar; and, has the said Mr. L. H. Deering ever transferred money from one estate account to another, or to his private account, known as "The Official Assignee's Account," on his separate and individual cheque or letter, addressed to the Accountant General of the Bank of Ireland; or lodged, paid, or transferred money, stock, or securities at any time in his capacity as Official Assignee otherwise than as provided by sec. 61 of 20 and 21 Vic. c. 60, and the 242nd and 243rd General Orders?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): From an explanation furnished by the Official Assignee, there would appear to have been some laxity of practice in the matters referred to in the Question. The circumstances will be at once brought to the attention of a Committee which was appointed at the suggestion of the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and which is now sitting, to inquire into the regulations under which the duties of Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy are performed, and to suggest any alterations which may appear to them desirable.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POSTMASTER AT BALA.

MR. HENRY CAMPBELL asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the fact that David Evans, the Postmaster of Bala, died on 1st January of the present year; whether, in consequence of ill-health, Mr. Evans was unable to attend to the duties of the office for a considerable time prior to his death; whether, during this period, Mrs. Evans efficiently performed the duties appertaining to the office; whether, after the death of her husband, she applied for the position; whether an influentially-signed Memorial on her behalf was forwarded to the Postmaster General, praying that she might be appointed Postmistress; whether, notwithstanding her efficiency and the local feeling expressed through the Memorial

in her behalf, the Postmaster General refused to recognise her claims, and appointed a local Conservative instead; whether the man appointed signed the Memorial in question; whether the removal of the office from the house of Mr. Evans has yet taken place; and, whether he will reconsider the matter with a view to the appointment of this lady?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY), in reply, said, he found that Mr. Evans died on the 1st of January; and, for some time previous to his death, the work was fairly well done by Mrs. Evans. A Memorial on her behalf was received. The vacancy was reported to the Treasury on the 13th of January, and on the 1st of February the office was filled up in the usual way by his Predecessor, who appointed John Williams. Williams might have signed the Memorial on behalf of Mrs. Evans, as the name of John Williams appeared frequently amongst the signatures. The office had not yet been removed from Mrs. Evans' house; but the appointment had been completed, so far as the Treasury was concerned, and he had no power to reopen the matter unless a vacancy was again reported.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ERECTION OF A TELEGRAPH POLE ON PRIVATE PROPERTY AT ENNISKILLEN.

MR. HENRY CAMPBELL asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the fact that the Postal Telegraph Department in the year 1879 erected a telegraph pole in the private yard of David M'Gaw, Enniskillen, without that gentleman's permission; whether a report, and, if so, to what effect, was made by the assistant engineer in reference to this pole; whether the wires are now cut away from the pole in question, leaving it, in the event of a storm, dangerous to life and property; whether notice has been given to the Postmaster General by M'Gaw that he requires possession of the ground occupied by the pole for building and sanitary purposes; whether the Postmaster General will cause this obstruction to be at once removed; and, whether he will give instructions that a fair amount of compensation be paid to M'Gaw as rent for the space upon which the pole now stands,

Mr. Peter M'Donald

and has stood during the past seven years?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): A telegraph pole was erected in 1879 in a private yard belonging to David McGaw, of Enniskillen, and next to premises then rented from him by the postmaster for the post-office. The Inspector of Telegraphs, who put up the pole, has reported that it was erected with Mr. McGaw's full consent. No claim for rent in respect of this pole was made by Mr. McGaw until 1883, when the postmaster, having moved the post-office to other premises, differences arose between him and Mr. McGaw, resulting in a lawsuit. Since the removal of the post-office the Postmaster General has repeatedly offered to remove the pole; but Mr. McGaw has persistently refused, and still refuses, to allow it to be removed, except on payment of an exorbitant compensation. The wires have been removed, but the pole is bolted into a wall.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE—SIR EDMUND HENDERSON.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Police under Sir Edmund Henderson have efficiently maintained order and respect for property in the Metropolis during seventeen years; and, whether it is a fact that Sir Edmund Henderson's resignation was accepted within a few hours of its being tendered, and before the Report of the Committee upon the disturbances of 8th February was made known to Parliament and the Country, without any acknowledgment of his long services?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to my hon. Friend, I would say that Sir Edmund Henderson has done much to deserve the gratitude of the public for the manner in which the police under his charge have maintained order in the Metropolis for many years. Though Sir Edmund Henderson's resignation was formally accepted shortly after being tendered, yet I was aware for some little time previously that Sir Edmund intended to send in his resignation. Together with the official letter accepting the resignation, I wrote a separate note, expressing my regret that this duty should have

fallen upon me, and my appreciation of his past services. In an official letter written to the Treasury on the subject of pension, I again expressed my sense for Sir Edmund Henderson's services, and I replied in similar terms to the letter in which he asked me to write to the Treasury. I have reason to believe that Sir Edmund Henderson is completely satisfied with the recognition which has been accorded to his long and faithful service.

SIR HENRY TYLER: Arising out of that Question, I beg to ask whether any pension has been awarded to Sir Edmund Henderson?

MR. CHILDERS: No; not yet. I have spoken of a letter written to the Treasury on the subject; but my hon. Friend is probably aware that letters of that kind to the Treasury are not answered in less than a few days.

PENSIONS.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If the four sums heretofore annually voted by this House to the heirs of Sir Thomas Clarges, to the Duchy of Lancaster, to the Duke of Rutland, and to the Duke of Norfolk respectively, have been, since 1st January 1881, commuted as if permanent charges, and on the same basis as pensions in perpetuity authorised by statute; and, if so, under what authority?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): The four sums referred to by the hon. Member have been commuted since January 1, 1881, under the authority of the Acts 36 & 37 *Vict.* c. 57, and 46 *Vict.* c. 1, (Consolidated Fund, Permanent Charges Redemption) Acts, 1873 and 1883, by which the Treasury is authorized to contract for the redemption of any annuity, as defined in those Acts, charged on or payable out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, or moneys provided by Parliament either in perpetuity or for a period not determinable with the life of the individual to whom the same is for the time being payable. The redemptions were made on the same basis as the redemption of other permanent charges under the Acts to which I have referred.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the declaration of trust actually executed by the

First Lord of the Treasury and Sir Charles Mills, baronet, as to lands purchased prior to the present reign, out of a sum of £633,333 6s. 9d. invested to secure the perpetual annual payment of £19,000 to the Duke of Richmond; and, whether he will also lay upon the Table Copies of any other declarations of trust executed as to other lands subsequently purchased out of the same moneys?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I can hardly answer this Question without a word or two of explanation. The original pension to the Duke of Richmond was granted by Charles II. [*Cries of "What for?"*] A duty of 1s. per chaldron on coals exported from the Tyne and consumed in England was granted under Letters Patent of December 18, 1676, to the Duke of Richmond. This pension was commuted into an annuity of £19,000, charged on the Consolidated Fund from July 5, 1799, under the Acts 39 Geo. III. c. 3, and 39 & 40 Geo. III. c. 143. The annuity was commuted under provisions in those Acts for a sum of £490,833 11s. 6d., which sum was invested in the purchase of £633,333 6s. 9d. Consols. By the Act 29 & 40 Geo. III., c. 103, a portion (£485,434 4s. 7d.) of this Stock was sold and invested in land, and by the Act 1 Vict. c. 34, power was given to sell the balance of Stock remaining and to invest it in land. The commutation money and the lands in the purchase of which it has been laid out were vested in Trustees, of whom the First Lord of the Treasury is one. The present Trustees are the First Lord of the Treasury for the time being and Lord Hillingdon. The lands purchased under the above-mentioned Acts will revert to the Crown in default of male issue of the first Duke of Richmond. I have not been able to obtain the declarations of trust referred to in the Question; but I may point out that as regards the estates purchased before the Act 1 Vict. c. 34, the form of declaration to be made by the Trustees is prescribed in the second Schedule to the Act.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Will the hon. Gentleman give the House the date and the names of the Trustees in the document as executed? The draft of the declaration is there, but I have been unable to see the declaration itself.

Mr. Bradlaugh

MR. H. H. FOWLER: If my hon. Friend will put down a Question embodying the details he wants, I will endeavour to accede to his request.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Can the hon. Gentleman state to the House for what services these pensions were granted?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: That Question, I think, ought to have been asked of the Secretary to the Treasury in the year 1676.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF MORGAN BRIEN, CORK WINTER ASSIZES.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in the case of Morgan Brien, charged at last Winter Assizes at Cork with wilful murder, the trial was put back after the case had been called at the commencement of the Assizes, to fully a month later, at great inconvenience to many witnesses who were subpoenaed from long distances; whether two of the witnesses for the Crown were medical gentlemen holding official appointments, one as dispensary doctor, the other as doctor of a workhouse; whether these gentlemen received the sum of £110 each as expenses for their services; if not, could he state how much they did receive; whether one of them, Dr. Hall, of Silvermines Dispensary, Nenagh Union, has since sent in a bill to the guardians for £14 for the salary of his locum tenens during his absence; whether both of these medical witnesses are connexions of the Crown Prosecutor in the case, Mr. George Bolton; whether he (Mr. Bolton) allowed it to go to the jury that the prisoner was in the employment of Lord Dunally as gamekeeper, and that he was boycotted, and had only acted in self-defence; whether the result was a verdict of guilty in the minor charge of manslaughter; whether Lord Dunally at once contradicted the statement put forward by the Crown Prosecutor that prisoner had been in his employment; and, what steps will be taken with regard to Mr. Bolton's action in the case?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): There were two postponements of this trial. The first, to enable counsel who were assigned for the defence by the Judge to consider their case; the second, in consequence of a certificate of the prison physician, that the

prisoner was too ill to appear. Two medical gentlemen were witnesses in the case. A brother of one of them is married to a sister of Mr. Bolton. The other is no connection of his. They were paid their expenses by Mr. Bolton according to Treasury scale, Dr. Minnett receiving £75 10s., and Dr. Hall £76 6s. Dr. Hall sent in a claim for his substitute, which the Guardians have refused. Evidence was given for the prisoner that he had acted as gamekeeper for Lord Dunally and had been "Boycotted," and his counsel argued that he might have fired the shot in self-defence; but Mr. Bolton did not put forward or adopt any such suggestion, and the Judge told the jury there was not sufficient evidence of the prisoner being gamekeeper to Lord Dunally, who was not at the Assizes.

NAVY—SUPPLY OF CUTLASSES.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the cutlasses in use in the Navy were procured from the same manufacturers as have supplied swords to the Army; and, whether the tests to which they were subjected differed from those which, in the case of the Army, have recently been abandoned as insufficient?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. WOODALL (who replied)): No Navy cutlasses have been procured from any source for the last 21 years. In 1858-9 some were obtained from Germany; but the great majority of those in use in the Royal Navy were produced by various English firms two of whom also supplied Cavalry swords. Of the firms referred to only one now survives. The tests for cutlasses differed from those for swords because the blades were of different pattern. Last year 50 cutlasses were taken at random from store and were subjected to a severe test with satisfactory results. The whole will be re-tested as soon as the testing of the bayonets is completed.

METROPOLIS—MEETINGS IN HYDE PARK.

Mr. ADDISON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that three waggons were brought into Hyde Park on Sunday last; whether this was done with his sanction; and, whether it is proposed to

interfere in future with the use of the Park on Sundays by the admission of such vehicles?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): Yes, Sir. It is true that three waggons were brought into the Park on Sunday last, as has been the custom since 1884. The Office of Works is the authority from whom sanction should be obtained. I am told that on this occasion it was not asked, and the waggons were admitted on the responsibility of the officer in charge of the police. It is a matter for the Office of Works to decide what regulations should be adopted in future. But I approve of the action of the police officer on this occasion.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND)— PUBLIC EXECUTIONS.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true, as stated in the public prints, that a baronet, whose name and address are given, has been allowed to act as "amateur hangman" at one or more recent executions; whether such a proceeding has been approved by the Home Office; and, whether remonstrances have been addressed to the parties responsible for carrying out the sentence of death in the case or cases in question?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply, I would remind my hon. Friend that the Home Office is not responsible for the carrying out of the sentence of death in any particular case. That duty rests with the High Sheriff of the county; but the Home Secretary has power by Statute to make provision for guarding against any abuse in the mode of carrying out executions. I have had no official correspondence as to the proceedings of the Baronet referred to; but, to guard against such abuses in the future, I have given instructions for the issue of a Circular to the High Sheriffs to the effect that no person shall be allowed to assist the hangman except on the personal approval of the High Sheriff.

Mr. O'KELLY asked whether the Government would offer a permanent situation to the person in question?

[No reply.]

THE EASTERN TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

Mr. HUTTON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, under the Contract of the 19th January with the Eastern Telegraph Company, it is intended that the British Settlements on the West Coast of Africa shall contribute any portion of the annual subsidy of £19,000 to be paid to that Company; and, if there is such intention, what proportion or sum is to be contributed by each of the five Settlements named in the Contract?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): I am informed that the West African Colonies are to contribute £5,000 a-year to the subsidy in question, and the Colonial Office proposes that this contribution should be divided among the four Colonies Sierra Leone, Gambia, Gold Coast, and Lagos on the following scale roughly proportioned to their revenues:—Sierra Leone, £1,300; Gambia, £500; Gold Coast, £2,200; Lagos, £1,000. The fifth Settlement mentioned in the contract is the Niger territory; but there can be at present no question of its contributing towards the subsidy, as no system of government or revenue has yet been established there. The contribution of £5,000 from the four Colonies has been fixed irrespective of any sum which may hereafter be received on account of the Niger territory.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—DEPRECIATION OF THE RUPEE.

COLONEL HUGHES-HALLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, as the contract rates of pay for the Civil and Military Servants of the Crown in India were originally fixed at a time when the rupee was worth two shillings, whereas now its exchangeable value has fallen to one shilling and sixpence, a depreciation of twenty-five per cent., and may possibly fall still lower, the Government will take into consideration the justice and necessity of affording compensation in some way to Civil and Military officers in India for the very heavy losses incurred by them in all their remittances to this Country?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH): It is only natural to feel sympathy with Civil and Military officers in

India who have to send private remittances home, and who lose by the fall in the relative value of the rupee. But any change could only be made at the expense of the Indian taxpayer, who already has to contribute towards the additional charge of £3,000,000 sterling falling annually on the Indian Exchequer in consequence of this altered value of silver. Her Majesty's Government can hold out no hope that salaries will be increased for such reasons as the hon. and gallant Member puts forward.

LAW AND JUSTICE—COMPENSATION TO SEAMEN WITNESSES.

Mr. KING asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that seamen or officers detained from sailing with their ships by order of the Board of Trade, in order to give evidence on inquiries into marine accidents or casualties, are only recompensed for the loss of their wages until the termination of their evidence, and are then left adrift without any compensation for the loss of their voyage, and possibly their employment; and, whether steps cannot be taken to remedy this injustice?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELL): Sir, I find it is the practice of the Board of Trade to detain officers and seamen of the Mercantile Marine as witnesses for inquiries into shipping casualties, and nothing is paid them beyond an allowance during the period of detention. The Board are aware that the detention of a seaman occasionally results in the loss of voyage; but they endeavour to avoid as much as possible taking seamen out of their ships for the purposes of an inquiry. I regret that it is not in our power to compensate witnesses for consequential loss incidental upon the discharge of civic duties.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CLOTHING CONTRACTS.

Mr. MURPHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the contracts for the clothing of the Royal Irish Constabulary are advertised in the Dublin papers; if not, would he state on what grounds; how the selection of manufacturers is made; to whom tender forms for these

contracts are sent; and, if it has been considered that six days is a sufficient notice of the contracts?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): As the contracts for the Constabulary clothing are made by the War Office, I may, perhaps, be allowed to answer this Question. It has not been the practice in recent years to advertise contracts for clothing of the Royal Irish Constabulary in the Dublin papers, but to invite tenders from certain English firms and from all manufacturers of clothing in Ireland who are known to the War Department as likely to undertake such contracts. I am told that advertisement has been tried and found to produce no competition beyond that resulting from the method of tender. On one occasion tender forms were sent to 12 English and three Irish firms, of whom two English and two Irish firms tendered. I shall be happy to give the names to the hon. Member if he desires it. The usual interval between the issue of tender forms and the date fixed for their return is 10 days; but, owing to urgency, it was on this occasion six days, and I understand that no complaints on the subject was made by any of the Irish firms who inspected the patterns with a view to tendering.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Are the patterns to be seen in Dublin as well as in London?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I gather from the information supplied to me that that is so, for I read that the patterns were seen in London.

CHINA—THE CHEFOO CONVENTION— THE OPIUM DUTIES.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the late Convention or Treaty with China on the Opium Duties has been ratified; and, if not, whether he is able to state the reason for the delay?

THE UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BAYCE): The ratifications of the Agreement have not yet been exchanged owing to the Chinese ratification not having yet arrived in this country. We are informed that it has been signed by the Empress of China, and that it will be brought to England by the new Chinese Minister.

FOREIGN CUSTOMS REGULATIONS.

MR. HANBURY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What instructions are issued to Her Majesty's representatives Abroad with reference to furnishing immediate Reports on the frequent changes in Foreign Custom House regulations and judicial decisions affecting matters of quarantine and tariff; upon what principle notices of such new regulations or decisions are published, or not published, in *The Gazette*; and, whether the Government will take steps to secure to the public fuller and more regular information on such subjects by circulating all such Reports without delay among the various Chambers of Commerce?

THE UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BAYCE): The instructions to Her Majesty's Representatives abroad on the subject referred to by the hon. Member are to transmit at once to the Foreign Office all announcements respecting these matters. The Foreign Office forwards these documents as soon as they are received to the Board of Trade, and that Department takes such steps as seem necessary in each instance to make the announcements known to the public and to persons interested. I have no doubt that my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade will give his best attention to any representations which may be made to him with a view to give greater publicity to these Reports. And I may add that Her Majesty's Government, very shortly after their accession to Office, gave directions that the whole subject of obtaining and making known information received from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Agents abroad should be inquired into with a view to its being turned to the best account and published at the earliest possible moment.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—DISLOYAL MEETING AT THE CRITERION RESTAURANT.

MR. BAUMANN asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is true, as reported in *The Morning Post* of the 25th instant, that he and the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department were present at a banquet to the labour representatives in Parliament, given at the Criterion Restaurant on the 24th instant, at which the health of Her Gracious

Majesty the Queen was received with "hissing, which was received with greater vehemence when about one-third of the company rose to honour the toast;" and, if true, whether he and the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, being Members of Her Majesty's Government, remained in the room without protesting against such disgraceful and disloyal exhibition? Before the hon. and learned Gentleman answers the Question, I beg leave to ask the following Question on the same point, of which I have given him private Notice:—Whether he has read the following account of the dinner in question which appeared in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, on the 25th instant, and whether he will say that such account is untrue:—

"Lord Hobhouse rose again, and in the good old-fashioned way began—'There is one toast, gentlemen, which in every assembly of Englishmen'—when he was stopped by a distinct outburst of dissent. He proceeded, however, to say that Her Majesty's care for her subjects, and her faithful and unremitting attention to the duties of her exalted position, entitled her to the respect and affection of Englishmen everywhere. This was accompanied by a running fire of hisses and expostulatory cries of 'No;' and when the toast was drunk, quite a number of those present remained seated, and the hisses were both loud and long?"

And I beg further to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman—and I am sure he will excuse me for not having given Notice—Whether he has read the letter which appeared in *The Times*, signed by Oswald J. Simon, son of a well-known Member of Parliament, who was present at the dinner, and who says that the hissing was loud and long, and that whole tables remained seated while the toast was being drunk?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL): When the hon. Member last night gave Notice of this Question, he proposed to put it to the Under Secretary for the Home Department, but, learning that my name was coupled with the Question, I represented to the hon. Member that if he desired to call in question my conduct, a Question ought to be addressed to me, so that I might have the opportunity of answering it. I have to thank the hon. Member for recognizing the propriety of the course which I suggested. I shall answer the Question he puts to me categorically. It is true that I was a guest at the banquet given on the 25th instant, at the Criterion, to celebrate the return to this

House of 12 hon. Gentlemen, who are described frequently as direct representatives of labour, all of whom I believe sit on this side of the House. I was there as a guest, invited as such before I was offered the position I have now the honour to fill. I wish to state most distinctly, in spite of the statements which the hon. Member has read, I did not upon that occasion hear any hissing whatever. I wish to call the attention of the House to one or two remarkable circumstances in connection with this matter. I am sorry to be obliged to admit, from the statements made to me by hon. Members whom I have questioned, that undoubtedly there was—I greatly regret it—some hissing. It was partial, not general, and not such as to call any general attention to it. I had previously not read any of the morning papers in connection with this matter; but I find that only one morning paper—one supposed to represent the views of hon. Members opposite—*The Morning Post*, contained the statement that hissing took place on the proposal of the health of the Queen. I find that while the proceedings were reported in *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Standard*, *Daily News*, *Daily Chronicle*, and *Echo*, no reference is made in any of these papers to any hissing, from which I may fairly ask the House to assume that it must have been very partial and confined to a very limited portion of the company, which numbered some 200 or 300. When this Question was put to me, I at once communicated with Lord Hobhouse, who presided on the occasion, and next to whom I was sitting, and he has assured me that he heard no hissing whatever. Since I came into the House to-day, the hon. Member for Burnley, who was sitting on the other side of the Chairman, and not far from him, has also assured me that he heard none. [Mr. RYLANDS: Hear, hear!] That being the state of the case, I hope I have made out to the satisfaction of the House that the statements referred to have been grossly exaggerated. The hon. Gentleman also asks whether I have read the account in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Having received Notice of this Question, I did read the account in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, and I will say of it that it does not purport to be an ordinary, dry, and historical account, so to speak, of the proceedings, but partakes of a highly

Mr. Baumann

constitutional character. And I have no hesitation in saying that, judging by my own observation, it has been greatly exaggerated, and does not truly represent what occurred on this occasion. I hope that the House will think that I have fully and satisfactorily answered the Questions.

**LAW AND JUSTICE—MURDER OF
POLICE CONSTABLE HINE AT FENNY
COMPTON.**

MR. COBB asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the murder of Police Constable Hine at Fenny Compton; and, whether the Government will offer a reward for the apprehension of the murderer or murderers?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): No, Sir; my attention has not been called officially to the murder of this police-constable. It will be for the Local Authorities to move first in such a matter. There are grave objections to a too liberal offer of Government rewards.

**ARMY (INDIA)—INDIAN MILITARY
LEAVE.**

MR. SHIRLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether proposals were made by Lord Ripon's Indian Government, and agreed to by the India Office, to modify the Indian Military leave rules, and to arrange that in future all leave should count for pension; and, if so, what is the cause of the delay in communicating this decision to the officers concerned?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (SIR HENRY KAY-SHUTTWORTH): I understand that the delay is caused by the difficulty of settling certain important points involved in a change in the military leave rules. The attention of the Secretary of State is being given to the subject.

**POST OFFICE—MAILS BETWEEN
CYPRUS AND ALEXANDRIA.**

MR. HOWARD VINCENT asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Why the regular weekly mail communication between Cyprus and Alexandria was suspended; and, if Her Majesty's Government will consider the advisability of re-establishing it in order

to promote the development of the resources of that island, and to increase its trade both with Great Britain and Egypt, and so frustrate its threatened diversion to the Continent of Europe by means of the facilities offered by the Austrian Lloyds Steam Navigation Company?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. OSBORNE MORGAN): The weekly mail communication between Cyprus and Alexandria was discontinued at the end of 1881 because it cost this country £6,950 a-year, and only brought in about £150 a-year in postage. It lasted six and a-half years and involved the Imperial Post Office in a net total loss of about £48,000. The question of re-establishing weekly communication between Cyprus and Alexandria on more reasonable terms and the arguments in favour of such communication were brought before the late Board of the Treasury by the late Colonial Secretary; but the Board refused to sanction any measure being taken for the purpose, and the present Board, having had the matter brought under their notice, adhered to that view. With regard to the latter part of the Question, I have as yet no information to justify the conclusion that the trade of Cyprus is diverted to the Continent of Europe by means of the facilities offered by the Austrian Lloyds Company, inasmuch as the import and export trade between that Island and England continues to be carried on through other channels. The direct trade of Cyprus with the United Kingdom never exceeded 31 per cent of the whole. For the last year of the subsidy it was 27 per cent.

**EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT—KIN-
DRED LEGISLATION IN FOREIGN
COUNTRIES.**

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will ascertain at an early date, through Her Majesty's Representatives, what legislation, if any, akin to that of the Employers' Liability Act and its proposed Extensions now obtains in the countries of France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, and the United States of America, together with the periods during which such legislation has been in force?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. BAYCE): The shortness of

the Notice given by the hon. Member has not allowed of my making the necessary inquiries as to whether the information he requires is not already in the possession of other Departments of Her Majesty's Government. I have, however, opened communications with the Board of Trade and Home Office on the subject, and should we not already possess sufficient information, Her Majesty's Representative abroad will be directed to procure and supply it.

ARMY—PRINCE HENRY OF BATTENBERG.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the statement is correct, that has appeared in *The Times*, that "Prince Henry of Battenberg is to be appointed a Captain in the 1st Life Guards;" whether, if so, he will be required to pass the usual examinations for a commission in the Army; whether the rank is merely honorary or will he receive the pay attached to a regimental captaincy; and, whether the said captaincy will be an additional one to the usual number of captaincies of the regiment; and, if not, how the question of the right of the officer entitled by seniority of service to this promotion will be met?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): No, Sir; no such proposal has been brought before the Secretary of State.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE NEW MAGISTRATES.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return of the names of the gentlemen who have been appointed magistrates in counties and boroughs during the tenure of office of the late Government?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): I see no objection to laying such a Return on the Table, and I will give instructions for its preparation immediately.

EGYPT—OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will take steps to prevent any British Troops being employed in the proposed re-occupation of Dongola?

Mr. Bryon

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): I am not aware that there is any ground for the apprehensions of the hon. Member.

LAW AND POLICE—EMPLOYMENT OF A BLOODHOUND IN PURSUIT OF POACHERS.

MR. SAUNDERS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to an advertisement in *The Field* for—

"A keeper's night dog, bull and mastiff; must be a strong, powerful dog, and thoroughly trained to hunt a man by scent and catch him; trial required. Address, &c.;"

and, whether such use of a dog is lawful?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): *The Field* newspaper is not taken in at the Home Office, and I had no opportunity of seeing the advertisement, which appeared three weeks ago, until the hon. Member kindly sent it to me. I believe that such use of a dog as is apparently intended would be contrary to law.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—THE BAR LIBRARY IN THE LAW COURTS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will bring to the notice of the First Commissioner of Works the desirability of having the Bar Library in the Law Courts lighted?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. LEVESON GOWER) (who replied): It is intended in the coming Estimates to ask for a sum of £400 for the electric lighting of the Bar Library in the Law Courts; and as soon as the money is granted the work will at once be taken in hand.

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION IN THE COLONIES—COLONIAL VOTERS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he can state the population and the number of voters (under the most recent constitution) of each of the following classes in the Colonies of Natal and Jamaica, viz.: Persons of European and Creole blood, of Indian blood, and of African blood?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. OSBORNE MORGAN): In Natal the Returns for 1884 show a total

population of 424,000; of these 35,000 are Whites, 27,000 Coolies, and 362,000 native Africans. The total number of electors is 6,730, but I am unable to say what proportion is to be assigned to each class of the population. In Jamaica, of a total population of 580,000 according to the Census of 1851, 14,000 are stated to be Whites, 110,000 Coloured, 444,000 Black; Indian Coolies number 11,000. The electors number 9,298, but, as in the case of Natal, they cannot be classified.

PARLIAMENT—PROCEDURE— QUESTIONS.

CAPTAIN VERNEY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will at an early date move a Resolution embodying the suggestions with regard to Questions made yesterday by Mr. Speaker?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): It will be the duty of the Government to take care that the suggestions which you, Sir, were good enough to make on this important question from the Chair shall be carefully considered by the Committee, and I have no doubt they will be considered with all the respect that, coming from such a source, they must necessarily command.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—SPEECH OF LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL AT BEL- FAST.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will arrange that the Motion of the honourable Member for Sligo, which he has put down as an Amendment on going into Supply to-night, shall come on for early discussion?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): Well, Sir, that is an addition to the Question which will be embraced in the answer I have to make. Looking to the state of the Paper, it is perfectly possible that the question may be raised to-night; but I am bound to say, having considered the question whether the Government time should be given for such a purpose, that, while I am very sensible of the motives which lead the noble Lord to desire, quite legitimately, I think, that an early opportunity should be taken to discuss the

Motion, and that it should come on at a time when a decision may be arrived at. I do not think it is a matter with which the Government can interfere by surrendering a portion of its time.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to state that I do not intend to call attention to this question, except in such a manner and at such a time as will enable me to take the sense of the House upon it.

THE LAND LAWS—LEGISLATION.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government will introduce before Easter a Bill dealing with the registration, transfer, and devolution of land?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): The whole question embraced in these particulars is under the careful consideration of the Lord Chancellor; but the Lord Chancellor is not able at this moment to say at what time he can introduce a Bill, nor has he yet determined whether he shall advise the Government to do so.

PARLIAMENT—ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What would be the Business on Monday after Supply was disposed of, and what would be the Business on Thursday?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, that the Votes that remained to be taken would probably occupy all Monday evening. On Thursday the new Civil Service Estimates would be taken, and on the Monday following he hoped the Navy Estimates would be taken.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

METROPOLIS—THE METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE—ORGANIZATION.

RESOLUTION.

MR. JAMES STUART, in rising to call attention to the disturbances of the peace in the Metropolis; and to move—

"That, in the opinion of this House, no reform of the administration and organization of the Metropolitan Police Force will be satisfactory unless provision is made for such reform of the government of the Metropolis as will insure to representatives of the ratepayers of the Metropolis a direct control over their own police,"

said, he had to apologize for the necessity of bringing forward a Motion of that character in the House of Commons. The Metropolis, however, had no Representative Body, and they were therefore obliged to put many Questions to Ministers and Notices on the Orders of the Day which ought not to occupy the time of this House, and which the House was not at all well-qualified to deal with. In bringing forward that subject, he would say at the outset there was very little in the evidence taken by the late Committee of Inquiry that was not summed up in the Report. He had no intention to give any Party complexion to the question he was raising; but he must say it seemed clear to him that there was one thing that was perhaps made more clear by the evidence than it was by the Report, and that was that his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) was not at all to blame for what had occurred in London on the 8th instant. The right hon. Gentleman practically entered upon the duties of his Office on the Monday, and by midday he had done all that any other Home Secretary had done—namely, inquired if the arrangements providing for possible contingencies were complete and sufficient. He had made what certainly seemed to be a rather perfunctory inquiry; but no further or more particular inquiry had generally been made by any Home Secretary in the experience of the late Chief Commissioner of the Force, Colonel Henderson. It was stated that it was in the power of the Home Office to alter any arrangements that were submitted by the Chief Commissioner; but, as a matter of fact, the Home Office never did so. That might be an unfortunate condition of circumstances; it might be an error, or it might not; but if it was it was one of system, and was not to be charged on the Home Secretary, who had been only two hours at the Office. The evidence showed conclusively that there was a great want of efficiency in the direction and organization of the Police Force in London; and

it was to be trusted that not only would the administration and organization of the Metropolitan Police be investigated, but that it would also be thoroughly reformed. He had nothing to say against the conduct or behaviour of the ordinary police-constables; but he considered that among the superior officials of the Metropolitan Force there had long been, and still was, a grievous want of organization and of attention to duty, as well as of ability to know how to fulfil the duties imposed upon them. He trusted the inquiry to be made would be a complete and thorough one; that no branch of the Force would be omitted, and that no scandal would be hushed up. He refrained from commenting on the condition of the police, because he felt confident that an inquiry directed by the present Home Secretary would be complete and exhaustive, for his right hon. Friend was new to the Office, and could not yet have fallen into the toils of the officials. As to the composition of the crowds in the gatherings that had occurred, wild statements had been made. They heard very little about red flags being waved when the Conservative Party were in power, and they saw very little of them when the Liberal Party were in power, and, as representing one of the most absolutely working-men constituencies in London, they might allow him to say that he believed that the working men of the Metropolis, whether employed or unemployed, were as orderly and law-abiding, nay, were as willing and able to share in the government of this great Metropolis with justice and success as any other portion of the community. His Resolution was so worded as not to reflect upon any person, and not even upon the police. There were two other points to which he wished to call the attention of the House, and which were patent to everyone, from the Report. The first was, that there was no proper control over the Police Force of London, for the Home Office exercised a most inefficient and superficial control over it, and the only way in which the Home Office could exercise a control, which was anything but the control of permanent officials, was through, and by, the inquiry and authority of the House of Commons. The other point was, that the House of Commons was loaded with the responsibility of what he might call being the

Mr. James Stuart

Vestry for London. They had that day been occupied, and had frequently been occupied before, as they might be in the future, with business that ought to fall upon the Vestry, or Municipality, or mere Watch Committee of London, and that, to a very great extent, to the detriment of Imperial interests. He thought it was a shame that that House, which had for its primary duty the consideration of those interests, should be required to fulfil the duties of a Watch Committee for London, as it was called upon to do in the present case. The London Police were paid for by the ratepayers of the Metropolis in as large, or even larger, a degree than in any large town in England, and yet there was not a shadow of control exercised over them except by the authority of the House of Commons, which he, for one, could not look upon as being in any way efficient for the purpose. He could not for a moment conceive how it could be expected that Members of that House, who came from all parts of the country, should understand the affairs of the Metropolis, of which many Members who lived in it themselves were absolutely ignorant, or how they could be thought to be efficient controllers of the police of London. On the contrary, it frequently happened that the consequence of the absence of municipal control over the police was, that whenever a riot or disturbance occurred it was always made use of as a stick to wallop the Party in power, and thus a political aspect was given to the occurrence which it had no right to assume. This question of the control of the police was really a part of the great question of the government of the Metropolis, and it was high time for that, if for no other reason, that the House had brought before it by the Government in power some proper and feasible scheme for the government and regulation of the affairs of the Metropolis. But for the intimation given by the Government a few nights ago, he should have given a wider scope to his Motion. He protested against the control exercised by the Home Office over the police; and he hoped an effort would at length be made to place the citizens of London in possession of the control of their police, which was the greatest guarantee for good order and security. In a vast centre of population those who held the

command of the police were the masters of the situation; and it was time that those on his side of the House showed that they had sufficient confidence in the people of London to allow them to have the control of their police. In conclusion, he begged to move the Resolution that stood in his name.

Mr. CREMER seconded the Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, no reform of the administration and organization of the Metropolitan Police Force will be satisfactory unless provision is made for such reform of the government of the Metropolis as will insure to representatives of the ratepayers of the Metropolis a direct control over their own police,"—
(Mr. James Stuart.)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Lord ALGERNON PERCY said, he trusted the House would not adopt the Resolution of the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart). The hon. Member occupied a considerable time in telling the House that he was not going to do so, and then proceeded to make a speech on the government of London; but he did not advance one single argument in support of the great change he advocated, nor did he offer any proof that, if the control of the police were in the hands of the Local Authorities, or in the hands of a single Municipality of the Metropolis, instead of the Home Office, the riots would not have taken place. He believed himself that if that had been the case, the riots would have been worse. At the same time, he blamed the Home Office for what occurred, though he did not make an attack upon the present Home Secretary, who had held Office too short a time to be responsible for the riots. It could not be said that the police was anything but efficient; indeed, in his opinion, it was a most able and efficient force. It was true that, on the occasion of these riots, there was a miscarriage; but he contended that it was due rather to particular and accidental circumstances than to the fault of the police. The hon. Member for Shoreditch had stated that the House should only be occupied with questions of national importance; but

it must be borne in mind that the peace of the Metropolis was a question of national importance; and, even if there were a Municipality of London and a riot occurred, it would most certainly form a subject of debate in the House of Commons. There was no doubt that the present condition of affairs was unsatisfactory as regarded the connection of the police with the Home Office, and he did not think the case had been much improved by the Report of the Committee of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, or by the promise of the right hon. Gentleman that a Departmental Inquiry should be held into the organization of the police. The Report excluded the subject of the composition of the mob, which he thought it most important to investigate; but there was no promise that such an investigation should take place, and a Departmental Inquiry on the part of the right hon. Gentleman into his own responsibility with regard to the preservation of order would, he thought, be hardly satisfactory to the country at large. To assist him the right hon. Gentleman had called in certain of the permanent officials of the Home Office, and he (Lord Algernon Percy) was bound to state that he agreed with the hon. Member for Shoreditch, that when permanent officials of the Home Office inquired into the responsibility of that Office, no satisfactory result could be arrived at. The Report, moreover, appeared to be somewhat unfair. It was excessively condemnatory of the police; but some of the reasons upon which the Report was founded were circumstances beyond the control of the police, and it was therefore very hard that they should be blamed for them. He did not think that the police were entirely and alone in fault on the 8th of February. For instance, on page 9 of the Report it was mentioned that there were no telegraphic communications between the police in certain places and Scotland Yard; but there was no evidence to show that the Commissioners of Police had the power to establish a telegraphic system between Scotland Yard and dependent districts. The question was, who was responsible for the existence of such a state of things as made the occurrence of the events of the 8th instant possible? It seemed to him that the Home Office was

Lord Algernon Percy

clearly responsible for that unsatisfactory state of things; for within recent times there had been two inquiries into the organization of the police, but no resulting action had been taken by the Home Office. Why were the recommendations of those Committees not carried out by the Home Office? The fact was that on the recent occasion the Police Force appeared to have been lulled into a false sense of security, owing to previous demonstrations having passed off peaceably. They failed to recognize that the circumstances were not usual; but if they were to blame in this the Home Office was equally so, for the Home Office, too, laboured under a similar misapprehension, and the right hon. Gentleman did not even take the precautions adopted by his Predecessors, in similar circumstances, and arrange to be supplied with information by the police from time to time during the day. His Predecessors had generally made arrangements of that kind on extraordinary occasions. He might instance the case of the Reform Meeting in Hyde Park, in 1884, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was then Home Secretary, and his right hon. Friend who was Home Secretary in 1875, made arrangements for receiving telegrams every half-hour, as well as messages at intervals during the day. The House, he thought, ought to be given more information with respect to the treatment which that very valuable public servant, Sir Edmund Henderson, had received at the hands of the Home Office Authorities. The right hon. Gentleman yesterday expressed some amount of regret that the services of Sir Edmund Henderson could not be obtained upon the Committee; but did it not strike the right hon. Gentleman that if he had asked that officer to reconsider the question of his resignation, until after the inquiry had taken place, instead of so readily accepting it, he would have had the advantage of his assistance upon the Committee? The precipitancy with which Sir Edmund's resignation was accepted seemed to give some idea of the intention of making him a scapegoat; and he submitted to the House that a man who had so well served his country, was entitled to better treatment at the hands of the Home Secretary. The House might well turn its attention to the question, whether public demonstrations

ought not to be controlled to a greater extent than heretofore. He did not say that they ought to be stopped altogether, although there was far less reason for holding such meetings than existed a few years ago, when working men had fewer means of making their wishes known. But it was a question for consideration whether processions that monopolized the streets should be permitted any longer—whether such demonstrations as that of February 8th should be allowed—for he had received many communications from many tradesmen complaining that when these demonstrations took place their trade was materially injured—the fact was that London submitted to mob law on these occasions. If the mob behaved quietly, well and good; if it did not, the House had seen what was the result. If the House chose to acknowledge and bow down to mob law, it must expect to see very strange things from time to time. The kind of language used at the meeting in Trafalgar Square had been repeated; and the law ought to be amended, so as to bring summary punishment upon people who used such language, and in that way render possible the dealing with men like Messrs. Burns and Hyndman. A good deal had been said, of late, as to the panic that prevailed among the public; but if there really was a panic, it was not because of the mobs, but because an uncertainty existed as to the intention of the Government to support law and order at all hazards. While the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department was trying to prosecute Messrs. Champion, Burns, and Hyndman for the part they had taken in this demonstration, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board Mr. Chamberlain was parleying with them, and the Prime Minister, through his Private Secretary, was expressing himself ready to receive any communications, in writing, on their behalf. That seemed to show that the present Government was destined to be no more unanimous than its Liberal Predecessor. Unfortunately, the past actions of Her Majesty's Government and the speeches which had been delivered by some Members of the Government contained much to cause such uncertainty. One Member of the Government had actually been suborned by

the Socialists as an "expert in agitation." The speeches of the Socialist Leaders and of some of the Members of Her Majesty's Government were so similar that it was difficult for the non-legal mind to understand how it was that the right hon. Gentleman was enjoying the sweets of Office, while the Socialists were being tried in a Criminal Court. "Oh, oh!" One of the Socialists had made a great point, in his speech in Trafalgar Square, of the fact that after the dynamite scare Parliament had taken immediate action, the deduction being that if they produced a scare by riot, action would again be taken by Parliament. The speech of the Prime Minister, at Dalkeith, in 1879, when he declared that the blowing up of Clerkenwell Prison had brought certain matters within the range of practical politics, the deduction again clearly being that if the Irish committed acts of violence, the attention of Parliament would be called to their demands. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman did not mean to urge them again to acts of violence, but the result was disorder, and disorder that went for 22 months unchecked, because, as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said, at Liverpool, to have stopped the agitation would have been to have checked reform. The speech of Mr. Burns in the Park and some utterances of the President of the Local Government Board about the murder of a French Minister at the time of the French Revolution, read line for line. It would be excessively interesting if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would inform the House and the tradesmen of the Metropolis generally as to the amount of "ransom" required by the persons who made such "short work of private ownership" of property in South Audley Street, and so thoroughly enjoyed themselves in the process, because the inhabitants would then know what to expect under the circumstances. The people of this country had a right to demand that the Government would perform that which was the first duty of a Government—namely, the maintenance of law and order; and that they should not be subject to a repetition of the terrible scenes which had been witnessed in Ireland, where crime had been allowed to run unchecked, and where,

at the present moment, the Government refused to enforce the law of the land.

MR. HOWELL said, that, in his opinion, it was desirable that an investigation should take place into the character of the meeting referred to, and of the men who called it together. He contended that a demonstration need not necessarily be the prelude to a riot. That demonstrations might be unaccompanied by any disorder was proved by the events of July 21, 1884, in which he, along with others, was personally concerned, when a procession of 120,000 men passed through the streets of London, which were lined by 750,000 people. Yet not a window was broken, not a person was injured, neither was there a flower trampled upon. One reason of this was that the men who were responsible for order on that occasion were men who had the confidence of the working men of London. They were not in the pay of the Tory Party, which now condemned the late riots. Many of the men responsible for the late riots were hired to disturb public meetings in the Metropolis. They were encouraged to create an assemblage of persons in Trafalgar Square, which it was known would probably lead to riots. There were several very curious circumstances about the matter. The riots took place on the very day that the Home Secretary came into Office; these meetings of the unemployed were being called together in various parts of London about 12 months ago, and were continued down to the very day on which the Liberal Government left Office; as soon as the Tory Government came in, last June, these demonstrations suddenly ceased, and although the distress went on accumulating nothing more was heard of them until the Tory Government left Office and the Liberals returned to power. It might be that there were reasons for this; and he believed it was because, during the time the Tory Government acted as caretakers, these men were hired by the Tory Party in various parts of the country to disturb the peace and order of their opponents' meetings; and these very men, as soon as the Liberal Government came into power, again disturbed the public peace by calling tumultuous meetings in Trafalgar Square. It was exceedingly convenient for hon. Members on the other side of the House to ignore altogether

the character of the men who called the meetings together, and to fasten all the blame upon the Socialists. He (Mr. Howell) had no sympathy with the Socialists; but it was a singular fact that those men were hired by the Tory Party, and several of them appeared in various constituencies, by the help of Tory money, as bogus labour candidates. He would like to see a Royal Commission appointed; and he hoped that, for his own sake, the Home Secretary would see that a full and complete investigation was made, not only as to the rioting which took place, but as to the character of the men who called the meeting together. He would take that opportunity of stating his full and decided concurrence in the views upon the subject expressed by the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart). It was his firm conviction that the police of the Metropolis ought to be under the control of duly elected Municipal Authority. The Report of the Committee did not give sufficient clue to the reason why Sir Edmund Henderson's resignation was tendered and so hastily accepted; but it was within his (Mr. Howell's) recollection that something like pressure was brought to bear upon Sir Edmund Henderson to resign his position on the occasion of the demonstration in Hyde Park, in 1874, not because of the tumult, but because of the peaceable character of the proceedings. Now he had resigned his position the Tory Party had got up a mock sympathy with regard to him.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS said, he did not propose to follow the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) into the extraordinary disclosures he had made with regard to the disposition of Tory money. The reason why he (Mr. Burdett-Coutts) ventured to address the House was because he represented a constituency which lay at the heart of the Metropolis, and was contiguous to those scenes of disorder which were the subject of the present debate. He might say, in answer to the hon. Member for Bethnal Green in this connection, that he was reminded that, in his small electoral experience, he had suffered great inconvenience at the hands of men who certainly acted as if they had been hired by the other side. He wished to ask the House whether they were satisfied with the way in which this inquiry had been conducted, and with the manner in

Lord Algonen Percy

which Sir Edmund Henderson had been treated? He ventured to think that the Home Secretary, in the whole of his elaborate statement, entirely missed the point most prominent in the public mind—namely, what part the right hon. Gentleman himself, the Minister of the Crown responsible for the safety of the Metropolis, played in this matter? The question was, how far had he accepted, either before or after the event, the responsibilities attaching to his high Office—responsibilities rendered the more grave by the fact that this was no ordinary demonstration. He (Mr. Burdett-Coutts) was aware that the Chief Commissioner had stated that it had not been the custom for the Home Secretary to give special instructions with regard to these demonstrations; but he thought that there might be some who would not accept this definition of the functions of the Home Office. He was not speaking of instructions in detail as to the management or disposition of the Force; but he thought that where there were special circumstances attending a public meeting, and arising from peculiar conditions which were known to the public, and which were altogether exceptional, it was necessary for the Home Office to take upon itself the responsibility of giving orders for more or less stringent measures to provide against an outbreak. There were several circumstances which should have led to an amount of attention greater than ordinary being paid to this demonstration. First, there was the condition of large masses of people in this city—a condition of irritation; secondly there was the inter-ethnic character of the demonstration. Again, public opinion had not supported the police in dealing with these demonstrations. Public opinion had been very delicate on the subject. The police had been educated up to believe that they had no right to interfere, or even to show themselves, and the slightest attempt on their part to do so had been construed into an attempt to coerce the rights of popular demonstration and free speech—as if, indeed, speech, be it free or secret, which led directly to outrage, had any rights at all in a civilized community. It had grown to be a custom in this country not to interfere with these demonstrations, and not to have a sufficient force at hand to keep order if disturbance should arise. It

rested on the Home Secretary to cast aside that ordinance of public opinion, and give support and authority to the police in taking precautions against violence. It had been left to the event to justify them in doing so. If they had taken the matter in their own hands, and, without the justification of these outrages, had broken a few heads in Pall Mall, the country would have rung with protests. The Home Secretary, if anyone, should have foreseen this difficulty in which the police were placed by custom and public opinion, and not have been in such haste to abandon them, because they had not done what he himself had not the courage to tell them to do. If the right hon. Gentleman abnegated his authority, and became a perfect nonentity in such circumstances, he was depriving the citizens of that protection which, by virtue of his Office, he was bound to extend to them. It was the duty of the Home Secretary to take such an initiative as would enable the police to cope with violence. It was absurd to talk about the police being demoralized and disorganized. On Sunday the police had been able to cope with a far more dangerous crowd than that which assembled on the occasion of the riots. The police could not be expected to exercise foresight, if the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Home Department was himself entirely blind to the course of events. But, although the right hon. Gentleman had failed to initiate or to support, he had shown an extraordinary promptitude in finding someone to blame. He (Mr. Burdett-Coutts) complained both of the Committee and its Report. He knew not what right this Committee had to investigate the question. It was not a Committee appointed by that House. Was it a Committee the composition of which the House would approve? He could claim to speak with a free hand, untrammelled by official considerations which might keep the Front Bench silent. He found no special qualification in any Member of the Committee for passing judgment upon so difficult and delicate a question as police organization, at least so far as the three civilian Members of the Committee were concerned, and he regretted that two Members of the Party to which he belonged had consented to serve upon it, especially when it was presided over by the Home

Secretary himself. To the fourth Member—the most distinguished of English soldiers, and a man, moreover, of singular fertility and breadth of mind—he found this objection—that, being imbued with military instincts and trained to military habits, he was called upon to decide on a purely Civil Force. As to the fifth Member, the Home Secretary himself, the objections to his sitting on the Committee were dictated by the most ordinary considerations of fair play and justice. He would not deal in detail on the recommendations contained in the Report; but its character could be judged from the suggestion that the Chief Commissioner should sit in Trafalgar Square in a cocked hat for the crowd to jeer at. The Home Secretary, by the course which he had adopted, had passed an emphatic and wholesale condemnation on all his Predecessors—on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), and especially on the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), during whose protracted tenure of the Home Office the disorganization of the police had gradually developed into the state in which his right hon. Colleague now described it to be. The police, the most temperate and efficient force in any capital in the world, were incensed at the humiliation which had been heaped upon them in the person of their Chief Commissioner. And he thought it was a dangerous thing to goad the police into irritation by such treatment as that. He had spoken from no Party motives. That might be seen by the fact that he did not conceal his regret that two Members of his Party had accepted seats on that Committee, which had been most unwisely appointed in a moment of panic. And if his remarks seemed to have any personal bearing, they were personal, mainly, to an officer, to whose long service the population owed such a debt of gratitude, whose character for conscientiousness, modesty, and loyalty was unsurpassed; and to whom, from the beginning to the end of this most painful business, there had been absolutely no chance given, save to do what he most certainly had done—fold his cloak around him and fall like a gentleman.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that a certain amount of modesty and diffidence gene-

rally characterized hon. Members when for the first time they spoke in the House of Commons. But one would have imagined, seeing that the hon. Member who had just spoken was not in any way afflicted with that hindrance, that he had been an habitual speaker in that Assembly for many years past. The hon. Gentleman had dealt pretty freely with the qualifications of the Gentlemen who formed the Committee of Inquiry, and had spoken in disparaging terms of the whole of them; but it was quite obvious from his speech that the hon. Member himself would have had no difficulty in placing his hand upon at least one Gentleman who possessed the qualities which he considered necessary for such an investigation. The hon. Member spoke of the qualifications of the Gentlemen who composed this Committee for inquiring into the delicate organization of the police. He (Mr. Ritchie) ventured to say to the hon. Gentleman that, so far as his experience went, what the Committee had to do was not to inquire into the delicate organization of the Police Force, or into the relations, not easy to be defined, which existed between that force and the Home Office, but they were called upon to inquire into the reasons why such a lamentable break-down occurred. He was bound to say that when he was asked to take part in the work of the Committee, it never occurred to him, for a single moment, that the question was one which involved either an acquittal of the Home Secretary from the responsibility which he undoubtedly lay under, or that it involved any question connected with politics of any kind whatever. He considered that he was only performing his duty as a Metropolitan Member in taking part in an investigation which it was undoubtedly the duty of the Home Secretary to take in hand. It was quite clear that the Home Secretary was responsible to the House of Commons for the preservation of public order in the Metropolis, and if the right hon. Gentleman had not given sufficient orders to the executive body at his command, it was for that House to form for itself an opinion upon the point, and for the right hon. Gentleman to justify his conduct to the House of Commons. He asked the House, whether if the right hon. Gentleman had undertaken such an inquiry by himself, as he might have

Mr. Burdett-Coutts.

done, it was likely that it would have commanded the confidence of the House of Commons, or of the people of London? Whatever might be the qualifications of the Gentlemen who composed the Committee, there was no one who would charge any one of them with a desire to suppress facts, or to screen the Home Secretary, or to disguise, in any shape or form, the responsibility which lay upon him. It was made perfectly clear and evident by almost the first paragraph in the Report that the Committee never undertook that duty. There was another point which they felt could not be adequately dealt with by the Committee, and that was the investigation into the origin of the disturbances. He felt very strongly, and he might say that he induced his Colleagues on the Committee to think with him, that such an inquiry was highly desirable and necessary; but, at the same time, he felt, from the constitution of the Committee and from the manner in which the investigation was carried on, it was not a body competent to carry on an investigation such as that. Such an inquiry, he held, ought to be of a public character, where the evidence would be published day by day, and where those who were accused would have an opportunity, in the public Press, of seeing the charge of which they stood accused, and, if necessary, of giving evidence to refute it. Therefore, they had no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that it was not their duty to make such an inquiry into the relative responsibility of the Home Office in the matter. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell), in the course of a violent harangue altogether unsuited to the subject which was under discussion, and which, perhaps, might very properly bring upon him the attention of the force whose conduct he had been impugning, spoke about "hired Tory agitators;" and when he (Mr. Ritchie) regarded the extravagance of his language, and the effect which usually followed such extravagant language, he began to wonder whether the hon. Gentleman was himself a hired Tory agitator—["Order, order."]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is now employing language which is hardly in accordance with the proper order of Parliamentary debate.

MR. RITCHIE said, he withdrew it. He gave it not as his own opinion, but

as the opinion which might be formed by the language of the hon. Gentleman himself; but he withdrew it. He had some recollection of a recent case in which the hon. Gentleman had been engaged with some of those whom he (Mr. Ritchie) imagined were not unlikely to have formed a portion of that meeting; and he could very well understand, looking to the result of the case to which he had referred, that the hon. Gentleman might have been very anxious to take the present opportunity of retaliating upon those who were successful in a certain trial.

MR. HOWELL: On the point of Order, I beg to ask if the hon. Gentleman is not exceeding the proper latitude?

MR. RITCHIE said, he was referring to a report in the public Press, and he did not think he had used a word which was not entirely justified by the result in that case. It was not surprising that the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart) had taken the opportunity of bringing forward the case of London government. But when he (Mr. Ritchie) looked around, and wondered what had become of the valiant leaders of the cause of reform of London government, and saw that their place in the House knew them no more, he was very much afraid he could not congratulate the hon. Member upon the popularity of the cause which he had taken in hand; for if there was one thing which had been more clearly shown than another at the General Election, it was that the people of London had no faith in their would-be leaders. The hon. Gentleman said that he would have introduced some words into his Resolution to the effect that the reform of London government was urgently desirable, if it had not been that the Home Secretary had promised him that the matter would receive early attention. Let not the hon. Gentleman lean upon such a frail reed as that. He had seen questions of a similar character put to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he was Home Secretary, Session after Session, and year after year, with answers regularly given that he, too, was very anxious indeed to introduce a Bill of the kind; but, with one abortive exception, the Sessions passed away without the Bill seeing the light of day. They knew what effect that procrastination had had in reference

to one important matter—he referred to the question of the water supply—and they knew that at the present time the ratepayers were suffering to a very large extent annually in consequence of that question having been so postponed. But there was one exception which ought to be made—notwithstanding that the right hon. Gentleman had promised that London should have the control of its water supply and other matters—he had never promised that the London Government Bill would give the London population control over its police. The right hon. Gentleman's experience of the Office of Home Secretary had convinced him that such a transfer of the police from the Home Office to a central Municipality for London was not one calculated to add to the efficiency of the force, but one that might in dangerous and in excited times have the very opposite effect. So that what the hon. Gentleman the Member for Shoreditch was asking the House to assent to was the postponement of a pressing question. For his own part, he (Mr. Ritchie) was not prepared to relegate it to the dim and distant future which the hon. Member desired; and he maintained that there was nothing more pressing in connection with the government of London than the placing of the police on a proper footing. With reference to what had been said by his noble Friend (Lord Algernon Percy), the Committee had passed no censure on the police at all. What they had pointed out was the great desirability of having the faults which existed remedied; and he thought his noble Friend would see that it was part of the duty of this Committee to point out in what it was the police system had failed, and also to show where those arrangements were faulty. He was inclined to think that there ought to be a public inquiry into what the relations were between the Home Office and the police. He did not think that a mere Departmental inquiry, such as was contemplated, would give satisfaction to the public. The public wanted the whole thing to be publicly investigated. He knew that a great deal had been said; but, after the matter was now all over, he had no reason to think that he did anything more than his clear duty in joining the investigation which took place. One word as to the character of the mob. As regarded

Mr. Ritchie

that point, he entirely agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Shoreditch. Like that hon. Member, he was the Member for one of the most working-class constituencies in London; and he said that it was unfair and unjust to charge the unemployed working men in the East End of London as being in any degree the authors of these riots. He was certain that there were none who would welcome more cordially than his constituents a public inquiry into these disturbances, because it would free them from the blame that had been unjustly cast upon them.

MR. WESTLAKE said, he was of opinion that the chances of London Municipal Reform were not so distant as imagined by the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken (Mr. Ritchie). For himself, he deprecated any interference with the legitimate right of public meeting in London, and regretted that the noble Lord opposite (Lord Algernon Percy) should have suggested the prohibition of these assemblies altogether.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY rose to Order. The hon. and learned Member was decidedly mistaken in supposing that he (Lord Algernon Percy) had advocated their total suppression. What he had said was that they should be conducted under different rules.

MR. WESTLAKE said, there was this to be considered—that as the shopkeepers of London enjoyed special advantages in living in the Metropolis, they also must expect to incur special disadvantages. The police were admirably organized for the preservation of the ordinary peace of the Metropolis, and no man deserved greater credit in that respect than Sir Edmund Henderson; but they were unprepared for what was really the strategical duty of dealing with large disorderly crowds. He trusted that the reforms which might be recommended would not obstruct upon some near occasion the accomplishment of the reform which he suggested—namely, the division of the Police Force into two bodies under separate controls, that, in his view, being the best solution of the question. In that way the ordinary police, comprising nearly the whole number of the force, should be given to the Metropolitan Corporation, for he quite agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart) that they were

often engaged in discussing matters which would really more become the Watch Committee of a Municipal Corporation than that House. But the nation had the same right to the control of the police required for the protection of the Parliament, the Palaces, and the Public Offices, all which belonged to the nation, which the Metropolis had to the control of the ordinary police. And this special police might be conveniently binned with that required for emergencies such as that which had lately occurred, forming a body which should be permanently under the control of the Home Office.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD, who had on the Paper an Amendment to the effect that compensation ought to be provided at the public expense, said, that as a Member for one of the constituencies that had been invaded and bombarded he claimed to say a few words. Generally speaking, in his opinion, there was no question but that after the stone throwing had begun 60 useful and determined men, such as were to be found in the police, could have stopped the riot at any moment. That had been clearly shown by the Report, since an Inspector—Inspector Cuthbert, with 15 men at his command—in Oxford Street, had been able to break up and thoroughly to demoralize the mob, diverting them into bye-streets, and thereby saving a great amount of damage to tradesmen. The tradesmen and others who suffered damage were paying a very high police rate, and that rate was regarded practically as an insurance against such possibilities occurring as that which had occurred on the 8th. In one parish, which had suffered heavily, the police rate last year had been nearly £35,000. The other day the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had told them—and they had all been delighted to hear it—that compensation would be given to those who had suffered damage. But he Lord (Charles Beresford) understood that that compensation was to be given out of money paid partly by the ratepayers, and partly out of a public fund. He thought that that was not quite fair to the people to whom compensation was to be given, since they would indirectly be compensating themselves out of their own pockets. He thought that the Government should find the money for this

compensation, since they had the entire charge of the police, and were responsible for what they had done—and for what they had not done—on that day. Many tradesmen had suffered severely, not only from the sacking of shops and breaking of windows, but also from the feeling of uncertainty which had resulted. They might be told that it was a bad precedent to form; but, in his humble opinion, it would be a good one that the Government should pay the damage, as it would be good guarantee that such a disgraceful occurrence did not happen again. The amount was only about £12,000—a very small sum for the State to pay, but of great moment to the tradesmen who had suffered. There had undoubtedly been an extraordinary want of energy and resource shown on that occasion. He was not blaming the police; they were as fine a body of men as it was possible to conceive, and who had often very irksome duties to perform; but they had been in the position of disciplined men waiting for orders, knowing what ought to be done, and, with the exception of one Inspector, no one seemed to have grasped the situation properly at the moment. He had been glad to hear what had been so kindly said on both sides of the House with respect to Sir Edmund Henderson, who certainly had no other course than to resign; and he hoped the Home Secretary would say more than he had already said in recognition of that officer's services. They ought to bear in mind what the Chief Commissioner had done. For 17 years he had commanded a force of 12,000 men who had been doing the police work for 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 of people, insuring their safety, and providing for their comfort and enjoyment; and for all that he thought he did deserve a word or two more of commendation. With regard to the inquiry, while not wishing to appear to say anything disrespectful with regard to his right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, he did think that the position which the right hon. Gentleman held, by placing himself at its head, was rather a ludicrous one. His position was like that of an admiral who had got into difficulties, had then ordered a court martial upon his subordinates for the blunders for which he himself had been responsible, and then made himself presi-

dent of the court. He could not help thinking it would have been better if someone else had presided at the inquiry. With regard to what had fallen from one hon. Member, he could not agree that meetings such as these should be stopped; but he thought that they ought to be regulated, and not to be allowed in inclosed places such as Trafalgar Square; there was, however, no reason why they should not be allowed to take place in the Parks. In going to the Park those who were to take part in the meetings could be kept under proper control. It was, in his opinion, an excellent safety valve to permit people to meet to thresh out questions which agitated the public mind. With regard to the proposed re-organization of the police, he hoped that there would be a public inquiry, and not a Departmental Committee. Indeed, a Committee composed of Members of the House would be more satisfactory.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he thought that probably the time had now come, after so many speeches upon this question, when he should state on the part of the Government, and on his own part, what he proposed to do with respect to the Motion before them, and also the Motion of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Charles Beresford), should that noble Lord have an opportunity of moving it. The noble Lord had, indeed, practically been speaking to the Motion which stood in his name. The noble Lord had suggested, on the point of compensation for damages, that the Government should find the whole of the money required for that purpose; because if the ratepayers paid half of it, as was proposed, possibly those who had suffered damage would be paying a small fraction of the compensation to themselves out of their own pockets. But if the public, the taxpayers, paid the whole of this charge, the tradesmen who had suffered would still be contributing, only the amount would be divided among a much larger number of persons; and although the amount might be different the principle would be just the same. He confessed he could not see the force of the noble Lord's argument, and he had not, up to that point, been persuaded. With regard to points raised by other hon. Members on both sides of the House, the hon. Mem-

Lord Charles Beresford

ber who had moved the Amendment (Mr. James Stuart) by means of it wished the House to declare at once that the representatives of the ratepayers in the Metropolis should have direct control over the police. As he (Mr. Childers) understood him, the hon. Member did not wish to prevent the inquiry proposed into the organization and administration of the police; but he did propose that the House should now pass a Resolution which should conclude the question whether in the future, at some reasonably distant time, the police of the Metropolis should be placed under local control, instead of under the control of the Executive Government. He was afraid that he could not accept that Motion; his view was this—they had, at the present moment, urgent need of dealing with the question as to the police arising out of the recent inquiry. As to the Bill with regard to the Metropolis, which he hoped at no very long date to introduce, he declined at the present moment to declare its provisions; the Government must have entire liberty of action in this matter. When the London Government Bill was introduced, it would be quite sufficient time, when it was being discussed, to discuss the question of responsibility for the Metropolitan Police. In the meantime he did not commit himself or his Colleagues in the smallest degree to any course on that subject; but he asked his hon. Friend, on his side, to give the Government liberty of action, and not to fetter them, as the Resolution would fetter them, in carrying out a particular measure with respect to the responsibility for the Metropolitan Police until they came to deal with the question of the government of London. If the hon. Member would trust him in that respect he hoped he would not press his Amendment. As to the general question of what happened on the 8th of this month, and the inquiry that had since taken place, and his own conduct in the matter, he might, perhaps, be excused if he did not reply in detail to the suggestions of the noble Lord the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square (Lord Algonson Percy) in attacking some of the speeches of his right hon. Friend at the head of the Government and of his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chamberlain). Whatever opinions his right hon. Friend

might have on political questions, they had nothing whatever to do with the subject which the House was now considering, which was the conduct of those responsible for public order on the 8th of this month. The real question before the House was, whether he Mr. Childers acted properly in the course he took on the 8th; and whether he acted properly in appointing the Committee which assisted him in his investigations; and whether he acted properly in the announcement he had made to the House of a proposed further inquiry into the administration of the police? Those were the real questions before the House. From different points of view, his conduct—he did not say his motives—in certain respects had been attacked, not in violent language, but in a very intelligent and clear manner; and it was his duty to place before the House his reasons for the course which he took, and he should submit himself to the judgment of the House in connection with them. The noble Lord who had attacked him Lord Algernon Percy admitted that he only came into Office a few hours before these events took place; but he said that the course he (Mr. Childers) took was unwise in many respects, and that he was not blameless in the direction he gave to the police. He would lay before the House, with sincerity and candour, exactly what took place. When he came into Office, he took over the Home Department at 11 o'clock on the morning of the 8th of February. As soon as he came into Office, it was his duty to see the gentlemen responsible for different parts of the administration of the Home Office. One of his first acts was to request the Commissioners of Police to come to him, and to state what was the position of police questions at that amount. One question he put was whether they had made sufficient preparations for what was then going on in Trafalgar Square—for when he spoke the meeting had, to a great extent, already collected. The arrangements of the Commissioners had been completed two days before; the Chief Commissioner saw his Mr. Childers's Predecessor on the previous Friday, and on Saturday all details were arranged. He asked the Chief Commissioner if his arrangements were satisfactory, and if there was any way in which he could

assist him? He replied that ample arrangements had been made. He again asked if there was anything left in which he could be of assistance, and was told no, everything was completed. Even then he was not satisfied, and asked the Chief Commissioner if he was aware of the peculiar character of this meeting—that it was not a meeting of one party, such as the Reform demonstration, or the Tichborne demonstration, but that two parties were engaged in it, the Fair Traders under Mr. Keuny, and the Socialists brought together by Mr. Hyndman and Mr. Burns. He asked him whether he was prepared for that? Both the Chief Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioners said that they were perfectly well aware of the nature of the meeting, and had made all necessary preparations. He asked how many men they had brought together, and they replied that altogether they had 600 or 700 men in readiness. They explained that a portion, 60 or 70, were actually in Trafalgar Square, and that 563 men were held in reserve. They assured him, therefore, that they had made all preparations. Knowing that the Chief Commissioner had been in communication with his Predecessor, knowing the great experience in matters of this kind that gentleman had, and in view of the fact that he Mr. Childers had himself only been in Office half-an-hour, he thought nothing would have been more foolish than for him, as Secretary of State, to interfere in any way, even if interference were required. He had said before, and he repeated, that the relations of the Secretary of State with the Chief Commissioner were very much the relations which existed between the Secretary of State for War and the General Officer of the Army sent on an Expedition. It was the duty of the Secretary of State, in the first instance, to discuss with the General Officer the plan of the campaign. In the year 1842 it had been his duty to discuss with Lord Wolseley, with the greatest minuteness, the plan of the campaign which ended in the battle of Tel-el-Kebir on the very day Lord Wolseley, in his room, said it would take place. There was no point of detail of that campaign which he had not gone carefully through with Lord Wolseley, before the latter left England. That was the position of the Secretary of State

for War in relation to the Army. Very similar was the Constitutional position of the Secretary of State with the head of the Police Force. He discussed, in the first instance, any point which the Chief Commissioner thought fit to bring before him; he asked him for further explanations; and then the responsibility lay upon those who had to carry out the orders. It was a great mistake to think that these separate functions ought to be mixed. The general idea of everything being concentrated in the hands of the Minister was considered the wise idea; on the contrary, he thought it was a very foolish idea. The responsibility of the Minister and of the executive officer ought to be quite clearly distinct. When the orders had been settled, it was for the officer to carry them out; and the Minister who interfered would be a foolish Minister, instead of a wise Minister, as some people appeared to think. Another point had been made by the hon. Member for the Abbey Division of Westminster (Mr. Burdett-Coutts). He said that, notwithstanding his recent accession to Office, there was a prevalent idea in the public mind that something dangerous might be anticipated on the day of the meeting, and he ought to have made further inquiries and taken steps to avert the danger which all the world expected. The hon. Member seemed to him (Mr. Childers) to be one of those who were wise after the event. What was the general impression on the public mind to which the hon. Member referred? He had looked at the newspapers—and they offered a tolerably clear indication of what the public mind looked forward to. On Monday morning in *The Times* there was not one single mention in any part of the paper of any apprehension, or even of the meeting itself. In one other paper, *The Standard*, there was an article on the distress, and incidentally it was mentioned that some of the distressed classes would meet in Trafalgar Square, without the smallest reference to any apprehension of what actually arose. In another newspaper there was no reference to the meeting; while in another, in an article under the head of "The Unemployed," it was said that the Chairman of the General Labourers' Union, at a meeting on the previous Saturday, stated that they had asked Sir Edmund Henderson not to send a large body of

police to Trafalgar Square, because the men themselves would be able to keep order. This was the only reference in that or any other paper. He had taken the trouble to analyze what appeared in the papers published on the 8th of February, such as *The Times*, *The Standard*, and *The Morning Post*, and he said most distinctly there was not a scintilla of fear or apprehension expressed in any of them. He thought that, under those circumstances, he, at any rate, ought to be entirely exonerated from any blame in not taking more steps than he actually had taken when he saw the Chief Commissioner of Police and inquired from him what were the arrangements he had made, and got from him, in a conversation of some length, the details and facts as to those arrangements. The hon. Member for Westminster said that he (Mr. Childers) had abnegated his own authority and become a perfect nonentity. He had not done so. Had he fussed and fidgetted in matters of detail he would have abnegated his authority; but he did not do that; he held the sound doctrine as to the relative responsibility of the Secretary of State and the heads of the police in maintaining order in London; and he thought he had shown, from the facts he had stated, that no neglect of duty or personal abdication of authority could be charged against him. Then the hon. Gentleman, after stating that he should have had more foresight, went on to say that it was the custom not to give the police sufficient force, and implied that he ought to have given them sufficient force. Now, the force consisted of about 11,000 or 12,000 available men, and out of that number there were on the ground on that occasion between 600 and 700 men. Where was the necessity for more? Anyone who read the Report of the Committee would see that it was the disposal of the force, and not its amount, that really was in fault in that case. The hon. Member also remarked that the police were deeply incensed by what had happened on that day, and, subsequently, that they would do no good by irritating them, and he ended by saying that those unfortunate people had fallen under a baneful star. Now, he (Mr. Childers) did not know how they could have fallen under a baneful star; but he would say—and he had thought it his duty to ascertain carefully the feel-

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ing of the police—that there was no evidence whatever that they were deeply incensed, or that they felt goaded by irritation; but, on the contrary, the disposition of the police at the present time was admirable. He could not speak too highly of the character of that fine body of men—the Metropolitan Police. There had been times when they were popular, and also times when they were unpopular; but, as he had said, at present the disposition and efficiency of the officers and men was excellent, and could not be too highly spoken of, subject to the observation in the Report of the Committee, as to which he and his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Ritchie) entirely concurred. He hoped, therefore, that the House, in dealing with that question and in approving or otherwise the action he had taken, would dismiss altogether from its mind the suggestion of the hon. Member for Westminster, and would rest content with the condition, mental and physical, of the Police Force at the present time. He thought he had now shown that his action on February 8 was wise, and was the only action which, coming as he did into Office while the meeting was actually going on, he could have taken. But he had also to justify what he had done since the events of the 8th and what he proposed to do. Well, his first step—and that had not been attacked—was to take efficient measures to prevent any further similar events by strengthening the Police Force itself, and by providing that military assistance should be at hand, if any were wanted; and next, he did his utmost to calm the public mind. And he told the House this—that, in spite of the newspaper story that instead of calming the public mind they took steps to irritate it, there was no foundation whatever for that assertion. They had those 11,000 or 12,000 men scattered over a vast area, and some particular policemen might possibly have said something that was alarming to a shopkeeper here or there; but nothing whatever of the kind was done by the order or direction of any superior officer. They, on the contrary, did their utmost to quiet the public mind, and by Thursday all those stories vanished into thin air, and the public were calmed and satisfied. That was his first duty, and, as he had stated before on several occasions, he had done it. His second duty was

to punish those who had committed these outrages—not merely the poor wretched people who had thrown stones, or been guilty of breaking the shops and stealing, but those who were the real instigators or encouragers of the riots. The noble Lord opposite had suggested that they had allowed those “agitators,” as they had been called on the other side of the House, to go at large for 10 days before they were apprehended, or brought to a Police Court; and yet the moment afterwards he admitted that they had proceeded against them as soon as they could, because the noble Lord recommended that they should alter the law in order to make its operation more speedy. But those two charges were wholly inconsistent with each other. The Home Office had acted immediately in the matter. On Tuesday, the day following the riots, the first step they took was to collect evidence, and the moment they were told by their Legal Advisers that they could take proceedings, the proceedings were immediately instituted. He himself had been in favour of summary proceedings in the matter; but he had found it impossible to take them. Of course, his mouth was closed as to what might be the upshot of those proceedings, and it was impossible for him to say more in regard to them. Then the third step he took was to make a searching inquiry into the conduct of the police on that occasion. It had been suggested that he himself either ought to have conducted the inquiry on his own responsibility, or that he ought to have appointed some other body outside of his responsibility to conduct it, and then have acted on their Report. The reason why that was suggested was that, in that matter, he was himself personally responsible; but was it not as clear as anything could be, from what he had stated, that with the events of February 8 he had nothing to do; and, therefore, he should have been a coward if he had shirked a searching inquiry. But it was urged that he should have made the inquiry himself. If he had done so, what, he asked, would the same people who were now attacking him for the line he had taken have said if, having just that day come into Office, he had undertaken to make the inquiry himself? Had he been for some months in his Office, and had had time and information on which to base an inquiry made by himself, that

might, perhaps, have been a right thing to do. But what were the facts? Overwhelmed by what had fallen on him in connection with those events, he felt it his duty to associate with himself able and competent men to conduct such an investigation. Had he selected proper men? Their names would, he thought, satisfy the House on that point. They were selected with no political bias. He had asked two Gentlemen from the other side and a noble Friend on his own side to act with him, and also Lord Wolseley. The hon. Member who had said that a gentleman who was a soldier could not pass judgment on civilians, and, therefore, that Lord Wolseley ought not to have been associated with that inquiry, little knew the mind of Lord Wolseley. For himself, he (Mr. Childers) knew no man who was at once so thoroughly fair-minded towards civilians, and so capable to inquire into a question as to the discipline of the police, as that noble and gallant Lord. Well, he thought he had justified the course he had adopted as being that which he thought the best for arriving at the bottom of that question. He had not evaded in the smallest degree his responsibility. He concurred entirely in the results of that inquiry; but the steps which he had taken in consequence had been taken on his own responsibility, and not on that of the Committee. He had always thought that the responsibility upon the Minister at the head of a great Department ought to be plenary and complete; and nothing would induce him to qualify or diminish that responsibility. He now said that he was competent, and it was his duty, as the head of the Department, himself to undertake further inquiries how they should apply to the organization and administration of the police what the Committee had discovered, and how he could, under his own responsibility, do his best to put that organization and administration into an efficient state. He had stated to the House the nature of the inquiry which he proposed to make. There was a suggestion, however, that the House could carry on that inquiry much better than he could. From that suggestion he entirely disagreed. After a Minister had himself made an inquiry and had decided on a particular course of action, if Parliament disapproved of what he had done, then was the time for Parliament to in-

terfere. Not only that, but he would point out that the work which a Parliamentary inquiry might do had already been done by the Committee which had just reported. If, however, Parliament should consider further inquiry still necessary, he should submit himself to the result of it. He excluded altogether from the scope of the inquiry what might be called the political, rather than the administrative, element—namely, the origin of the riots, the persons who formed the mob, and who created the disturbance. That was a totally different question; and with respect to it he confessed that he agreed with the suggestion that it was a matter worthy of being considered. But, so far as he was personally concerned, he would not abdicate his responsibility in dealing with any Department for the administration of which he was responsible. Whatever faults he might possess, that of shirking responsibility had never been one of them; and he would always adhere to his principles in that respect, whatever his conduct might be as a Government official. There were smaller questions which had been raised, but which he thought the House would not wish him to discuss in detail. The noble Lord the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, spoke of the telegraphic arrangements, suggesting that the deficiency in this respect was due not to the police, but to the Home Office Authorities. Of course, in a matter of that kind, the Police Authorities could not take possession of the telegraph system and place telegraph instruments in their different rooms. He would admit that a great improvement might be made in that direction; but it was not really a matter of blame, either to the police or to himself, and he had already given instructions which would have the effect of carrying out the recommendations of the Committee more fully, perhaps, than was originally designed. Then, again, with reference to the admission of waggons into Hyde Park, it had been suggested that they should not have been allowed to go into the Park; but he found that permission for waggons to enter the Park had been in existence for the last two years. The Police Authorities, in allowing these waggons to enter the Park, exercised a very wise discretion. If they had been stopped on Sunday last the probability

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Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he did not think it was possible to enlarge too much on the personal responsibility which attached to the Secretary of State for the Home Department in this matter, and most certainly nothing which he would venture to suggest would be at all calculated to depreciate that responsibility. The right hon. Gentleman had told the House that the responsibility of the Secretary of State was complete and entire with regard to the maintenance of the peace of the Metropolis, and had pointed out that it was the duty of the executive officers under the Secretary of State to take directions, after that official had made himself acquainted with the various circumstances of the case, to conduct the required operations. He said it was also the duty of the Secretary of State to place entire confidence in that officer. He Mr. W. H. Smith thought the particular feature which struck one in connection with the events of February 8 was this—that there did not seem to have been a sense of responsibility in any quarter which attached to those who had the care of the peace, the order, and the security of the

Metropolis. He was not going to bring any charge against the right hon. Gentleman; no charge rested against him; but he asked if it did not strike hon. Members that it was an extraordinary occurrence that the right hon. Gentleman should have been allowed by the administrative officers of the Department to sit at the Home Office up till 6 or half-past 6 o'clock that evening, and to have been unaware of the events which were known almost in every other part of London shortly after their occurrence? It appeared to him that, both at the Home Office and at Scotland Yard, a feeling seemed to have existed that the arrangements which had been made had been adequate for all contingencies, and that it was nobody's duty to follow up the arrangements, and see that the events which were not at first foreseen should be guarded against. Great stress had been laid on the fact that the newspapers contained no indication that riots were expected. He would admit that people going about to fulfil their ordinary avocations on this Monday had no expectations that a riot would occur, that windows would be broken, men robbed, and shops plundered. There remained, however, the fact that men were gathered together on that day, under conditions which gave an opportunity, to those who chose to avail themselves of it, to combine for purposes of riot and robbery. One would have thought that, under those circumstances, surely it was someone's duty to have watched over this gathering of people, and to have made it impossible for the bad characters to commit the riots and the robberies which took place. It had been remarked that those riots were not committed by working men. He had had great experience of the Metropolis, and he would express his own conviction that the unemployed working men had no part whatever in the disturbance. The people called Social Democrats were, he believed, remarkably few in number, and he should not like to charge them with a desire to commit robbery, or to aid in the destruction of property; but there was in the Metropolis a large number of low characters, who were called loafers by some, and pickpockets and thieves by others, who availed themselves of an opportunity of this kind to reap a rich harvest. It was also well known that a large number of persons

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Mr. Childers

of the Committee. But he would not quarrel with the view taken by the right hon. Gentleman, whose acceptance of responsibility was worth much to that House. The selection of Members of the Committee must rest with him alone, as also the provision of machinery to secure the desired results. He did not wish to share that responsibility with the right hon. Gentleman in the least; and, therefore, he said to him—"Act as you like; take what steps you please." The House of Commons and the country would willingly provide a sufficient body of men to protect the interests of the Metropolis. He thought that an inquiry by a Committee ought to be made in fairness to the working men of London, in order to get a little more light as to that dangerous class of persons who were hanging upon the skirts of every movement, and who, whatever they might call themselves, whether Radicals or Social Demagogues, were ready to avail themselves of every opportunity to put their hands in other people's pockets. He considered that the police themselves ought to have a little more knowledge and a little more power than they had to enable them to deal with that class, who were a dangerous element in the centre of a great population. The class might be small in number, but they seized upon and availed themselves of any popular excitement. He hoped, therefore, inquiry would be undertaken by a tribunal of a public character, and that it would be complete and searching, and sufficient to satisfy all who were interested in the good name of the working classes of this country. He was glad to know that compensation was to be given to those who had suffered by the riot; it was only reasonable, although one-half would practically come out of the pockets of the taxpayers of the United Kingdom, and the other half would be paid by the ratepayers of the Metropolis, and he should not grudge his contribution to it. The point to be aimed at in the future was that the ratepayers, who paid largely for a force to maintain order and security, should be able to feel that they could rely upon it. Otherwise, consider what the result would be. The peaceable citizens, driven by a feeling of insecurity, would take measures to protect themselves, and no disaster could be greater than that the people of this

Metropolis should come to the conclusion that any Government were unwilling to take on themselves the responsibility of the duty of keeping order and protecting property. If that were so, it would not be long before the old spirit of Englishmen would revive. If they could not induce the Government to protect them, they would take steps to protect themselves, and then would come a period of evil and mischief which would be a bad omen for the liberties and happiness of this country. What was essential was that there should be security for all who honestly pursued their avocations, and that, under proper regulations, men should still enjoy the right of public meeting.

Mr. CREMER said, that he trusted his hon. Colleague in the representation of Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart) was satisfied with the promise given by the Home Secretary, and would not press his Resolution to a division. A desire had been manifested on all hands that an investigation should take place into the causes which led to the disturbance, because, at present, the House was not in possession of any information which would lead it to a right conclusion as to the promoters of it. Everyone knew what had happened; but what they wanted to know, and what people out-of-doors wanted to know was how it happened. When the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) rose, it might have been expected that he would throw some light on the subject. The hon. Member had for some years enjoyed the friendship of the promoters of the meeting in Trafalgar Square, and on more than one occasion he had attended their meetings and been associated with them in their enterprises. He hoped he did not do the hon. Member injustice when he said that he was strongly inclined to believe—and that belief was shared by many outside the House—that the hon. Member could, if he so desired, afford a considerable amount of information with regard to the doings of the gentlemen in question. He hoped, however, that an opportunity of giving that information at a future inquiry would be afforded to the hon. Gentleman. As, however, the hon. Member had not thrown any light on the question, perhaps the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) would assist him.

He believed that the noble Lord, from his connection with a well-known agitator who was frequently within the precincts of that House, could, if he desired, throw a considerable amount of light on the disturbances which had taken place. He (Mr. Cremer) was not insinuating that the noble Lord had any connection with the original promoters of the meeting; but that he was connected with another agitator who, not many years ago, was parading the Metropolis with a fez on his head and a Turkish flag in his hand trying to get up an excitement among the people. Some asserted that the agitator to whom he alluded had inspired the noble Lord to found the new Tory Democracy, and that he had been the guide, counsellor, and friend of the noble Lord for some years past. But as neither the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets nor the noble Lord had afforded the House any information, perhaps the hon. Member for the City (Sir Robert Fowler) could throw a little light upon the subject. There were certain Gentlemen who, free lances themselves, had always a number of men at their beck and call, who could always be despatched to any part of the Metropolis, or any part of the United Kingdom, and who would engage to get up a meeting or to break up a meeting for a sufficient consideration. Many of the meetings promoted by the Municipal Reform League had been defeated in their operations by means of disturbances which had been traced to the sources to which he had referred. They were anxious that these people should be unmasked; that these parasites, who, for many years, had paraded themselves as the representatives of organized bodies of working men, should have their true character made known, as they were exceedingly desirous that, for the future, they should be rendered innocuous, and that could only be done by the light being let in upon them. There were agitators and agitators; he had himself been one, and so had many of his hon. Friends. But the result of the agitation of himself and his hon. Friends was that they were landed on the Benches of the House of Commons as Members of that House. But the men to whom he was referring belonged to no such agitation as that. They had no organization, but met in some public-house from time to time to concert their plans; prepared their own

Mr. Cremer

newspaper reports; in fact, they lived on paragraphs and subsidies. That was the character of the promoters of the Trafalgar Square meeting. All real working men organizations were public, well known, and registered under the Trades Union Act; but the men in question had no visible means of subsistence, yet they did live, and lived well, and for some time past they had been living in clover, and were ready to work for any cause. Sometimes they were advocates of Sugar Bounties, at other times they figured as riverside workmen, advocating bridges over the Thames or tunnels under it; then they were heard of as leaders of the Metropolitan Labourers' Union, advocating or opposing Cattle Diseases Bills. They had also been concerned in numbers of bye-elections; but their golden harvest was the General Election. He was glad that the Party opposite pressed for this inquiry, though some awkward results might follow. It might surprise hon. Members opposite to hear the kind of information which he and his Friends were prepared to give; and he hoped the hon. Member for Westminster would not regret challenging an inquiry, because on the Radical side of the House they had everything to gain, while he was afraid several Members on the Opposition side would find that they had a great deal to lose by it. These men went down to Birmingham to oppose the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary to the Home Office (Mr. Broadhurst), and as soon as the working men of Birmingham discovered that they resolved to return the hon. Gentleman to Parliament. These men, too, had by their opposition also secured the return of his hon. Friend the Member for West Ham. If he was not mistaken, the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington, or some of his Friends, had some kind of connection with the Social Democrats who took part in this demonstration, and could make some interesting disclosures of the methods and practices of that class of men.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is travelling wide from the Question. I must remind him that the subject before the House is the administration and re-organization of the Metropolitan Police.

MR. CREMER said he bowed to the authority of the Chair. He regretted the

was that a large crowd would have collected at the entrance gates, and much disorder would have occurred, and that the police would have had very considerable difficulty in maintaining order. These were details, however, which he trusted he would be able, in the conduct of the inquiry which it was proposed to institute, to vigorously carry out as soon as the new Chief Commissioner had been appointed; and he thought the House might trust him, however guilty he might be of error of judgment with regard to details, that he would do his best to put the administration in this respect on a sound and effective basis. With reference to Sir Edmund Henderson, he had already said that for many years he had been a most efficient public servant; and no one regretted more than he (Mr. Childers) did the circumstances in which that gentleman had thought fit, after the Report of the Committee, to tender his resignation. In dealing with a public servant in these circumstances—and no one could have been more gentle than he had been in doing so—he submitted himself to the House, and asked it not to adopt any Resolution which would imply that he had been remiss in the discharge of his duty.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he did not think it was possible to enlarge too much on the personal responsibility which attached to the Secretary of State for the Home Department in this matter, and most certainly nothing which he would venture to suggest would be at all calculated to depreciate that responsibility. The right hon. Gentleman had told the House that the responsibility of the Secretary of State was complete and entire with regard to the maintenance of the peace of the Metropolis, and had pointed out that it was the duty of the executive officers under the Secretary of State to take directions, after that official had made himself acquainted with the various circumstances of the case, to conduct the required operations. He said it was also the duty of the Secretary of State to place entire confidence in that officer. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) thought the particular feature which struck one in connection with the events of February 8 was this—that there did not seem to have been a sense of responsibility in any quarter which attached to those who had the care of the peace, the order, and the security of the

Metropolis. He was not going to bring any charge against the right hon. Gentleman; no charge rested against him; but he asked if it did not strike hon. Members that it was an extraordinary occurrence that the right hon. Gentleman should have been allowed by the administrative officers of the Department to sit at the Home Office up till 6 or half-past 6 o'clock that evening, and to have been unaware of the events which were known almost in every other part of London shortly after their occurrence? It appeared to him that, both at the Home Office and at Scotland Yard, a feeling seemed to have existed that the arrangements which had been made had been adequate for all contingencies, and that it was nobody's duty to follow up the arrangements, and see that the events which were not at first foreseen should be guarded against. Great stress had been laid on the fact that the newspapers contained no indication that riots were expected. He would admit that people going about to fulfil their ordinary avocations on this Monday had no expectations that a riot would occur, that windows would be broken, men robbed, and shops plundered. There remained, however, the fact that men were gathered together on that day, under conditions which gave an opportunity, to those who chose to avail themselves of it, to combine for purposes of riot and robbery. One would have thought that, under those circumstances, surely it was someone's duty to have watched over this gathering of people, and to have made it impossible for the bad characters to commit the riots and the robberies which took place. It had been remarked that those riots were not committed by working men. He had had great experience of the Metropolis, and he would express his own conviction that the unemployed working men had no part whatever in the disturbance. The people called Social Democrats were, he believed, remarkably few in number, and he should not like to charge them with a desire to commit robbery, or to aid in the destruction of property; but there was in the Metropolis a large number of low characters, who were called loafers by some, and pickpockets and thieves by others, who availed themselves of an opportunity of this kind to reap a rich harvest. It was known that a large number would assist him.

mediate attention to the defects themselves. The hon. Member for the Abbey Division of Westminster was pleased to ridicule the Committee for having suggested that Sir Edmund Henderson should have sat at the base of the Nelson Column in full uniform, with cocked hat and spurs. He (Sir Henry Holland) need hardly assure the House that there was no such recommendation, or anything like it in the Report. The paragraph was simply an outcome of the fertile imagination of the hon. Member. The Committee found fault with Mr. Superintendent Walker, who had sole control in Trafalgar Square, for not remaining in one place, where his constables could find him. The Superintendent was in plain clothes; he was hustled about in the crowd; he fell amongst thieves, and his pockets were picked. An officer who was in command on such an occasion ought to remain in a certain place where he could be found, and to have with him men to act as messengers if necessary. The Committee had not only no fault to find with private constables; but recognized that they were a very hard-working, capable, and excellent body of men. Among the superior officers there was not enough power of initiation; but that criticism did not apply to the constables. He heartily agreed with what had been said in "another place" by Lord Aberdare with reference to Sir Edmund Henderson, and to the excellent public work he had done. It would be a bad day for this country when such services as that officer had rendered were forgotten. He was nevertheless, to a certain degree, responsible for the defective system of organization. In that respect he had failed. He (Sir Henry Holland) was glad to know that the Amendment was not to be pressed; because he felt satisfied that to remove the police from the control of the Executive Government, who were responsible for peace and order, and to place them under the control of a representative Body, however excellent, would be a great mistake.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he would not indulge in any insinuations, but would make a plain statement with regard to the part which the Tory Party had played in connection with certain agitations. He agreed with the opinion that had been expressed that a number of people assembled in Trafalgar

Square with the knowledge that a riot might occur; and he was prepared to produce evidence before a Committee of Inquiry to show who were the people who brought together those who were likely to take part in the riot. He would undertake to show, if an inquiry were granted, which now seemed certain, that during the six weeks preceding the day of the meeting in Trafalgar Square large sums of money, far exceeding any legitimate allowance for expenses incurred in convening a meeting of that kind, were supplied to Mr. S. Peters by leading Conservatives, Members of both Houses of Parliament. ["Oh, oh!"] He undertook to show that part of the money was paid by cheque; that some of the cheques were payable to bearer, and others to order, and crossed; and also to prove that the cheques reached the hands of the bankers, and to produce some of the beer-shop keepers at whose establishments the proceeds were spent by the sober patriots who were called on to aid. He thought it fair to add that he had communicated his intention to Mr. Peters, who denied in writing that any cheque had reached him; but he must say that the signature to this reply to his communication was the same as that which he had seen on the back of some of the cheques to which he had referred. He did not think it would be in keeping with the decorum of the debates in that House to continue this personal matter, or to weaken the effect of the charge he had made by any other words; and he, therefore, left it there.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY said, he was at the meeting in Trafalgar Square, and saw there several of his constituents who were out of employment, and they were very glad to see him amongst them. [*Laughter.*] Well, it was the duty of a Member to look after his constituents. The first speeches which he heard were in favour of Fair Trade, and he saw nothing in them to object to. A large number of the men present were out of employment, and many of them were starving. He was told by some of them that they had had nothing to eat that day, and he sympathized with them very much. Speeches were subsequently delivered, enforcing the argument that to behave quietly would not avail, and that it was necessary to proclaim by agitation that those present were in distress. He followed the

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crowd through Pall Mall and into Piccadilly, where he was struck by the careful manner in which the constables protected the shops where windows had been broken. When he arrived near the Achilles Statue he heard speeches delivered by men, who addressed the mob very much after the manner attributed to the President of the Local Government Board when the right hon. Gentleman spoke at public meetings. Soon afterwards eight or ten people seized him. Some of them thrust their hands into his pockets, and others tried to tear open his overcoat; but he prevented them from getting his watch. He was, however, thrown down, and would have been molested still further had not one of the leaders of the Democrats protected him. The men who seized him did not look like starving men. They appeared, on the contrary, to be very well fed; but they had a very bad and criminal aspect. He did not, in the least degree, blame the Home Secretary for what occurred that day as regarded any imperfect arrangements on the part of the police. There was a want of organization in the whole affair; that was his opinion, speaking as an eye-witness; but he did feel that it was to be regretted that the Home Secretary was the Chairman of the Committee of Inquiry. He also thought that Lord Wolseley, as Adjutant General of the Army, ought not to have sat on a Committee which was practically inquiring into the conduct of the head of the police, which was essentially a civil force. He strongly objected to any transfer of the control of the police, and hoped that, whatever reform there might be in it, or the government of London, the control of the Metropolitan Police would be kept in the hands of the Home Office whichever Party might be in power.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT said, he felt bound to congratulate the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just spoken on the narrow escape he had experienced. He (Mr. Howard Vincent) recognized that it would not be proper for him, who had been so long intimately connected with the Police Force, and under the control of the Home Department, minutely to criticize the evidence taken by the Committee, and the Report of the Committee upon it. But he could well understand that hon. Members, who

represented those whose property had suffered, and whose lives had been imperilled, should speak in indignant terms in regard to the want of protection afforded by the police on this occasion. It must, however, be borne in mind that this was really the first time, within the memory of the present generation, that anything of the kind had occurred. The right of public meeting had never been contested in this country, and very wisely so; for, no doubt, public meetings acted as a safety valve in letting off the steam of popular discontent. But he ventured to say that not one in ten of those who took part in those demonstrations had the smallest sympathy with their object. The great majority merely looked for a little idle amusement. It had always been the practice of the police not to give exaggerated or undue importance to these meetings, and not to arouse susceptibilities by displaying a large and unnecessary force. It had also been the practice to hold a considerable number of men in reserve in case their services were needed; and this precaution had, it would appear, been amply taken on this occasion. The control of crowds by the English police, and especially by the Metropolitan Police, had long been the admiration of foreign authorities. It was not for him to criticize the handling of the police on this occasion by one whose brother officer he had long been; but he might point out that Sir Edmund Henderson had for 17 years discharged the arduous duties of Chief Commissioner of Police in such a manner as to endear him to every man under his command, and to raise the Metropolitan Police Force high in public estimation. It would be exceedingly to be regretted if the outcome of this debate were to deprive the Police Authorities of that freedom of action and that unfettered responsibility which was absolutely necessary to the efficient discharge of their duty. He was free to admit that there were many matters in connection with the organization of the Metropolitan Police susceptible of remedy. He would not enter into these matters in detail; but he would venture to point out that among matters requiring early attention was the provision of proper headquarters instead of the present miserable premises in Scotland Yard; and, secondly, the constitution of a proper system of in-

struction in police duties for the rank and file of the force. Speaking of that splendid force, however, as a whole, he could only remind the House of the eloquent tribute paid it by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when Home Secretary—

"That it was not surprising the police sometimes went astray, were sometimes in the wrong; but it was marvellous how seldom. Their work was generally done with a fidelity, a diligence, and a discipline which were the admiration of all who took the trouble to make themselves acquainted with it."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT) said, he wished, at the commencement of his remarks, to record his entire agreement in the testimony to the character of the Metropolitan Police which had been expressed by the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken and by others, as to their excellence, both mental and physical. His experience of the force had been that, on the whole, they, to a marvellous degree, fulfilled the duties with which they were intrusted; and it would be a great misfortune if, in a moment of excitement, the House and the country were to believe that the present police organization was entirely in fault, and ought to be condemned. He believed that if, on account of the deplorable incident that had lately occurred, public confidence were shaken in the force, and injustice done to any part of that great system which maintained the security of this Metropolis, it would be of incalculable mischief, and greater harm than good would result. A great many unjust things had recently been said of the police. Well, there were Railway Companies, extremely well managed, on which hundreds of trains were going night and day at express speed for many years, carrying millions of passengers in perfect security. Then a terrible accident happened—an accident due to the carelessness of someone who had never been careless before, and that was very much what had occurred with regard to the recent riot. The persons responsible for the management of the Police Force had had to deal with similar meetings for a great number of years, and they had always done so successfully, no event of this character having occurred before. Meetings had taken place under every circumstance of difficulty and danger, and the organization

of the police had been found adequate. Nothing that he had heard or which he had read in regard to what occurred the other day conveyed to his mind the belief that the organization was to blame. It was the result of individual carelessness which it was difficult to explain. The police had very responsible duties to perform, and if any inquiry was held, no doubt they would have many accusers. The hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart) spoke in severe terms of the superior officers of the Metropolitan Police. No doubt, discharged servants would bring accusations against these officers; but he could bear testimony to their high character and efficiency. Sir Edmund Henderson was a public servant who, however unfortunate he might have been on this occasion—and it was no part of his (Sir William Harcourt's) duties to pronounce judgment upon that—for a great number of years by his calmness and firmness, by his tact and by his judgment, had done his duty in that great and responsible office which he filled for the protection of the people of London. It had been said, and repeated during the debate, that the Secretary of State was too liable to be overborne in his duties by permanent officials. It was easy for persons who knew nothing of the duties of the Home Office and of the Police Authorities to say that; but the notion of the permanent officials in the Home Office having anything to do with the administration of the police was perfectly ridiculous, and anyone who had ever gone up the stairs of the Home Office would know that. Whatever relations existed between the Home Office and the police were really personal between the Secretary of State and the police. The Secretary of State was responsible for the police in this sense—and it was the very highest sense—he was responsible for them just as the Secretary of State for War was responsible for the Army; that was to say, he was responsible for appointments in the police, he was responsible for their efficiency, he was responsible for their general policy, if he might so call it, and for giving them instructions whether they should allow a meeting to take place or not, and whether they should go in this direction or in that. He was also responsible for placing at the disposal of the police an adequate force for

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any circumstances that might arise; and he was responsible for the police of the Metropolis to the House of Commons. But when it was contended that the Secretary of State was responsible for the details of the executive action of the police, a more dangerous or more mischievous doctrine it was impossible to propound. In so interfering he would be doing nothing but harm, and he would be doing that for which he was totally unfit. What the Secretary of State had to do was to see that there were proper men in the police, to call their attention to the principal duties they had to perform, and to place a sufficient force at their disposal; but if there were any attempt on his part to conduct their policy so as to say that constables should be in this or that street, whether in individual cases or on occasions of this character, he would be doing exactly what the Secretary of State for War would do if he were to telegraph to a General in the middle of an action to alter the disposition of his forces. Another subject had been referred to by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Algernon Percy), and he hoped he did not mean by that reference that it was inexpedient to allow these public meetings. He was quite sure that no greater mistake could be made than to prevent these meetings. They were placed in London in the midst of a population of 4,000,000. In other towns in the country meetings could be held outside the town; but did they think it was possible to say to 4,000,000 of Englishmen—"You shall have no opportunity for holding public meetings?" What they must do was to regulate these public meetings; and, according to his experience, nothing was easier than to regulate public meetings in London. In these great crowds they might depend upon it that nine out of every ten persons were on the side of order, and would assist the police in maintaining it. The tenth person might be a rough or a plunderer; but if the police were present nine out of every ten persons in the crowd would aid them; and he was perfectly certain that on the very occasion of these riots a very small body of police could have stopped the whole mischief at any point. That was one of the reasons why he had never concurred in the doctrine which he knew was held by some that the police ought not to be "shown." He thought that

was an entire mistake. If it should be necessary to have the military in readiness, they should not be "shown;" but the police were a civil force. They came from the people, they belonged to the people, and were a civil force enrolled for the purpose of aiding the people in keeping order; and he had always said—Let the police be seen, let the people know that the police are there. The presence of the police on the spot prevented the very commencement of disorder, and the more they were shown on these occasions the better, in his opinion, was it for the preservation of peace. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith) had observed on the information not having been sent immediately to the Home Office. He (Sir William Harcourt) certainly thought that was a great mistake. But let it be understood why it was a mistake. The Secretary of State ought, no doubt, to be informed of everything that affected the peace of London at once. But it had been said that he ought to have directed the operations of the police. That was, he thought, a great mistake, as it was no part of his duty. If the police were overpowered, the Secretary of State would have power to appeal to military force; but, generally speaking, in his opinion, the duty of the Secretary of State was to take care that an adequate force was provided, that the head of the police was informed as to the policy he ought to pursue and the duty he ought to perform, and to advise as to the legal position and action; but after that to leave the executive action and the conduct of his policy on any particular occasion to the responsible officers of the police. Half-a-dozen mounted policemen would have been sufficient to quell the whole disturbance. A great deal had been said about telegraphic communication; but where they were dealing with matters of this kind a few men on horseback were more valuable even than telegraphic communication. Such occurrences as those on February 8 were simply accidents arising out of a piece of carelessness; but they did not affect the reputation and organization of the force. Of course, if and it would be very dangerous to attack the reputation of the police on the occasion of this character of accidents of this character as to the existing organization. He was satisfied the hon.

police were produced by sensational accounts of the occurrences themselves, and by erroneous deductions, both with reference to the mob dealt with, and with reference to the Police Force which had to encounter them. He thought they ought to bring common sense to bear on this matter, and not to allow a spirit of panic to inspire them. The events of February 8 occurred like a railway accident, and just in the same way was much less likely to occur in the future. It was equally certain they had been the result not of a comedy of errors, but of a tragedy of errors, any one of which, if it could have been foreseen and prevented, would have entirely stopped the subsequent proceedings. It was a lesson of vigilance to everybody concerned, from the Home Office down to the lowest officer in the Police Force; but he was perfectly certain that to exaggerate the matter, or to approach it in any sensational spirit, was greatly to be deprecated. If the present system had not been a good one, how could the Metropolis have gone on for 20 years without the occurrence of an accident of this kind? Therefore he entreated the House of Commons not to be led away because of these events. He did not disparage their gravity or their magnitude; but, for Heaven's sake, let them look at the matter in a calm and quiet manner, and bring to bear in its discussion a spirit of cool common sense; and he hoped it would be recognized that far greater mischief would be done than any which had yet been apparent, if there was any attempt to revolutionize altogether what for so many years had worked with such advantage to the people of the Metropolis.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, that 18 years ago, as Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, he was directed to make an inquiry into the organization of the Metropolitan Police Force; and it was a remarkable fact that in that Report, drawn up by Sir Henry Thring and himself, they put their fingers on all the weak points which had been exposed on the occasions of the meetings for session. The first of these was centralization, and the want of responsible officers. They fully, no event of any day a disaster occurred before. The want of immediate place under every eye, and the want of immunity and danger, and the want of immunity, be issued from

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Scotland Yard. They also said the force was far too large to be treated as if it were a single battalion, and recommended that London should be divided into four, five, or six districts, and that each district should have a Superintendent or Commissioner, with powers similar to those of the Chief Constable of a county. Lord Aberdare, in "another place," had stated that he carried out that suggestion, by appointing four or five District Superintendents to manage different parts of the Metropolis. He (Sir James Fergusson) believed, however, that the system was never properly carried out, and that Scotland Yard retained too much of detail in its hands and never allowed these officers sufficient discretion. He regretted very much that of late years a distinctly retrograde step had been taken. Whether the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) was responsible for it or not he did not know; but two or three of these District Superintendents had been discontinued. There had been two inquiries since.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The most recent Committee disapproved of these District Superintendents.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: Very well; but it seemed to him very curious that the present Home Secretary said he was going to carry out the suggestions of the Committee, who had recommended that system at the very outset of their proposals. He (Sir James Fergusson) would put it whether it was right or wise that there should be no discretion outside Scotland Yard to deal with emergencies? The remedy for such fiascos was to take away the present excessive centralization in Scotland Yard; and he implored the Home Secretary not to give way on that point.

MR. LOCKWOOD said, he looked upon the attacks which had been made upon the present Home Secretary as perfectly unjustifiable. If it was suggested in any way that that right hon. Gentleman was to blame for what had happened, they ought to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary to the Home Department what information he had at the Home Office during his tenure of Office, and what steps he took before he left that important post to inform the right hon. Gentleman who was to succeed him as to what was likely

to occur. They had as yet received no information from him upon the point.

SIR R. ANSHETON CROSS said, he wished to say, at the outset, how satisfied he was at the assertion made by the Home Secretary as to the general efficiency and excellent character both of the men and officers of the Metropolitan Force. He was glad to observe that the right hon. Gentleman had made use of the words "mental and physical," and he would like to add also the word "moral" in relation to the character of the force. He also desired to bear his testimony during six years of Office to that efficiency, and he was pleased to say that when he returned to Office last year he found both officers and men in as good a condition as he had left them. He was bound also to add his testimony as to the conduct of Sir Edmund Henderson, who had paid so much attention, not simply to the organization of the police, but to the individual comforts and moral training of every member of the force. He knew the past services Sir Edmund Henderson had rendered, and the excellent work he had done in the settlement of the boundary line of Canada, in carrying out the Ashburton Treaty, and in other directions. Afterwards, when brought to this country and appointed, on the death of Sir Joshua Jebb, to the head of the Police Department, he administered for many years the duties of his Office to the satisfaction of those who were over him. As head of the Metropolitan Police Force for a period of 14 years, he had done more to promote the efficiency of the force, and for the happiness and moral training of each individual member of it, than anyone occupying a similar position had done before. Therefore, he was very glad to hope, although this unfortunate circumstance had occurred, that the present Home Secretary fully recognized those services, and that Sir Edmund Henderson would, as he hoped, profit eventually by the way in which he would be treated by the Home Office. The disaster which they all deplored was not, in his opinion, due to any great want of organization in the force. He had read the Report over with the evidence, and if he had anything to say about the Report it would be this—that it was calculated to raise, and have the effect of raising, more distrust on the part of the public as to the working of the force

than was warranted by what took place. He believed that the disasters of a fortnight since were not due to a want of organization on the part of the police, but to the fact that the Chief Commissioner evidently underrated the gravity of the situation. So many meetings had passed off quietly that Sir Edmund Henderson did not take into consideration clearly the very peculiar character of the meeting, or rather of the two meetings; and seeing that there was danger of a collision the police ought to have been warned of the intensity of the danger. When he (Sir R. Ansheton Cross) was at the Home Office, he always sought to impress upon the police the uncertainty of the elements comprising a large crowd. His own experience was that what they had to fear was not from those who came to hear discussion, but from those who did not come to hear, who mixed in the crowd and who might start it into another channel altogether. He thought that Sir Edmund Henderson ought to have taken greater precautions. He had been asked by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Lockwood) what part he had taken in this matter. He left the Home Office on the Friday afternoon, and he saw Sir Edmund Henderson and asked him about this meeting. He told Sir Edmund Henderson that it was one which required his very careful consideration. He reminded him of the necessity of having a very large force, and he reminded him of his own words used on a previous occasion—"It is not the meeting, but what may come out of it." He said, further, to him, using this exact expression—"Now, mind, these things, to use your own words, grow up exactly like a mushroom; they grow up so quickly that you have not time to change your plans at the moment—that you should prepare for them at the start." That was the warning which he had given to Sir Edmund Henderson on the Friday. He certainly thought Sir Edmund Henderson ought to have had better information as to the class of people who were coming up, and he regretted that he did not take the opportunity of gaining further information about what was likely to take place. Of course, if further information had been gained, proper precautions might have been taken against this new danger. He hoped he had now satisfied the hon.

Member. What was the responsibility of the Secretary of State? There was no doubt he was responsible for the peace of the Metropolis, for maintaining the force in a high state of organization, so that it might be capable of dealing at any moment with any sudden emergency that might arise; but he could no more take the actual direction of the police than the Secretary for War could take charge of the Army, or the Secretary to the Admiralty charge of the Navy; but his duty was to discuss with the Chief of the Police all the dangers which were likely to arise. Of course, the communications between the Secretary of State and the Chief Commissioner would depend upon the character of the matter that had to be dealt with; but during his tenure of Office he always felt a deep feeling of responsibility on the subject of maintaining the public peace. Now the possibility of the mob going West was just one of the things which might have arisen in a discussion with the Home Secretary; and although it appeared not to have presented itself to the mind of the Chief Commissioner, it seemed almost impossible to think it had not done so. It was also a great mistake in the first instance not to show the police. It was proper not to show the military until they were required; but the police, being a civil force, ought to be shown. Then a great number of police should have been kept in reserve. In all serious cases he had felt deeply the responsibility for the peace and safety of the town, and he never was easy until he knew that the meeting was over and that the crowd had dispersed. There were several occasions which he could recall. There was one in 1875, when he had reports every half-hour during the time disturbances were going on. There was the case which arose out of the Tichborne trial, when De Morgan came down to present a Petition to the House, and he had to stop him. During all that time, he had constant messages backwards and forwards by constables and by his private secretaries to the Home Office, and to the House of Commons. There was the case only the other day of threatened disturbances in the East End, and he had reports during the whole of that meeting. That practice, besides being a precautionary one, made the police feel that the eye of the Home Secretary was upon them. The

Sir R. Assheton Cross

Chancellor of the Exchequer said:— "What would you do if the riots were going on?" But there was a point on this day when a word from the Home Secretary to Scotland Yard might have secured reinforcements and stopped the whole thing. He hoped, however, that the House would not run away with the idea that the police wanted thorough re-organization. No doubt, they, like almost all other things, were capable of some improvement; but if, in trying to effect it, they upset the whole system they would run a great danger. They had had great meetings, dangerous meetings, during the 18 years, and the whole of them had passed away without the smallest censure; and, indeed, on more than one occasion, the police had received the thanks of that House on account of their behaviour with regard to them.

LORD EDWARD CAVENDISH: I should not have risen to say a single word on this occasion if it had not been for one or two observations which fell from the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, which observations I consider to be of an ungenerous character, and unfair and unjust towards the present Home Secretary.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Allow me to explain. I think that the noble Lord is labouring under a mistake. I never intended to do anything of the kind; and I thought that I had carefully refrained from doing so.

LORD EDWARD CAVENDISH: It certainly appeared to me that in some of the observations of the right hon. Gentleman he suggested or insinuated that these disturbances were all due to some want of care on the part of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. CHILDERS): Perhaps my noble Friend will allow me to interrupt him. I did not understand the right hon. Gentleman to have done that.

LORD EDWARD CAVENDISH: Then I beg to apologize to the right hon. Gentleman for having misunderstood in any way what he stated. It appeared to me that in the observations of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to making inquiry during the course of the disturbances the right hon. Gentleman had thrown out some insinuation to that effect against my right hon. Friend, Mr.

Children, and had implied, that if proper precautions had been taken the disturbances might have been avoided. I can only say that, holding the position which my right hon. Friend did of Home Secretary on that occasion, it was perfectly impossible for him to have taken steps to avoid these occurrences, and any interference on his part would have been perfectly unjustifiable, having already an assurance that everything that was necessary for the maintenance of order would be done; and he would have been to blame if, under such circumstances, he had given any counter-instructions. I may say, for myself, having sat on the Committee, and having signed the Report of the Committee, that I signed it with a feeling of regret and very great reluctance, for this reason—I cannot forget that this is the first occasion, during many years, that any charge has been made against Sir Edmund Henderson, and the first occasion since the police have been under his control that the peace and public order of the Metropolis have been disturbed. The police, on other occasions, have discharged their duties in a manner which reflects the greatest credit on themselves; and during the time the police have been under the charge of Sir Edmund Henderson they have performed their arduous and difficult duties in a most satisfactory manner. It was, therefore, with very great regret that any Member of the Committee felt himself called upon to sign a Report which might be said to reflect upon the manner in which Sir Edmund Henderson has performed the important duties reposed in him. I will only say that if in any way I have misrepresented the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken I regret that I have done so; but I did feel that under the circumstances in which my right hon. Friend the present Home Secretary came into office it would have been unjust, unfair, and ungenerous, if any blame were attributed to him for what occurred. It certainly has been attributed to him—I will not say by the right hon. Gentleman, but by other hon. Members—that the disturbances were due in consequence of my right hon. Friend not having taken greater precautions, and from his not having had more frequent communication with the Chief Commissioner of Police. After having very carefully listened to all the evidence which

was brought before the Committee, I feel that in no sort of way whatever does any blame attach to my right hon. Friend.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

LOANS TO LANDOWNERS.

OBSERVATIONS.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE: There is a Motion on the Paper in my name—

"That it is desirable that more extended facilities should be given by legislation to owners of land to improve their estates by means of moneys borrowed on Terminable Annuities from the State."

My object in placing this Motion upon the Paper was to call attention to the present condition of the landed proprietors of this country. In 1816 an Act of Parliament was brought in by Sir Robert Peel, which allowed £2,000,000 to be lent to the landowners for the improvement of the land by means of drainage. In the year 1850 there was a further grant of £2,000,000 under similar conditions to the landowners of Great Britain, and similar advances were made to the landowners of Ireland at the same periods. Leaving Ireland out of the question for the present, the total amount of the advance sanctioned by Parliament for such purposes was £4,000,000; and that sum was advanced to the landed proprietors of Scotland and England towards enabling them to effect improvements in their land by draining and building suitable labourers' houses at 6½ per cent upon Terminable Annuities of 22 years. This amount of £4,000,000 was exhausted about the year 1870 or 1871. Now, Sir, not one sixpence of this money so advanced by the State has been lost. I have been informed by the best authority that only in two instances there were arrears, which were in consequence of accidental errors having been made in the accounts; but on each of those occasions, immediately the matter was brought before the landed proprietor who was in arrear, the amount in question was immediately sent to the Office of the Inclosure Commissioners. What I want now is to place for a moment the condition of the landed proprietors of this country before the House. On all sides there has been an outcry for further efforts on the part

of the landowners for the improvements of their land. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) proposes to make it a misdemeanour for landowners not to cultivate their land. I certainly think that it is a most desirable thing that they should be placed in a position to cultivate their land. But what is the present position of landed proprietors? There are the same mortgages upon it as there were when the owners succeeded to the property. The tithes on the land are also the same; and although we hear of reductions of rent, we have never heard of one single instance in which tithes have been reduced by 10 or any other percentage; on the contrary, they remain the same as they were upon their accession to the property. In addition, there are charges upon entailed property for younger children; and last, although by no means least, there is a charge for dowers, and what remains longer, as a rule, than any other charge upon the estate, is the charge for dowers. The rent of landed property has declined from 10 to 25 per cent. I am speaking of Great Britain only. I have no wish to exaggerate, but I believe that upon some properties the rent has declined 40 per cent; and many landowners, who are not themselves responsible for the charges placed upon their estates, are called upon now to improve their property, while the taxes on the land have been increased, and the incomes of the owners have fallen. We were told over and over again during the late Election that the so-called owners of land did not own the fee-simple of their estates, but that the fee-simple is the property of the Commonwealth; and that the landlords only hold the property as long as they improve it, and act up to the old spirit of the landed proprietors in the feudal times. Then, in addition, we have heavy local taxes placed upon the land, and beyond those local taxes the Income Tax, which, although it is collected in Ireland upon two-thirds of the rent, is collected in Great Britain upon the full rent. Hon. Members will probably ask why persons engaged in commercial pursuits should not have the same advances made to them by the State to enable them to carry on their businesses as I ask to-night for the landed proprietors? We have heard over and over again that the country is

in the greatest distress; and what is the use of the cheap loaf which Free Trade has given us, and the warm jacket which we can purchase cheaper than at any former period—what is the use of these advantages, if a labouring man, however anxious he is to work, cannot find employment, and has not got a penny in his pocket? We have heard to-night—and I fully agree with the principle—that the only way to meet the distress, now only too well known, which exists in large towns such as London, Manchester, Newcastle, Sunderland, Birmingham, and, including Glasgow, in Scotland, is to draw the honest labouring man back to the land. I do not speak of the men who broke windows in the West End a few days ago, because they are men who ought to write themselves down, as similar people did in India when the last Census was taken, as professional thieves; but I speak of the honest labouring men who are only too anxious to work, but who cannot find employment. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) will see fit to advance another £2,000,000 in aid of the improvement of land, it would immediately have this effect—it would draw the labouring men out of the large towns into the country. The effect would be spread over the whole of Great Britain, and I know of nothing more desirable than that the working men of Great Britain should be so drawn out of the large cities, and employed all over the country upon the land. I have no doubt that I shall be met by Her Majesty's Government with the argument that Companies have been started, and are in existence, who will lend money for the improvement of the land. But hon. Members will remember that private Companies would cease to exist if they did not make a profit. And now, when the landed proprietors' incomes are so much reduced, it becomes impossible for them to go to Companies for advances for improving their estates and employing labourers. It is well known that the value of land is so much depreciated at the present time that a large proportion of the land which requires draining would not pay the interest which any private Company would be obliged to charge in order to secure a profit. What I ask now is that there should be a further sum of money ad-

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vanced by the State for the purpose of giving employment to the labouring men; and the only useful employment which could be spread over the country for our unemployed working men would be the construction of drainage works. I believe that if the money I ask for were advanced the country would be immediately covered with gangs of drainers, earning from 18s. to 25s. a-week. I hope that in this matter I may have the sympathy of hon. Members opposite who sit below the Gangway, because a large proportion of the men who are usually employed in these works of drainage are Irishmen; and after an experience of 25 years in the constant employment of gangs of drainers I am able to say that there never was a more industrious, orderly, sober, and persevering man than the Irish labourer. Then, again, what would be the immediate effect of giving this inducement to the landed proprietors to commence works of this nature? It would react, I believe, over the whole of the country. I would even make an appeal to the hon. Member for Burnley Mr. Rylands, who I regret is not in his place, and other hon. Members who watch so very closely every appeal that is made to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because I believe they know as well as I do that the improvement of the land will immediately give an impetus to the expenditure of money in other profitable ways—for instance, more fencing would be undertaken, and wire would have to be purchased; and if additional employment is given to the labouring classes, houses will have to be built for their accommodation. Speaking from 25 years' experience, I know that cottage property, over and over again, has been allowed to fall into ruin, because the proprietor has not been able to see his way to put it into that state of repair which the Local Government Board consider necessary for the houses of the poor. I do not complain of the decision of the Local Government Board in this matter; but the practical result is that the houses are allowed to fall into a state of ruin, and no new cottages are built. If this advance were made by the State, there would be an immediate inducement to the landed proprietors to build fit and proper cottages, not only for their labourers, but for other persons engaged in improving the land, and in

keeping up a proper state of cultivation upon the land, whether in grass or in tillage. Only yesterday we heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) that all over Scotland there is a great wish that every labouring man should have sufficient pasturage for a cow. In the North of England we have endeavoured to carry that out. In many instances these cows graze in common, and go home, if I may say so, each to their own domestic hearth. And what happens? The other day the Inspector of a Local Government Board found a cow residing in an apartment which was under the same roof as the owner, and that was against the rule of the Board in regard to sanitary arrangements. It, therefore, became necessary either to pull that cow-house down or to build a new cottage. The cottager was not in a position to do that, and he paid no attention to the notice; and I think the Local Government Board exercised a wise discretion in not having taken further proceedings. It is out of the question for the Local Authorities to build cottages. It was mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) last night that not only in Scotland, but in other parts of the United Kingdom, are the sanitary laws and regulations infringed. It is all very well to say that the proprietors can go to private Companies and apply for advances from them. But a proprietor who takes that step will considerably diminish his income for the rest of his life; and it must be remembered that a landed proprietor who has younger children to provide for, and, in some instances, widows also, is bound to consider these things; and the result is that, practically speaking, very little improvement, either in the cultivation of the land or in the condition of the houses of the labouring classes, is going on in any portion of Great Britain at this moment. And when I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to grant an advance from the National Exchequer, I wish it to be remembered that the State has actually made a profit by the advances which were made in 1846 and 1850. I believe that the loans have been excellently well managed by the Inclosure Commissioners. I admit that the State has not realized a large profit; but it has made a small one. The Office has been

very well managed; and three-fourths of the expense, speaking in round numbers, has been met by the fees paid by the landed proprietors who got the advances. Now I hope that Her Majesty's Government will feel disposed to look into this matter, and grant the advance which I ask for. But there are one or two points in which an alteration would be required in the system under which former advances were made. In the first place, it would be necessary to lend small sums in advance by the State without waiting for any part of the work to be done in the first instance; because at present, when a proprietor receives aid from a private Company, he has to borrow from his bankers, in the first place, until the first instalment of the work is completed. There are many details in connection with the question with which I will not trouble the House. My main point is that the State should do now as it did in 1846, when it advanced £2,000,000 sterling, and as it did again in 1850, when a further advance of £2,000,000 was made to the landed proprietors of Great Britain. I will not refer to the case of Ireland, because that country has had special facilities for purchasing land and improving property granted to it only last year, when I think the sum of no less £5,000,000 was voted by Parliament for the purchase of land at the extraordinarily low rate of 4 per cent, spread over 49 years, such payment for 49 years extinguishing both principal and interest. I do not grudge the people of Ireland their good fortune in obtaining that advance, because I think it was no more than justice to Ireland for the State to make it; but I do say that we poor Saxons should receive some benefit from the State, especially when we consider that the advance, such as I suggest, would not cost the taxpayers of Great Britain anything; but, on the contrary, there would be a profit to the State from the transaction. No doubt, right hon. Members on the Treasury Bench will ask why I do not bring in a Private or a Public Bill to carry out this object, and they will point out that such a course is quite open to me. I have made careful inquiry, and, from the information I have received, I find that it would be utterly impossible for any private Member to succeed in passing a Bill of this nature through the House of Commons

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without the assistance of the Government of the day. At this late hour I have no wish to detain the House; but there are one or two points which I would like to mention. I am informed that the actual cost of the Inclosure Commission last year for the administration of the Commission was £23,000, and that there was received by fees a sum of £17,000. I do not think that the additional work which my proposal would entail upon the Commissioners would very materially add to the work of that Office; but it would greatly increase the amount of fees received. I daresay the Government will say that it is impossible to advance the public money for this purpose without an Act of Parliament; but in this House we are constantly asked to vote hundreds of thousands of pounds which have already been spent in war, and I do think it is not too much to ask Her Majesty's Government to allow £100,000, or £50,000, or even £20,000, to be advanced at once for this purpose, while an Act of Parliament is being brought forward, out of consideration for the starving multitudes to be found now in every city throughout Great Britain. If the Treasury were to allow advances on the old system, which did so well, and by which the State actually realized a profit, I believe it would have the effect of immediately drawing out of the towns those starving masses who are now crowding them, and who are increasing the distress of the regular population of our large cities. Not only that, but it would afford an opportunity for properly housing the labouring population, and keeping the labouring men of the country fully and well employed, an end we all desire to see accomplished. Then, again, let me turn for a moment to the allotment question. I believe there is an anxiety on both sides of the House to provide allotments for the labouring classes in some shape or other. At all events, I know a very strong feeling on this side of the House does exist in favour of allotments. But what is the use of allotting to anybody land which requires draining? It must be drained in plots of 40 or 50 acres before it can be rendered of any service. Perhaps hon. Members are not aware that in the North of England, and even in some parts of the South, there are

enormous tracts of land which could be turned, by a proper system of drainage, from sheep-walks into fair cattle pastures. With these remarks I will conclude by urging that the appeal which I now make to Her Majesty's Government, and to this House, is not only reasonable, but opportune, practical, and, above all things, urgent.

Mr. McCULLOCH: In the absence of the hon. Member for North Cornwall (Mr. Conybeare), I rise for the purpose of seconding the proposal of the hon. Baronet the Member for the Lichfield Division of Staffordshire (Sir John Swinburne). Although I represent a city constituency, I have been considered conversant with the details of rural economy, and I may say that in my candidature for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow the Land Question attracted considerable interest; and I am sure that in seconding the appeal of the hon. Baronet I shall be supported by landlords on both sides of the House. I believe that the policy which has been adopted towards Ireland may with advantage be extended to the United Kingdom. Although it may not be considered wise to advance the public money for such purposes as this, I think it would have the effect of relieving the landed proprietors from some of the difficulties of their present situation, and enable them to improve the cultivation of their estates, not only with advantage to themselves, but to the labourers whom it would be necessary to employ. The hon. Baronet has told us that in the advances which were made in 1846 and 1850 there was not the loss of a penny to the State. I believe that was so; that they benefited the farmer as well as the landlord, and gave a large amount of employment to the labouring men of the district in which works of improvement were carried out. The security is, I think, indisputable; and the Government, in making advances, would take care that the proportion of the money was such as would be repaid. The increased product would at least help to pay the interest, and I believe that in 19 cases out of 20 in Scotland the interest was actually paid out of the increased produce of the land. That of itself is a consideration of no small moment; and, even in the interest of the unemployed, it would be a good application of some portion of the

public money, because encouraging reproductive works that would not only pay the interest upon the money advanced, but otherwise be amply secured. Therefore the State would run no risk whatever; a public advantage would be effected, and employment would be given to a large body of working men, who do not know at present where to obtain employment. Under these circumstances, I think the proposal is one which should have the very earnest consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and I think it has been proved that the State would incur no risk whatever, having the security of the whole estate for advances spent on a portion. All would share in the benefit, not only landlords, tenants, and labourers, but the people of towns also, and I think that past experience is enough to justify all that the hon. Baronet has put forward. If those who think it dangerous to spend the public money in this way will only look at the past, they will see there is not the slightest risk incurred by the Government. Although the prices of agricultural produce are now greatly depreciated, I believe that they cannot go much further in that direction, because no foreign country can continuously send in its produce at lower prices than at present; and I think, whether or not the State is prepared to advance a portion of the public money in the way suggested by the hon. Baronet, we ought not to lose confidence in the future of British agriculture.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is desirable that more extended facilities should be given by legislation to owners of land to improve their estates by means of moneys borrowed on Terminable Annuities from the State."—*Sir John Swinburne.*

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt): My hon. Friends who have moved and seconded the Amendment have made an appeal which demands, and which I am sure will receive, much consideration and sympathy from both sides of the House. If anything can be done in the present state of the agricultural interest to alleviate the distress from which we

know that it is now so heavily suffering, I feel certain it would command the sympathy of the House and the Government. But the question is, whether the proposal of my hon. Friend (Sir John Swinburne) is really calculated to relieve that distress? It is quite true that soon after the repeal of the Corn Laws Sir Robert Peel proposed and carried, first of all, one grant of £2,000,000, and then another of £2,000,000 more, which I believe were very usefully employed in effecting improvements on land; but we know at that time the land of England was comparatively undeveloped; it was in a condition of hope and expectation; and there was a general confidence, and I think, also, a disposition to invest money in the improvement of land. I am afraid that that sentiment hardly exists now. What were the terms on which money was advanced at that time? The advances were repayable by Annuities at £6 10s. per cent. I cannot help asking myself whether the landed proprietors of Great Britain would be disposed to borrow money at £6 10s. per cent in order to invest it in improvements in land? I am afraid they would not do so at the present time. I do not think they would see their way, on such terms, to any improvements on which they are now likely to receive a return. [Mr. McCulloch: Capital and interest.] No doubt it was capital and interest. There was a Sinking Fund. That is what was meant by Terminable Annuities. But that was what the landowners would have to pay for 22 years. I ask whether it is likely, if a measure of that kind were proposed, the Government would have any demand for investments of that sort. My hon. Friend behind me (Sir John Swinburne) has held out a tempting picture of a number of things that would be done—of cottages that would be built, and the many other improvements that would be carried out under his proposal. But I suppose that few persons can build a house that is suitable for a man and his family for much less than £200. [An hon. MEMBER: Yes.] Then my hon. Friend's experience is better than my own. I doubt whether a cottage can be built for a labouring man and his family for much less than that. And the interest at £6 10s. on £200 is £13 a-year. If, therefore, you only charge the interest

for the cottage it is certainly a high rent. If you could, your experience must have been particularly fortunate. £5 a-year is much nearer the rent that would be charged, and that would involve a loss of £8 a-year on every cottage for 22 years. It is not, therefore, a transaction that can be engaged in, to any large extent, without seriously diminishing the landlord's income; and I doubt, therefore, whether there would be any large demand for advances at £6 10s. per cent. Indeed, I doubt very much, from what I know of the present condition of the agricultural interest, whether there would be any real demand for money on such terms for purposes of this character. I quite admit, however, that if advances were made without disadvantage to the country or to the Exchequer it would be faithfully repaid; and I believe that of the loans made in 1846 and 1850 there is only a sum of £17,000 still outstanding. That is not absolutely arrears; but it is money still due, and will be repaid. There has been no loss; but when one is asked to embark in a large loan of this description, one asks one's self what profit will accrue to the borrowers at such a rate of interest; and I confess I did not think that there would be any great demand for money for these purposes. There is no reason to suppose that the State can supply money for all purposes for the advantage of various sections of the community. Be it remembered that it is not to be taken from the local rates, but from the Consolidated Fund. People do not seem to know where the money of the Consolidated Fund comes from, but seem to have a belief that it comes from the pocket of the Chancellor of the Exchequer personally and his Colleagues, and that the Treasury have a well from which money can always be drawn. Persons who are continually asking for grants from the Consolidated Fund do not realize the fact that it comes out of the pockets of the people. If hon. Members realized that the Consolidated Fund is made up from the taxes of the people whom they represent—if that were more frequently realized, I do not think they would show such a constant desire to draw upon it. I do not say that to advance the money for the purpose which my hon. Friend has in view would be a loss

The Chancellor of the Exchequer

upon the Exchequer; but I confess that I am not satisfied, from the information I have received, that there is any great demand on the part of the landed interest for borrowing powers such as my hon. Friend has indicated. I may say that there are many private societies such as those referred to by my hon. Friend which give any accommodation for this purpose; and I do not know that the interest asked is very much higher than that demanded by the Treasury. It may be a little higher, and I suppose it is about 7 per cent. [An hon. MEMBER: 6½ per cent.] 6½ per cent, as I have said, is exactly the amount charged by the Government; and if the demand is not excessive it appears to me that there is a supply from private societies which would meet the particular contingencies that may arise from day to day. It is always a serious matter for the Government to embark in a loan transaction of this kind; and I think my hon. Friends must show a larger case of demand and more complaint of a want of supply than that which exists at the present time.

MR. MARK STEWART: I should be as willing as any hon. Member to afford the greatest possible facilities for making improvements at a very low cost; but the hon. Baronet (Sir John Swinburne) who moved the Resolution failed to consider and inform the House what the landed proprietors ought to pay; and therefore we are driven to the conclusion that they would have to pay 6½ per cent. Speaking from a somewhat long experience, partly of my own, and partly of those who have gone before me in the management of landed property, I know very well what difficulties were experienced when the loan of £2,000,000 sterling was permitted to be spent on land by Sir Robert Peel. Instead of having the land well drained, it was very badly drained. Although there were Government Inspectors, it was found that many of the Inspectors were very ignorant, and the work was done so badly that it had to be done over again at the expense of the private proprietors, while the interest added largely to the burdens upon property. Then, again, men were induced to do far more lavishly what might have been done much cheaper; and, instead of en-

couraging economy, extravagance was the order of the day, not only in regard to draining, but in other matters as well. If a landed proprietor can induce persons to take his land who can make a living out of it, there would be no difficulty in finding 6½ per cent interest; but when the landed proprietor has to do all the improvements himself, and cannot charge one farthing for interest on the capital expended, it would be madness to go to the Government and say—"I will give you 6½ per cent if you will advance a certain sum." I would appeal to the House generally whether that is not the case at the present time? A landlord has to carry out many improvements; and if he spends thousands of pounds upon his land, what does he get in return? He may know that his land is in good order, and well cultivated, and that the tenants are doing their utmost to keep up in these bad times, and steal a march, if possible, upon them; but the struggle is nevertheless a hard one, and many, alas, are failing in their attempt to do this. Then there is another matter which must not be lost sight of. It is said that the landed proprietors are driving many of the cottagers into the towns, and the consequence is that labour is leaving the country. One reason is that a great portion of the land of the country is now so well drained and so well cultivated that there is no employment to be found such as was to be found a short time ago, not only with regard to drainers, but even with regard to the more intelligent of the labouring men. That being so, there is no doubt a disposition on the part of the farming population to gather together in the towns rather than isolate themselves in the country. It is, therefore, not worth while for the landed proprietor to spend large sums of money, ranging from £150 to £200, in building cottages, in order that he may have the satisfaction of saying—"I have got so many more cottages on my estate than I formerly had." It is a great satisfaction to know that his cottages are in good order and repair; and that is all the landed proprietor can reasonably be expected to do at the present time. I have no doubt that this question will come up again in the Bill which is proposed to be laid upon the Table before long; and it will certainly surprise me if the

Local Government Board are not prepared to make advances on the part of the Government to assist those landlords who are anxious to give good cottage accommodation. For the reasons I have stated, I cannot support the Amendment; and I certainly do not suppose that the hon. Baronet who moved it will, although not coinciding with the views which I have expressed, divide the House.

CAPTAIN VERNEY: I rise to answer the challenge of the hon. Member the Seconder of the Amendment (Mr. McCulloch), who assured us that there was no landlord to be found in this House who would oppose the Resolution. Now, I beg to say that I am a landlord, and I oppose it with all my heart and soul. I consider that nothing could be more disastrous than to adopt this system of outdoor relief by the way of loan for the advantage of landed proprietors. I think that the suggestion made to us to-night is one which belongs to a bygone House of Commons, in the days when Members were returned by the landlords, and when the people had no voice in controlling affairs. We all admit the evil of which complaint is made. It is quite true that the landowners are, to a great extent, a poor, miserable, and wretched class, and many of those who drive about in their carriages have not a sixpence to bless themselves with. I do not know any class of the community, taken as a class, who live a more improvident life than the average landowner. In the various professions and businesses of life something is usually done for posterity; some provision is made for widows; some self-denial is exercised, and something, however small, is put by for successors. But in the case of the landed proprietor he never saves a penny; he habitually provides for his widow and younger children by further burdening his property; he lives up to his income; and when any work is to be done on the estate he cannot find the money to do it with, and in times of depression he is sorely pressed. I cannot forget that an Act was passed by a Tory Lord Chancellor, the late Lord Cairns, to relieve the landed proprietor in the hour of his necessity; and it is by availing himself of this Act, and not by further burdening his property, that he must seek relief. He has possession of the plate and pictures which have been 400 or 500 years in the family,

Mr. Mark Stewart

and these he can dispose of. Perhaps he would not be in so unfortunate a position if he had not the electioneering bills of the last century to pay. I could quote more than one instance in which those debts have not yet been paid, but where they remain to this day as a charge on the estate. If an embarrassed landowner really wants to do his duty to the estate let him sell one-half of it, and let some self-made man with ample capital buy up the other portion, found a new family, and do his duty to the country more in accordance with the tone and feeling of the 19th century. So far as the old historic families are concerned, they would be able in that case to do their duty on that smaller scale to which they have been so justly and righteously reduced by their own want of thrift and foresight.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The remarks which have fallen from the hon. and gallant Member (Captain Verney) who has just sat down, combined with those which fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), induce me to ask the House to allow me to offer one or two remarks which possibly did not occur to those hon. Members before they addressed the House. The last speaker, I have every reason to believe, is a great friend of the agricultural interest. He was returned to Parliament by a portion of a very important county, and he came into Parliament as one whose constituents were fully assured that he would confer, if he could, great benefits upon the agricultural interest as a whole. Now, Sir, I see sitting opposite to me the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), who is also a friend of the agricultural interest as a whole, and who wishes to restore the prosperity of the land in England. I wish, therefore, to draw the attention of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) to, and, indeed, I will invite him, if possible, to make some remarks on this subject as it now presents itself to the House of Commons. It is proposed to give to landlords facilities for the development of their land by loans. How did the hon. Member who has just sat down describe it? He said it was a gigantic project of outdoor relief. Yet the hon. Member who said that supported the hon. Member for Ipswich on the Amendment to

the Address which destroyed the late Government, that Amendment being nothing more nor less than a gigantic proposal of outdoor relief by way of loans to a class. I am not finding fault with the hon. Member for Ipswich, but I am finding fault with the inconsistency of the hon. and gallant Member for Buckingham (Captain Verney), who poses as a great friend of the landed interest, and who voted with the hon. Member for Ipswich. The hon. and gallant Member described the landlords as very poor, miserable, and impoverished persons. [*Laughter.*] The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) laughs. That was precisely the description which was given of the agricultural labourer by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings).

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: No. I knew that I should carry the hon. Member with me. But observe the inconsistency of the hon. and gallant Member for Buckingham. He supports the hon. Member for Ipswich in advancing State loans at a very low rate of interest—3 or 3½ per cent, I believe—to this very poor, miserable, and impoverished class of agricultural labourers; but he utterly declines—and, indeed, denounces as flagitious—the proposal to grant loans at a low rate of interest to an equally poor, miserable, and impoverished class. What further marvellous analogy did the hon. and gallant Member draw between the two classes, and on behalf of the Party whose interests he came into Parliament to serve? He said that the landlords lead improvident lives, and that is exactly what was said of the labourer in the argument of the hon. Member for Ipswich. He has always said that the circumstances of the agricultural labourer's life are so indifferent and so unsatisfactory that they have no stimulus to thrift. Now, why is it more desirable that facilities should be given by the constituted authorities to assist the one class, and that they should be refused to the other, when it is said that each has equally spent the money which ought to have made him comfortable in his old age? According to the hon. Member, exactly the same thing applies to the landlord as to the agricultural labourer. Then what is the meaning of the Resolution of the hon. Member for the Lichfield Division of Staffordshire (Sir John Swinburne), which says—

"That it is desirable that more extended facilities should be given by legislation to owners of land to improve their estates by means of moneys borrowed on Terminable Annuities from the State."

Why is it more desirable that more extended facilities should be given "by legislation to owners of land to improve their estates by means of money borrowed from the State on Terminable Annuities?" Why should the owner of a large amount of land have less facilities than the owner of a small amount? The hon. Baronet who moved the Amendment is an authority on the Land Question; but will he, or will any intelligent man explain to the House why a person holding 100 acres of land should have less extended facilities afforded to him by way of loans on Terminable Annuities for the improvement of his estate than a person holding only three acres? I invite the hon. Member for Ipswich to explain why extensive facilities for borrowing money should be given to the person who owns three acres, and not to the person who owns 100 acres. I ask the House to observe the policy of the great Liberal Party this evening on the Land Question in England, on which we are led to believe, from an authorized person, the Government are prepared to submit to Parliament a distinct and intelligible policy. We have the hon. Member for the Lichfield Division of Staffordshire getting up and proposing that extensive facilities should be given by legislation to the owners of land to improve their estates. That has been denounced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I never heard a more contemptuous way of treating the proposal of the hon. Member for Ipswich. Why does the Chancellor of the Exchequer denounce the present proposal, and why did he support the proposal of the hon. Member for Ipswich that owners of land on a small scale should have extensive facilities?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I said the landowners did not want it.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Oh! The right hon. Gentleman has made a tremendous assumption, and one which has been altogether set aside by recent land legislation. It is stated that the State can only advance money to these poor, miserable, and wretched persons who have led such an improvi-

the absence of any landlord to abuse; and I can quite understand that the absence of any landlord whom they can denounce must lessen, in the eyes of hon. Gentlemen, the interest and excitement which naturally attach to the land agitation. I am glad that we who represent Ulster constituencies are in perfect accord with hon. Members who sit below the Gangway. [Mr. W. O'BRIEN: Who did represent Ulster constituencies.] Several suggestions have been made in this matter; and I should like, if I shall not be out of Order—I am very ignorant of the usages of the House, and I find it most difficult to obtain reliable information from the older hon. Members—to make a suggestion, because I have had the opportunity of conversing with many of the glebe purchasers of Ireland, and I think I am tolerably conversant with their views on this subject, and with the remedies which suggest themselves to their minds. In many cases the rents were considerably over Griffith's valuation; and I have reason to know that it would meet with the views of the glebe purchasers in Ireland if the amount of the rent which was in excess, multiplied by the number of years' purchase given, were deducted from the instalments still due. One of the undoubted hardships is not so much the number of years' purchase, or the exorbitant rents on the basis of which the sale was conducted, but the fact that they were forced, in order to lay down the amount of purchase-money required, to resort to usurers and borrow money at great interest. I believe I am right in stating that the Church Temporalities Commissioners had power to invest money in cases where the entire amount of the purchase-money was under £100. There is no doubt that many of the unfortunate tenants whose purchase-money was under £100 were—because they were required to pay one-half down—forced to go to usurers, and by these men were persuaded that it would be to their advantage to borrow the whole of the money. A reference to the Returns will show that this was done in many cases; you will find that in instances where the amount of the purchase-money was under £100 the whole sum was paid down. I think it would be only fair that the amount of money that the purchasers were compelled to pay should now be advanced to the men by the

Lord Ernest Hamilton

State at the same rate of interest and on the same conditions as if they had been purchasers under the Act of 1885. I will not detain the House longer. I hope the Government will give this matter its most earnest consideration, and that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway and hon. Gentlemen representing similar views to myself will long continue to be in the same accord we are in on this matter.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I think the noble Lord (Lord Ernest Hamilton) has scarcely, in all his remarks, kept up the tone of sincere desire to be in accord with hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway; and he certainly is in error in supposing that he and those who sit near him have only the right to speak for Ulster.

LORD ERNEST HAMILTON: I think the right hon. Gentleman has misunderstood me. I do not think I said anything of the sort. I did not say we were the only Members who had a right to represent Ulster. If I did not say so in so many words, I meant to convey that I was a Member of the Party which, I believe, goes by the name of the Ulster Party.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I do not think that hon. Members sitting opposite me can any longer claim to be the Representatives of the Ulster Party. But I will not pursue the point; it is not an important one. Well, Sir, it cannot be denied, and is not denied in any part of the House, that the case of the glebe purchasers in Ireland is a very hard one. These purchasers paid prices which, undoubtedly, they would not have paid if they could have foreseen the legislation which took place in 1880 or 1881; still less if they could have foreseen the enormous change that has since come over the economic condition of agricultural pursuits in Ireland. It is clear they entered into bargains which have turned out bad and unprofitable. Considering how much has been done to relieve Irish tenants of all kinds, it does seem hard that these men, who showed themselves provident, self-denying, and wisely desirous to secure their holdings, should be suffering hardship for what was, in fact, no fault of their own. On that I think we are all agreed. The only difficulty is how are we to give them relief? The hon. Member for South

Tyrone (Mr. W. O'Brien) has suggested a grant from the Church Surplus. I am not very willing, at the first glance, to fall in with that proposal, though it is not an inequitable one in itself, because I think there are other purposes in contemplation for which the Church Surplus may be useful. The suggestion of the noble Lord (Lord Ernest Hamilton) is also open to a great deal of criticism, with which I will not now trouble the House. I will only promise the House that, in that reconsideration of the whole Land Question which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) has announced as one of the three objects of the Irish policy of the Government, the case of the glebe purchasers shall not, if we can help it, be overlooked. My hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has stated clearly enough how the matter stands financially; and I think he has pointed out one direction in which some relief may be granted. I mean a relaxation of the sub-section of the Act—the 23rd section of the Purchase Act—which insists upon the payment of all instalments in arrear before any advantage can be taken of that section. I think, without further consideration, I can hold out hopes of being able to relax that section; but whether that can be done before measures of larger scope are brought before the Legislature, I rather doubt. I should say it is hardly worth while raising a minute point of that kind when larger measures are in contemplation. Under these circumstances, I will only repeat that we shall not lose sight of the interests brought before us by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. W. O'Brien); they will take their place amongst all the other points of the Land Question which are now under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. M. J. KENNY: I would remind the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley), that when the late Government introduced the Bill, now Lord Ashbourne's Act, the condition of the purchasers of the glebe land was brought before them, and the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) distinctly declined to adopt the suggestions then made. At that time I was not an Ulster Member, and I was not aware of the extreme hardship

under which the glebe purchasers in Ulster laboured. Within the last two or three months, however, I have heard many stories from glebe purchasers in my own constituency of extreme hardship. In all cases the men have given me their names and addresses, and they have informed me that they have paid as much as 35 years' purchase for their holdings, and on rents which were double those in Griffith's valuation. I calculate that, at that rate, they paid at least three times more than their farms are worth, even making allowance for the high prices of farm produce which prevailed 10 or 15 years ago, when the purchases were made. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will also bear in mind that the arrears of £35,000 which now exist have nearly all accrued within the last three or four or five years. When the Besborough Committee was taking evidence in 1880, the arrears only amounted to a little over £5,000, and it is owing to the extreme hardships and the extraordinary agricultural depression of the last five years that these men have been forced to fall into further arrear. Now, it is but reasonable that the glebe purchasers, who had not the advantage of the Land Act, who had not the advantage of the Arrears Act, which greatly benefited the tenants of Ireland, should have the advantage of Lord Ashbourne's Act, and that they should at least have loans for the purpose of paying off the money they have had to borrow from usurers at an exorbitant rate of interest, loans similar to those which are advanced at the present time to persons who are willing to purchase under the Act of last year. That will go a long way towards solving the difficulty in which these men are placed. I wish the Government could see its way to wipe out the arrears of £35,000 altogether, without calling on the Church Surplus, which is really called upon for everything of this kind. And when advances are made out of the Church Surplus, a great many people in England think they are paying the debts of the Irish people, whereas those debts are paid out of money which belongs to the Irish people, and to the Irish people alone. I trust that the Government will see its way to move at once in this matter. If they find that this question is being approached in a manner which will lead

to its speedy solution, the glebe purchasers in Ulster will very readily perceive the effect of Ulster having become, within the last three or four months, as far as this House is concerned, more than half-Nationalist, though at heart it has been more than half-Nationalist for many a long year. It is very desirable that a comprehensive treatment of the whole Land Question should come before the House within the next two or three months. I believe that some relief of the glebe purchasers in Ulster might be included in the great scheme of land reform; but if it is not intended that the Land Question shall be dealt with this Session, I think it would be advisable for the Government to frame a measure dealing exclusively with the glebe purchasers.

Motion, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," by leave, *withdrawn*.

Committee upon *Monday* next.

SPORTING LANDS RATING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*Dr. Cameron, Marquess of Stafford, Mr. Fraser Mackintosh, Dr. Farquharson.*)

[BILL 86.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

DR. CAMERON: At this hour of the night I will do no more than move the second reading of this Bill. Its object is to carry out the recommendations of the Select Committee of the House which reported in 1874, which recommendations have been endorsed by the Crofters' Commission to the effect that sporting lands and deer forests in the occupation of persons should be rated in the same way as land in the occupation of ordinary tenants. The measure has the sanction of the principal Officers of Her Majesty's Government, and I hope it will be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): On the part of the Government I assent to the second reading of this Bill. It seems quite right in principle, although no doubt there will be certain questions to be adjusted in Committee in order to make it clear.

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I wish to say that I concur with the right hon.

Mr. M. J. Kenny

and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate. The measure is founded on a just view of the propriety of the Valuation Roll setting forth one of the qualities of values of land in Scotland, and that is its capacity for sporting purposes. The mode in which the entry should be made in the Valuation Roll is a matter of detail, and I have no doubt that the Lord Advocate will give such guidance and advice as will put the matter in the best possible shape. I desire to say for myself that it is wholly right that now, when the sporting value of land is a very material element in the actual value, as a matter of commerce, of land in Scotland, that that should appear in a question of rating.

SIR DONALD CURRIE: I must express my strong approval of the measure.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

DRAINAGE AND IMPROVEMENT OF LANDS (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Leveson Gower, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order, under "The Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Act, 1883," and the Acts amending the same, relating to the Glasheen River Drainage District, in the county of Cork, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Leveson Gower and Mr. John Morley.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 119.]

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT [STAMP DUTY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment of a Stamp Duty on any Copy of Memorandum of Enfranchisement, of the same amount as if it were a Deed of Conveyance, which may become payable under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to amend the Copyhold Acts.

Resolution to be reported upon *Monday* next.

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Secretary Childers, Bill to provide for the payment of Compensation for Damage done during a certain Riot in the Metropolitan District, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Childers and Mr. Broadhurst.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 120.]

MARRIAGES [ATTENDANCE OF REGISTRARS] BILL.

On Motion of Sir Richard Webster, Bill to amend the Law respecting the attendance of Registrars at Nonconformist Marriages, ordered to be brought in by Sir Richard Webster, Sir Richard Cross, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, and Mr. Baggallay.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 131.]

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 1st March, 1886.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—*Drill Grounds*,* (21).
Second Reading—Lunacy Acts Amendment (12). Lunacy (13).
Report—Freshwater Fisheries (Eels)* (23).

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

(NO. 12.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HENCHILL), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he should not detain their Lordships at any great length on this occasion, because the measure in its essential features was the same as that which had been laid before their Lordships last year by his noble and learned Predecessor in Office (Lord Halsbury). Inasmuch as such alterations which had been made in the measure of last year and which appeared in the present Bill had been made by his Predecessor, he could claim no merit whatever in introducing this measure except that of having taken up the work which had been done by that noble and learned Lord. It was impossible to exaggerate the importance of the subject with which this Bill proposed to deal, and few would deny the necessity that existed for fresh legislation with regard to it, because the conviction was increasing in the public mind year by year that under the existing law it was far too easy to incarcerate as a lunatic any of Her Majesty's subjects and that the

safeguards against improper incarceration were far too few. And when they reflected upon the wretched condition of those who were improperly incarcerated and upon their terrible sense of impotence to contend against the wrong that was being done that must be felt, and upon the misery in which a man must live who being in possession of his senses was condemned to dwell among those of unsound mind, they would feel that no efforts should be spared on the part of the Legislature to put an end to a law under which such a state of things was possible. It was a peculiar satisfaction to him to have the honour of introducing this measure, inasmuch as he had been a Member of the Select Committee of the House of Commons upon whose Report this Bill was founded. Ever since he had sat upon that Committee he had never ceased to take a deep interest in this subject. Under the present law it was possible for an individual totally unconnected with the alleged lunatic, by ties of blood or otherwise, with the assistance of two medical men to procure the incarceration of an individual for an indefinite period under the pretence that he was insane. He must, however, say that he did not believe that this power had been very greatly abused. It was only just and right that he should say so, and it was, in the highest degree, to the credit, the honour, and the intelligence of the great Medical Profession to whom such large powers had been intrusted, and it was also to the credit of the Commissioners of Lunacy, who had the control and superintendence of the working of the Lunacy Acts, that the abuses had not been greater. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the safeguards against improper incarceration were not all that could be desired. It was therefore proposed by this measure that a judicial investigation should be as a general rule an essential preliminary to the incarceration of any individual as an alleged lunatic. It was provided that an inquiry into the state of mind of the alleged lunatic should be made by either a County Court Judge, a Stipendiary Magistrate, or a Justice of the Peace specially chosen by the Court of Quarter Sessions for the duty. It was not intended that this investigation should be a perfunctory kind of thing, and therefore it was not permitted to all Justices

to undertake it. The desire had been to mark the importance of the investigation. Again, it was to be provided that the investigation should only take place upon petition, and that the petition should be presented by a relative of the alleged lunatic, or if by any other person some explanation should be given by him as to the reasons which led him to take that step. The judicial inquiry was made a condition to the incarceration; and every precaution had been taken to make that inquiry as private as possible compatible with the serious character of the matter. Provision had also been made for dispensing temporarily with the inquiry in cases of extreme urgency, because their Lordships were aware that in cases of urgency it was impossible to wait for an inquiry, and that it was for the interest of the lunatic himself and of his relatives that he should be placed in confinement without delay, because in many cases the only chance of cure was to be secured by immediate treatment. In such cases of urgency it was suggested that the lunatic might, upon the certificate of a medical man, be detained in an asylum for a period of seven days without investigation. It was, however, provided that where a person was so confined without a preliminary inquiry, an investigation into his state of mind should be held within seven days of his being so incarcerated, and that in the event of no petition being presented by his relatives within that period the alleged lunatic should be at once discharged. He thought that this provision would effectually guard against the power of immediate incarceration in urgent cases being abused. Provision was also made for a fresh investigation into the state of mind of each individual lunatic at the end of every three years, and unless the report showed that further detention was necessary the person detained should be released. It was also proposed that all letters written by lunatics to officials connected with the administration of the Lunacy Laws were to be forwarded by the superintendent of the asylum to the persons to whom they were addressed without having them opened. It was obvious that the object of such a provision was to enable every person under incarceration to state his grievances. An alteration was made with regard to the law relating to pauper

lunatics, who were not to be confined as hitherto upon the certificate of a clergyman or overseer; and it was also provided that no person not actually a pauper should be sent to a pauper lunatic asylum. This provision had been found necessary because it had been discovered that many persons not actually paupers had been sent to pauper lunatic asylums. These were the main safeguards which had been provided against persons being improperly incarcerated as lunatics in the first instance. But it was equally necessary that precautions should be taken against persons who had recovered their reason being detained in confinement. Perhaps the danger was greater that such persons should be wrongly detained than that they should be improperly incarcerated in the first instance. He could give an illustration drawn from the evidence taken before the Select Committee to which he had referred as exhibiting what he meant. It was that the public officials who visited those asylums to see that nobody was improperly detained there must be to a great extent dependent on the statements made to them by the medical man whose asylum was visited. One of the appointed Visitors he remembered told this story:—There was a patient confined in an asylum whom he visited on several occasions, and as far as possible he satisfied himself that the patient was completely restored to sanity. He expressed that opinion more than once to the keeper of the asylum; but he replied—“Yes, it is very well for you to think so, as you only see him on your visits; but if you heard the language he uses at night when he thinks he is not watched you would see that his mania exists—a homicidal mania with relation to his wife.” What was the Visitor to do under those circumstances? He did not take on himself the responsibility in the face of such a statement of ordering the patient’s discharge. What would have been his position if the patient had returned home and had made an attack on his wife’s life? It was impossible for him, having no evidence, to prove that the statement made to him was not true. He, however, induced the friends of the patient to remove him to another asylum, and he asked the medical man of that asylum to have him watched at night without the patient knowing it,

The Lord Chancellor

to see whether his language and his mania continued. That was done; it was found that no such language was used, and an order was made for the patient's discharge. That, as the witness told the Committee, occurred some years before, and the result was highly satisfactory. That would serve to show how impossible it was, whatever inspection they might have, to avoid relying to a considerable extent on the statements of the medical man whose asylum it was. He did not mean to suggest that even in the case to which he had alluded it necessarily followed that the superintendent was disposed to keep the patient in confinement knowing him to be sane. He might have relied on the statements made to him by the attendants who had the care of the patient during the night. The truth was that, however they might fence matters round, they could not be without those dangers if they permitted places of confinement to exist where persons had an interest in detaining the patients there. He knew it was said that they had sufficient safeguard in the fact that the asylum from which patients were oftenest discharged cured would obtain the best reputation, and patients would be sent to them. In regard to the cure of certain diseases, that would no doubt prove true in the long run. But he was afraid there were many cases where the possible recurrence of an attack might make people not always eager to send patients to an institution where they would most rapidly recover; and he did not think they had the same security in the case of lunacy as in regard to other maladies. The question arose, What were they to do in respect to licensed houses? One proposal, a most sweeping one, would, of course, be to put an end to them at once; but it would, he thought, be impossible and unwise to adopt it. In the first place, they would be cutting up existing asylums with which the public were contented without providing adequate substitutes, and the public mind would hardly be prepared for such a step. He knew that during the last few years there was not the same prejudice in the public mind against publicly managed institutions as there used to be; but he still thought the public were not prepared to put an end to all private asylums. And, then, if that was done, they would be face to face with the

question of compensation. He did not think their Lordships would be prepared, though it might be for the public good, to put an end at once by a compulsory Act to undertakings that had been carried on for many years for the purpose of earning a livelihood without compensation. Then, would it be expedient to put an end to them at a fixed date? Again, whatever date they fixed, say 10 years, which some thought desirable, the same question of compensation would arise, because they would be affecting vested interests. Therefore the Bill provided that no new licence should be granted to any person to keep a licensed house. It interfered with no existing licence, but it allowed no new person to obtain a licence; and it also allowed no increase in the number that could be kept under any existing licence. Therefore they would have a gradual and natural cessation of licensed houses, and they would have an interval of time in which to substitute by authority the other class of asylums contemplated by the Bill. He was happy to think that proposal had substantially the approval of that very high authority on that subject, the late Lord Shaftesbury. Those were the main provisions of the measure, and if they were passed into law they would provide greater safeguards than those which now existed, both against improper detention in the first instance, and also against unduly-prolonged detention in asylums. He believed that if their Lordships carried out the reforms suggested by that Bill they would have taken a considerable step towards correcting abuses which, to some extent, existed under the present system, and would have done something to put the law on that most delicate and difficult subject on a more satisfactory footing than it was at present.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d."
—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

THE EARL OF SELBORNE observed, that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had very clearly explained the provisions of a Bill that was substantially the same as the one which he had himself the honour of introducing last year, and which made considerable progress, but was eventually interrupted by political events to which he need not allude. He cordially hoped that the Bill would not only pass their Lordships' House

without any material alteration of its main provisions, but would be sent down to the House of Commons in time to have a chance of being passed there also. This important matter had long waited for legislation. It had been very carefully considered both by a Committee of the House of Commons some time ago and by their Lordships last year, and also by the Lunacy Commissioners and by the portion of the general public who had given attention to it. It was a most difficult question undoubtedly; but he said with great confidence that the clauses of the present Bill would go a long way to do that which was possible—for, of course, there was much that was not possible—for the correction of whatever abuses did exist under the present system, to allay the reasonable apprehensions of the public mind, and to do that which was sufficient to protect personal liberty, while at the same time securing that the necessary care was taken of the unfortunate class of persons concerned. His noble and learned Friend had stated that he had introduced some alterations into the Bill of last year, to strengthen its provisions in regard to the gradual substitution of public for private asylums. He himself had been sensible of the importance of attaining that object by gradual and prudent means as soon as it could be done, and, therefore, he was very far indeed from being unfavourably disposed towards those alterations. If he himself had not seen his way to go quite so far, it was more, perhaps, because the great question of compensation, with which their Lordships could not deal, stood in the way, than from a want of desire to accomplish that end. He would only express his hope that their Lordships would give to his noble and learned Friend the same kind and liberal support which they had given to himself last year.

LORD COLERIDGE said, that, having considered this subject with great care, there were three points to which he desired to call the attention of their Lordships. Two of those points were noticed in the Bill; but he ventured to suggest to his noble and learned Friend that something more was to be desired, and the other point did not appear to be noticed. The first point was that to which his noble and learned Friend had just referred—namely, the extinction by degrees of all private asylums. He had

been of opinion since he had gained any experience in this matter that it was impossible to effect a real and satisfactory change in the Lunacy Law as long as it remained possible—human nature being what it was—for those persons who kept asylums to have an interest in retaining patients who were placed in their charge. He regretted to say that, both as a counsel at the Bar and since he had had the honour of a seat on the Bench, he had seen cases in which it was manifest that persons perfectly unfit to be detained in a lunatic asylum had been detained by the interest and by the representations, certainly coloured by that interest, of the keepers of the asylums where the patients happened to be incarcerated. He had stated before, and he took the liberty now of repeating the statement—which was, of course, not of universal application by any means—that, for some reason or other, to be the keeper of an asylum was not a pursuit which commended itself to the highest minds in the Medical Profession. He believed the greatest men among the Medical Profession would concur with him in saying that, as a rule, the best men among them did not take to this pursuit. He thought, therefore, no one with any experience at all could doubt, regard being had to human nature, that to give a medical man an interest in retaining a patient was to subject his moral nature to a strain which few could bear. He was not much moved by the answers to evidence of misconduct in this respect. They all knew that in the case of a person placed in any of those asylums the very last thing which such a person would do was to mention the fact of his incarceration. Although the speedy cure of the patient was the surest advertisement to the skill of the practitioner, and to impelling other persons to seek similar relief, yet that state of things did not apply in the case of lunatic asylums, because people who had been detained in private lunatic asylums forgot the fact as soon as they could, concealed it as long as possible, and mentioned it to as few persons as they could. The fact that there were speedy cures was not of direct personal advantage to the medical man who effected them as it was in the ordinary run of cases. He trusted, therefore, that so far as this Bill went something would be done to prevent the multipli-

The Earl of Selborne

cation of those asylums. When it was said that no further licences were to be granted to these houses, he hoped it was intended to provide that no further licences would be granted to any fresh persons, because it was obvious that the asylums might be perpetuated in other hands. In reference to the second point, he was glad to see that there were alterations proposed in the Bill regarding the present state of the law as to the examination of patients. He remembered a case in which the late Lord Chancellor was counsel, and he himself was the Judge. Undoubtedly the person who had been the subject of the incarceration was mad, and was most properly placed in confinement, and yet, owing to the manner in which he had been dealt with and the process used towards him being so outrageous, it was with the greatest difficulty that the jury were persuaded to do justice in this particular case from indignation at the state of the law. He thought, therefore, that some more stringent provisions than even those of his noble and learned Friend might with advantage be introduced in the Bill. Especially was this the case with respect to the examination of the lunatic when it was conducted by the magistrates. It should always be conducted with the assistance of a medical man, and after notice to the lunatic himself that he was to be subject to such an examination, in order that he might be given an opportunity of taking part in the proceedings, and of explaining, if he could do so, the circumstances on which his alleged lunacy was founded. He had known of cases where persons had been examined without the slightest idea on their part that they were being examined, and without the slightest expectation on their part that their imprisonment in an asylum was pending. He thought, therefore, that when the Bill was discussed in Committee it might be amended in some respects in this direction. No far as he could see, another useful provision was not to be found in the Bill. According to the present state of the law, the person who put the law in force against a lunatic, however *bona fide* he might act, was not protected. He could not help thinking that this state of the law, in many instances, caused great hardship, the person so acting, if it was found that he was mistaken, being oftentimes subject

to actions for heavy damages. He submitted to their Lordships that some provision protecting the person who acted in a *bona fide* manner should be inserted in the measure.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he must express his satisfaction at hearing the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack speak so strongly against licensed private asylums. He would have heard with greater pleasure the statement that the noble and learned Lord had seen his way to at once suppress those institutions. He was willing to admit that the reasons adduced by the noble and learned Lord for adopting a moderate course were strong, although he was of opinion that the financial difficulty might be met by issuing bonds or by some analogous measure. If licensed houses were to be continued, those who kept them ought to be proper and qualified persons. As a matter of fact, most improper persons were allowed to keep them. Some were kept by discharged coachmen and persons of that class, who had no medical knowledge whatever. Many houses were kept purely in the way of business speculation, and that in itself was very undesirable. Many complaints were made that friends and solicitors could not obtain access to patients. There might be good reasons why a patient should not be allowed to see the order for his incarceration, but it ought not to be impossible, as it was often found to be, for friends to see the order, so that they might know the grounds on which it had been made. Brutality was often practised, and yet neither the police nor the public could do anything, as the order of incarceration was an answer to all interference. It ought to be compulsory on the Commissioners to see a patient within a month of his commitment. Thirty per cent of the acute cases were either cured or proved fatal within three months; and if a patient might be left three months without a visit, it was obvious that many patients might die without ever having been seen by a Commissioner. A penalty for malfeasance ought to be recoverable either by the patient on his discharge, or by his friends. In this respect the Bill left far too much to the Commissioners. There were too few Commissioners for the work to be done. When six were appointed the number of lunatics was one-fourth of what it was now, and

the expenditure was £200,000 compared with £2,000,000 now. If there were not too many then there must be too few now. The houses in the Metropolis were directly under their care; and these were supposed to receive four visits a-year. The Commissioners had to pay their visits in couples, a medical and a legal Commissioner going together; and it was obviously impossible that three couples of Commissioners could do their duty by 8,000 patients in the Metropolitan district and 70,000 more outside that district. There were other points and deficiencies which would call for consideration in Committee.

EARL BEAUCHAMP said, that the clauses which gave the Secretary of State power on the report of the Lunacy Commissioners to require the Local Authorities to provide accommodation for lunatics in the public asylums where that accommodation was stated to be necessary required careful attention on the part of their Lordships. He was not aware that there had been any hesitation on the part of the Local Authorities in providing the necessary accommodation, or in fulfilling the obligations laid on them by the law, and it was not, in his opinion, desirable to override their jurisdiction. He should object very much to the Secretary of State or the Commissioners being empowered to place heavy burdens upon the ratepayers in this matter.

LORD BRAMWELL remarked, that there were many minute regulations in the Bill now before their Lordships and in the Bill which would follow it. He did not say that they were not necessary; but he recommended that they should be expressed, if possible, in the form of rules under some authority, so that if any alteration was required in them it could be carried out with making application to Parliament. Another matter—the law as it would stand under the next Bill on the Paper—the Lunacy Bill—would enable the Secretary of State to remove any person certified to be a lunatic from prison. The consequence would be that although a lunatic might be committed for trial he could not be tried, notwithstanding the fact that he might be perfectly innocent of the offence charged against him. On the other hand, he might be guilty, although a lunatic. The Secretary of State was not bound to

remove a lunatic in a case where a certificate of lunacy had been given for imprisonment. The Statute said that he might order the removal. In his opinion, the Secretary of State ought not to have the power, except when a person was in such a condition that he was not only a lunatic, but also unfit to plead.

LORD EGERTON said, he wished to make some remarks on the clauses relating to idiots and imbeciles. He thought that the clauses on that subject would effect a very great improvement upon the existing law, but suggested that it would be greatly to the interest of idiots and imbecile persons, and also to their relatives, if the Lord Chancellor would take out of the Bill the clauses relating to those classes and embody them in a separate measure. Many children who were confined in idiot asylums were now educated and reclaimed to such an extent as to be able to follow some trade, and no longer be a burden on their families, and it placed a certain stigma upon them to class them with lunatics under that Bill.

LORD ESHER said, he had heard the term "incarceration" used in connection with this subject. It was a word which seemed to suggest an idea of offence or disgrace. It seemed to him that such a term depended upon an error which might give colour to a Bill of this kind which it ought not to have. It would be a good thing when everybody was of opinion that a disease of the mind was no disgrace to the person who was suffering or to any person belonging to him. Next, it was not every person of diseased mind who ought to be placed under control. If there was disease which did not affect the safety of the person diseased physically or as to his property, or the safety of others, he ought not to be placed under restraint. In the Bill itself there was no definition of the person who ought to be put under control, although the form of the medical certificate showed that the medical practitioner must certify more than mere disease of mind. It was said in the Bill that it was a person who was a lunatic. But that was not a definition, for people might have very different opinions as to who might be a lunatic, or to what extent in particular cases the disease might

go. It was not, as he had said, every one who had a diseased mind or might be a lunatic in one sense who was a proper person to be taken in charge and put under restraint, and it would be for the general safety that that view should be expressed in the Bill. Then there were other precautions which should be taken. A magistrate not possessed of sufficient weight or experience placed himself too much under the influence of the medical men; and it was somewhat dangerous that any medical man, however young or inexperienced, should be allowed to sign a certificate. Then they must deal with the case of a person not only before but after he had been placed under control. It was too much to say that after a person had been put under restraint there need be no fresh inquiry for three years. Inquiry should be much more frequent. Lastly, it was evident, in view of recent litigation, that unless they provided very strong safeguards for the protection of relatives or friends, who might have taken the original steps, and also for the protection of the medical men, who might have acted in the matter, both one and the other might be placed in a very unsafe position, although they acted in perfect good faith. There ought to be protection for them in such case.

LORD ASHBORNE said, that the most important and striking amendment proposed in the Bill of his noble and learned Friend was that which provided for the gradual extinction of private asylums. He had not heard from noble Lords in any part of the House any objection to that proposal, and he thought it was a wise one. It would not, in his opinion, be fair to the many honourable men engaged in that branch of the Medical Profession to introduce a drastic provision for the sudden extinction of their establishments. He believed that the provisions of the Bill by which provision was made for the care and retention of wealthy or solvent lunatics would require careful examination by their Lordships. The machinery by which the ratepayers were to be forced to provide houses for the reception of those now confined in private asylums, who were admittedly able to pay for themselves, would also need to be very closely regarded. He did not

agree with Lord Coleridge's suggestion that when lunatics were about to be examined by doctors, they should be warned of the purpose for which the examination was required. He fully agreed as to the necessity and justice of treating lunatics with every consideration and fair play; but he did not think that object would be achieved in a satisfactory way by putting the lunatic on his guard, by providing that, when examined by a medical man, he should be cautioned as to the purpose for which he was being examined; because everyone with the most superficial knowledge of lunacy was well aware of the cunning, which was so great and so far-reaching, in all persons thus afflicted that if, in all cases, an intimation was given of the object of the inquiry, the examination would be almost worthless. He regarded the Bill, on the whole, as a great advance on the existing state of the law, and trusted that it would soon pass into law. He would also suggest that some parts of the Bill should be applied to Ireland as well as England, for he did not believe in separate legislation where the objects to be legislated for were identical.

LORD CLIFFORD or CHUDLEIGH asked whether it was not desirable to make some provision for paying patients when the present system of private asylums should be done away with? He could see no reason why the cost of founding and maintaining asylums for those not of the pauper class should be thrown upon the counties. He believed that it would much more conduce to a proper treatment of lunatic patients if the numerous asylums which would spring up under this Bill should be so systematized that the different classes of mental diseases might be kept distinct. To treat certain cases properly separate asylums were indispensable; and children of tender years should not be confined with full-grown persons. This question would require serious consideration in Committee.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that he was much indebted to their Lordships, not only for the manner in which the Bill had been received, but for the valuable suggestions that had been made. With regard to the remarks of the noble Lord who had last spoken, he might say that he anticipated that

the ultimate result of the Bill would be a saving instead of an additional burden to the ratepayers. At present the country sustained a substantial loss because there were many patients in county asylums just above the pauper class who could not afford the expense of private asylums. Many persons now confined at the public expense would have a certain sum provided by their friends for their maintenance in the new asylums, so as to give them additional comforts and remove them from the pauper class. He agreed with the observation of a noble and learned Lord that great mischief would be done if unnecessary difficulties were put in the way of placing lunatics under control. Owing to recent litigation, the fear of having actions brought against them deterred many people from taking steps to have their relatives confined, even where it was highly desirable for the latter's own sake that they should be placed under control. The consequence was that many of these persons remained at large until they came into collision with the police. That was very undesirable; and it was of importance that unnecessary obstacles should not be thrown in the way of placing undoubted lunatics under restraint. With regard to the observations of the noble Earl on the Front Benches in reference to the fresh inquiry into the state of mind of incarcerated lunatics every three months, he admitted that in the case of lunatics who had been confined in public asylums for long periods such inquiries might be regarded as being too frequent, and he thought that it might be as well to amend the Bill in Committee by providing for more frequent inquiries being had during the earlier years of incarceration and less frequent as time went on. In conclusion, he might say that he was not irrevocably wedded to any particular provisions in the Bill, and that he was ready to give his best consideration to any proposals which would make the measure more valuable, and would conduce to the general welfare of their unfortunate fellow-creatures.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday the 15th instant.

The Lord Chancellor

LUNACY BILL.—(No. 13.)

(The Lord Chancellor.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSHELL), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he need not trouble their Lordships further than to state that this was a mere measure of codification. As it was extremely desirable that all the provisions relating to lunatics should be embodied in one Act, he intended to propose that the Committee stage of this Bill should be delayed until after the Bill which their Lordships had just read a second time should have passed that House, so that the provisions of that measure should be incorporated in the present consolidation measure.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—*(The Lord Chancellor.)*

In answer to the Earl of MILLTOWN,

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that the Committee stage of the previous Bill would be fixed for that day fortnight.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly.

DRILL GROUNDS BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for extending, with amendments, to grounds for drill and other military purposes, the enactments relating to the acquisition and regulation of rifle ranges—*Was presented by The Lord Sandhurst; read 1^a. (No. 24.)*

House adjourned at quarter past Six o'clock, till
To-morrow, a quarter past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 1st March, 1886.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBERS SWORN—Sir Edward James Reed, K.C.B., *for* Cardiff Borough; Patrick O'Brien, esquire, *for* Monaghan County (Northern Division); Octavius Vaughan Morgan, esquire, *for* Batterssea.

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES, Votes 1 & 6; ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-6).

PRIVATE BILL (by Order)—*Second Reading*—Hillhead and Kelvin-side (Annexation to Glasgow).*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Leave*—Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation, *debate adjourned*.

Second Reading—Globe Leasing (Ireland) Acts Continuance [107]. Land Tax Commissioners' Names* [111].

Second Reading—*Referred to Select Committee*—Hyde Park Corner (New Streets) [101].

Select Committee—Shop Hours Regulation* [56], *nominated*.

Committee—Sporting Lands Rating (Scotland)* [50]—*n.r.*

Committee—*Report*—*Third Reading*—Land Registry [91], and *passed*.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LAMBETH WATER BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster*.)

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I have placed upon the Paper a Notice not of objection to the second reading of this Bill, but of my intention, after it has been read a second time, to move that it be referred to a Hybrid Committee, together with an enlargement of the Standing Orders in regard to Petitions against Private Bills. I wish to explain to the House my motives for having placed this Motion upon the Notice Paper.

MR. SPEAKER: I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that he does not object to the second reading of the Bill.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: No, Sir; I do not object to the second reading.

MR. SPEAKER: Then before the hon. Gentleman makes his Motion it will be necessary that the Bill should be read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed."—(*Sir Charles Forster*.)

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I beg to move—

"That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee: Five to be nominated by the House, and Five by the Committee of Selection:—That all Petitions against the Bill, presented not later than six days before the meeting of the Committee, be referred to the Committee; and that each of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by

themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions."

I propose to move a similar Resolution in the case of the East London Water Bill, and of the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Bill, which are down on the list of Private Bills for consideration on the present occasion. My object is to secure that they shall be referred to a Hybrid Committee in the form indicated in my Motion. My principal motive for taking this step is the fact that these three Water Bills together contemplate the raising of perpetual Debenture Stock at 4 per cent of no less than £700,000. Now, it is within the knowledge of the House that the Water Companies will, some time or other, in accordance with the view which the House has over and over again expressed, be taken over by some constituted authority within the Metropolis—either a new municipal organization, or some one of the existing organizations which deal with the raising and spending of money in the Metropolis. It is perfectly well known that the Metropolitan Board of Works, on the security of the rates, is able to raise the funds that may be necessary for the purpose of carrying on their undertakings at the same price that Government are able to raise money on Consolidated Annuities. And I conclude that if we consent, without any restraint, to grant to these Water Companies—and I wish the House to observe that these three Water Companies supply one-half of London—the power of raising no less than £700,000 in this way—in the case of the conversion of this Debenture Stock into Metropolitan Stock or Consols the ratepayers would be mulcted to the extent of £175,000—that is to say, that the value of this Debenture Stock, when turned into a perpetual 4 per cent, will be equivalent to what would certainly in the market fetch £125 for every £100 Stock. Then I think that, under these circumstances, the House of Commons ought to resist an attempt of this kind to create a very large debt in the way of raising money by Debenture Stock upon such terms as these by the Water Companies. I certainly do not think, and I believe it will be the general feeling of the House, that the Water Companies of the Metropolis deserve any great amount of consideration at our

hands. I understand that the three Water Companies in regard to whose Bills my Motion is directed have issued a paper to-day imputing to me certain improper motives in bringing forward this proposition. Now, I have no motive whatever, except that of a consideration for the ratepayers of London, whose interests cannot be looked after except by the Metropolitan Members, as they have no real Municipal Institution upon which they can fall back. It is upon that ground that I deem it to be the duty of every Metropolitan Member to deal with every measure which may appear to involve the welfare of the Metropolis, especially where there is a total absence of information as to the manner in which the provisions of a Private Bill may affect the interests of the ratepayers they represent. I may add that in making this Motion I have the support of the hon. Baronet the senior Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler). The City of London have determined to appear by counsel against this Bill, with a view of preventing a large and unnecessary expenditure from falling hereafter upon the ratepayers of the Metropolis. I have also had an opportunity of speaking to the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Aasheton Cross), who is well known to take a great interest in these matters, and I believe I am fairly entitled to say that I have his sympathy and goodwill in the Motion I now make. I hope that in the interests of good government in London, and the prevention of an extravagant outlay of the public money at a large loss to the mass of the ratepayers, the House will agree to my proposal, which is simply to refer all these Bills to a Hybrid Committee under conditions which will secure the representation of every interest concerned. If this is done the expense to the ratepayers of the Metropolis will be greatly diminished, because they will have to appear before one Committee only, instead of having to instruct counsel to appear against three Bills which may be heard by three separate Committees. My Motion will give the parties who are interested in opposing the provisions of these Bills an opportunity of being fairly heard on the matter; and there will undoubtedly be sufficient in the way of instruction to the Committee to induce them to devote their attention to

Mr. Thorold Rogers

this branch of water finance, with a view of making it as little onerous to the ratepayers as possible. I beg to move that this Bill be referred to a Select Committee in the terms of the Motion which I have placed upon the Paper.

MR. T. H. BOLTON: I beg to second the proposal of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers).

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words, "to a Select Committee, to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection."—
(*Mr. Thorold Rogers.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I trust the House will allow me to say a word upon this Motion in favour of the Bill which is now under consideration. The hon. Member (Mr. Thorold Rogers) has said that certain motives have been attributed to him in papers alleged to have been put forth by the Water Companies—I think he said to-day. I am bound to say that I have not seen those papers, nor shall I, or the Company which I have the honour to represent, attribute any personal motives to the hon. Member on this occasion. The object of this particular Bill—the Lambeth Water Bill—is to raise the sum of 150,000 by means of Debenture Stock at 4 per cent, and to meet the requirements of an ever-increasing district. The district supplied by the Lambeth Water Company is increasing at the rate of something like 4,000 houses every year; and the Company ask to be allowed to supply this increasing district with an increased water supply. In the year 1883 the Company applied to the House for power to raise a capital sum of £375,000. Of that sum only £75,000 were granted by the Committee, presided over, I believe, by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the senior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket). Looking at the Report of that Committee, I find it is stated that the Preamble of the Bill was proved; but that, having regard to the Report of the Committee on the London Water Supply in 1880, they were not willing to grant powers beyond what were absolutely necessary to meet the actual demands of the public which might interfere with future legislation. The

amount of capital authorized to be raised under the Bill was, therefore, limited to £75,000. What we ask for now is simply the means of living from hand to mouth, and in order that we may be enabled to carry out the necessary requirements of this ever-increasing demand. At that time, when the power to raise an additional capital of £75,000 was granted by the Committee to the Company, there was a sum of £90,000 in hand, and the annual expenditure on capital works amounted to something like £50,000 a-year. More than two-thirds of the amount granted in 1883, besides the £90,000 in hand, have been expended, in order to meet these requirements; and I do not think, therefore, that the Lambeth Water Company are asking for very much in the very modest amount of increased capital they have inserted in the Bill. If the Motion of the hon. Member for Southwark is carried the Company will be put to a greatly increased expense; and they will be obliged to admit, as Petitioners against the Bill, persons whose claims have not been passed by the proper authorities of this House. The hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) alluded to the fact that the Corporation of the City of London intend to present a Petition against the Bill. Well, Sir, if the authorities of the City of London represented here by the hon. Baronet the senior Member for the City (Sir Robert Fowler) intend to petition against the Bill, I would ask why they did not petition against it in the ordinary way, and allow their Petition to go before the Court of *locus standi*. I really do not see the slightest reason why this Bill should not be treated in the ordinary way. If it is sent, in the usual manner, before a Select Committee upstairs, the public interests will be duly guarded by the Metropolitan Board of Works, who have already petitioned against the Bill, and whose Petition has been passed by the authorities of the Court of *locus standi*. Then, I trust, without taking up further time, that the House will not agree to the Motion of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers). I take it that, if there is any real objection to the principle of the Bill, the proper course would have been to oppose the second reading of it, and that it is not desirable now to depart from the ordinary course of re-

ferring a Private Bill which has been read a second time to a Select Committee.

MR. T. H. BOLTON: The hon. Member who has just addressed the House tells us that it is the duty of the Metropolitan Board of Works to take charge of the opposition against this Bill, and that they have already been granted a *locus standi*.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in Order in speaking again, inasmuch as he seconded the Amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (MR. COURTNEY): If this Bill were the only Bill relating to the supply of water to the Metropolis which has been introduced this Session, I think there would be much force in the objections which have been raised by the hon. Member for Kent (Mr. Akers-Douglas). But it will be observed that there are two other Bills which also deal with the supply of water to parts of the Metropolis; and the three Bills, taken together, cover a very large proportion of the whole Metropolitan supply. Upon that ground I conceive there may be reasons for departing from the ordinary Rule of the House to refer Private Bills to the consideration of a Select Committee of four Members of the House, and for referring these particular Bills to a Hybrid Committee. I am sorry to say that the practice of referring Private Bills to Hybrid Committees is rather a growing one; and I think it ought to be watched with a certain amount of care. It must be remembered that it opens the door to a good deal of wrangling with regard to the provisions of a Bill, and that it involves a considerable amount of expense being thrown on the consumers of water, as well as upon those who supply the water. But, at the same time, I think that it is possible to meet this particular case in a satisfactory manner by a modification of the proposal of my hon. Friend Mr. Thorold Rogers. He proposes to refer this and other Bills to a Hybrid Committee to be nominated by the House and the Committee of Selection, and to allow all Petitions against the Bill presented not later than six days before the meeting of the Committee to be referred to the Committee, giving the Petitioners the right of being heard against the Bill by counsel, agents, and witnesses. Now, I

think that that amounts to an invitation for the presentation of Petitions which may be carried out to an alarming and unnecessary extent. I think it is quite sufficient that we should allow such Petitioners to be heard before the Hybrid Committee who presented their Petitions within the time allowed by the Standing Orders. In that case the Corporation of the City of London, as well as the Metropolitan Board of Works, will be heard in opposition to the Bill; and the two acting together may be fairly taken to represent the interests of the rate-payers of the Metropolis. Under these circumstances, I propose to amend the Motion of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) by omitting the words "presented not later than six days before the meeting of the Committee," with the object of having the Bills referred to the Committee in the usual way; and upon that understanding I would advise the House to assent to the Motion.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I have no objection to adopt the suggestion of my hon. Friend.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Bill committed to a Select Committee to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection.

MR. COURTNEY: I have now to move the next paragraph in an amended form—

"That all Petitions against the Bill, presented within the time limited by the Standing Orders, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions."

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I have no objection.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered accordingly.

SOUTHWARK AND VAUXHALL WATER BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Bill read a second time.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I beg to move the Motion which stands on the

Mr. Courtney

Paper in my name, simply altering the form of it so as to make it in accordance with the Motion just passed by the House in regard to the Lambeth Water Bill.

Bill committed to a Select Committee to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill, presented within the time limited by the Standing Orders, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions. — (Mr. Thorold Rogers.)

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION.

EVICCTIONS (IRELAND)—EMPLOYMENT OF THE MILITARY FORCES OF THE CROWN.

MR. LEWIS gave Notice of Motion for a Return of the number of cases in which, during the last two years, 1884 and 1885, the Military Forces of the Crown have been employed in carrying out evictions of tenants of land, or lands and houses, distinguishing each county in Ireland.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that I shall oppose the Motion.

MR. LEWIS: Having regard to that fact, I beg to give Notice that I shall ask whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland will voluntarily lay on the Table the Return I ask for?

MR. SEXTON: And I shall ask, in that case, whether the Return by the Government will be so extended as to make it of any use?

QUESTIONS.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, for the efficiency of the police and the convenience of the public, he will take immediate steps to provide a proper head quarters for the Metropolitan Police Force, with adequate office and barrack accommodation, and offering sufficient facilities for the training, and, when necessary, the concentration of policemen, in lieu of the present collection of inferior, detached, and

inconvenient houses held on leases at costly rentals, which constitute the Metropolitan Police Force, in the thoroughfares of Great Scotland Yard and Whitehall Place?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the Question of the hon. Gentleman, I am fully aware of the present inconvenient and unsatisfactory character of the buildings comprising the head-quarters of the police at Scotland Yard, and it is one of the matters that will engage my serious attention in connection with the forthcoming inquiry.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Will the right hon. Gentleman be kind enough to say whether he has now formed his Committee of Inquiry into the organization of the Metropolitan Police; whether it will include other names than those already mentioned to the House; and, whether the Report of the Committee will be laid on the Table of the House?

Mr. CHILDERS: I stated that one of the Members of the proposed Committee under my Chairmanship will be the new Chief Commissioner of Police. Of course, until he is appointed, I cannot definitely say who will constitute the Committee. I did not limit the Committee to the names I mentioned to the House the other day. As to the last part of the Question, I imagine there is no doubt that the Report will be laid up on the Table. It is not usual to say so beforehand; but I think I may say it will be presented, though, perhaps, part of the evidence which may relate to the defective police could not be laid upon the Table.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would take care that, before any decision was taken as to the disposal of the vacant ground adjoining the present police station at King Street, Westminster, the fitness of that site to be devoted, either wholly or in part, to the erection of new central police offices for the Metropolis, should be fully considered?

Mr. CHILDERS: There were some interesting Papers on that subject presented many years ago, to which I intended to refer in conducting the inquiry.

LAW AND JUSTICE—SCOTLAND—THE PROCURATOR FISCAL OF ORKNEY.

Mr. LYELL asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the recent prosecution of the

Rev. Mathew Armour, at Kirkwall, was undertaken after communication with the Crown Office, or on the sole responsibility of the Procurator Fiscal of Orkney; whether the Procurator Fiscal of Orkney, in addition to his official duties, acts as law agent to a number of Conservative landed proprietors in the county; and, whether the Procurator Fiscal in question is the same official whose proceedings in connection with a case arising out of a threatening letter received by General Burroughs was last year brought before this House?

Mr. MACDONALD CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called to a report in *The Orkney Herald* of the 23rd of December last, where it was stated that seven men were accused before Sheriff Thoms of so-called rioting at the late General Election, and that one of these men was sent to prison for a period of 10 days without the option of a fine, although he did nothing at the riots except appear as one of the crowd; and, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman would inquire into the administration of justice in Kirkwall?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BATHOURN), in reply, said, that the recent prosecution of the Rev. Mr. Armour was undertaken without communication with the Crown Office. Various riots occurred at the time of the election, and the Sheriff Principal of the county, Mr. Thoms, personally investigated and disposed of several of the cases; but before all of them were inquired into he had to leave for Caithness, where there had been a number of incendiary fires; and he directed the Sheriff Substitute—Mr. Menzies—along with the Procurator Fiscal and Sheriff Clerk, to make the necessary investigation in regard to rioting at Sanday. As the result of the investigation, the Sheriff Substitute directed that certain persons should be tried for rioting, and that the Rev. Mr. Armour should be charged on a charge of breach of the peace. These directions were carried out by the Procurator Fiscal, who, in addition to his official duties, acts as law agents for sundry landlords and proprietors, some of whom are Conservatives, and some of whom are Liberals. The Procurator Fiscal is the same official who acted along with and under the direction of Sheriff Thoms in investigation of the case of a threaten-

ing letter received by General Burroughs—an act which was brought under the notice of the House. In reference to the second Question by the hon. Member for the Wick Burghs, he was aware that there was a riot that took place at Kirkwall, and there were certain convictions; and he was under the impression that an appeal was made to the late Secretary of State for the Home Department to remit some of the sentences, and that the right hon. Gentleman did not see cause to do so. He was not aware of the particulars of these cases; but if Notice were given he would make inquiries. He knew generally, however, that there was a good deal of rioting at that election, and that the Sheriff, who was responsible for the peace of the county, took himself the superintendence of the investigations until he was obliged to go to Caithness in regard to the incendiary fires.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON: I wish to explain—["Order, order!"]

MR. J. B. BALFOUR: If there is anything more my hon. Friend desires, I shall be very glad to get the necessary information.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON: It is not in regard to that—["Order, order!"] You have not answered the Question.

DR. CAMERON: Can the Lord Advocate, at his convenience, state to the House what were the expenses connected with the Sanday riots?

MR. J. B. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman gives Notice I will endeavour to find out.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—PRIVILEGE—INTERFERENCE OF PEERS AT ELECTIONS.

MR. T. H. BOLTON asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he is aware of the interference of certain Lords of Parliament in the election of Members of this House, especially in the Metropolis, by those Lords sending their carriages and hired servants to convey voters to the poll; and, whether, having regard to the Resolution of this House, which declares that—

"It is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament . . . to concern himself in the election of Members to serve the Commons in Parliament,"

he will consider the propriety of advising

The Lord Advocate

proceedings to support the Resolution of this House?

COLONEL BROOKFIELD asked, whether the hon. and learned Gentleman was aware of and would inquire into the interference of certain Lords of Parliament in the election of Members of this House, especially in the North Riding of Yorkshire; whether he was aware also that the interference of a Lord of Parliament in one case took the form of sending £1,000 to an election committee for election purposes?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR. CHARLES RUSSELL), in reply, said, that he was not aware of the matters to which the hon. and gallant Member for Rye referred; but perhaps he would put his Question on the Notice Paper, in which case inquiries should be made. As regarded the Question of the hon. Member for St. Pancras (MR. T. H. BOLTON), it was the fact that carriages had been sent by Peers to convey voters to the poll. As to the Resolution of the House relating to the liberties and Privileges of the Commons, he must repeat what he said the other day—that that was not a subject which was at all in any special sense within his sphere of duty. It was a matter for the House to deal with; and if the hon. Member desired information with regard to it, he should address his Question to the Leader of the House. With reference to the latter part of the Question, he did not propose to offer an opinion about it, unless it was asked by the Government.

THE COINAGE.

MR. S. MONTAGU asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether his attention has been called to the condition of the coinage; whether he is aware that about sixty millions, or in other words sixty out of every hundred, of the gold coins in circulation have ceased to be legal tender, in consequence of their worn condition; and that, in consequence, many millions in gold lie idle in the hands of bankers and others; whether it is a fact that the silver currency, originally issued at a premium of less than ten per cent., is now, owing to the diminished value of the metal, circulating at a fictitious value of forty per cent. when of full weight, and fifty per cent. when worn, above its market price; whether he has reason to fear

illegal coinage in consequence; whether he has directed any inquiry into the practice of importing French one and two sous pieces and putting them into circulation, at a profit of about five per cent; and, whether he has any reason to fear that the ultimate loss arising out of this importation may fall upon the poorer classes?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): As to the first two parts of the Question, the actual figures and the whole circumstances of the matter were brought before the House by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary two years ago. As to the next two parts on the subject of the silver coinage, it is true that the premium at which our silver coin circulates is nearly as stated; but I learn, from the Mint Authorities, that there is no apprehension of illegal coinage, and, indeed, that there is no such thing as forged silver coin. With regard to the copper coinage, we all know there is a certain number of small copper or bronze coins imported from France; but there is no reason, however, to think it is done for purposes of profit, and in any case no inconvenience has been proved to exist.

MR. BRODRICK: Could the right hon. Gentleman say whether he intends to re-introduce the Bill for the debasing of the gold coinage, or otherwise dealing with it, that was introduced by his Predecessor?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not think that is a Question which ought to be put to me. It does not arise out of my reply, and I do not recognize a Bill by that description; therefore I am not prepared to answer it.

SCOTLAND—THE SHERIFF CLERK DEPUTY OF SKYE

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House, Papers connected with the dismissal from his office of Mr. Dugal MacLachlan, bank agent, Portree, sheriff clerk deputy of the Skye District of Inverness-shire?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BURNES) who replied said: I shall inquire whether it would be according to usage to lay on the Table of the House certain telegrams which formed an important ingredient in the case. There

are no other documents which could properly be laid upon the Table; but my right hon. and learned Friend the late Lord Advocate and I will be ready to give full information to the House as to the causes of the dismissal if any question in regard to it is raised.

SCOTLAND—ARREARS OF RATES IN SKYE.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether, in the peculiar circumstances of the Island of Skye at present, he will lay upon the Table of the House Returns showing the arrears in the whole Island, as at 14th February, of school and poor rates, under the heads of landlords, tenants paying over £30 a-year, and tenants paying under £30 a-year?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (MR. TREVELYAN): The Board of Supervision intended to obtain Returns of the arrears of poor rate at the beginning of April, in which the information as to the arrears of school rates which my hon. Friend wishes to get can be included. There is a difficulty about obtaining frequent Returns, as the duties of the Inspectors of the Poor are at present very onerous. The best plan will be for these Returns to be taken in hand at once, and put into the shape, as far as it can be accomplished, which will meet the wishes of my hon. Friend. When I have got them they will be laid upon the Table.

IRELAND—RAFFLES FOR LANDS OF PROTESTANT LANDLORDS.

MR. SEXTON for **MR. DWYER GRAY** asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there is any truth in the statement published in *The Dublin Daily Express* and subsequently in *The Times* last month and reported in *The St. James's Gazette* of the 19th instant, on the authority of a letter "from a responsible person in Ireland to a distinguished person in England," to the effect that raffles are being held by Catholics in various districts in Ireland for the reverendary possession of farms held by Protestants?

MR. ALBERT GREY: In reference to this Question, I would, at the same time, ask my right hon. Friend whether he has seen similar statements explicitly made in the columns of *The Belfast*

News Letter, and reported in *The Times* of to-day.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Question on the Paper, I have to say that the authorities in Dublin have no official knowledge of these alleged transactions; and the police authorities in the North of Ireland, to which most of the statements are confined, have not heard of them. In answer to the Question now asked by my hon. Friend (Mr. A. Grey), my attention has been called to the specific statement to which he refers, and in consequence of that I shall have further inquiries made.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that, on a future day, I will ask if the Government will consider whether the wilful and persistent publications by newspapers of false news, calculated to endanger the public peace, should not be constituted an offence?

IRELAND—CONDITION OF THE WESTERN ISLES.

MR. SEXTON (for Mr. DWYER GRAY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether an inspector of the Irish Local Government Board visited the Island of Boffin last month in order to ascertain the condition of the potato supply on the island and the probability of famine; and, whether he can state the result of that inquiry?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): An Inspector of the Local Government Board visited Boffin Island last January, and his Report has been laid before me. I expect it will be my duty very shortly to make a statement embodying the result of this and other inquiries into the condition of the Islands on the West Coast of Ireland; and I am glad to say I believe I shall be able to make a statement that will be satisfactory to hon. Members in all parts of the House.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED OUTRAGES NEAR DUNDALK.

MR. JOSEPH NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the Dundalk constabulary received information recently that in one night several outrages had been committed in the neighbourhood, including the breaking

of windows, setting fire to a haystack, and setting fire to a dwelling house; whether the constabulary, on making inquiry, learned that these outrages were committed by a landlord and magistrate in the locality with some friends of his; if it is true that the inspector of police in Dundalk used his influence to have a compromise effected between the injured parties and the perpetrators of the outrages, pointing out to the former that it was only by suppressing the names of the offending parties that compensation could be procured from the grand jury; and, whether any effort has been made by the police to bring the guilty parties to justice? In putting this Question he desired to substitute for the words "a landlord and magistrate in the locality" the words "brother of a landlord and magistrate in the locality."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The attention of the Inspector General has been called to this matter, and he has thought it necessary to order a special investigation into the circumstances of the case; but the Report of it has not yet reached us.

POOR LAW—DERIVATIVE SETTLEMENTS.

MR. NORTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that a great deal of litigation has arisen in consequence of the enactments relating to the abolition of derivative settlements comprised in section 35 of the Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act of 1876, 39 and 40 Vic. c. 61; whether the Judges of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice have frequently remarked, in their judicial decisions, upon the obscurity of that section of the Act, as to whether a widow does or does not derive the settlement of her deceased husband; and, whether he will introduce an explanatory or amending Act, with a view to define clearly the Law with regard to derivative settlements?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN), in reply, said, it was a fact that there had been a good deal of litigation in reference to this question of derivative settlements; but he believed the difficulty had chiefly arisen with regard to the settlement of children, not of widows, and in consequence of a decision of the Court of Appeal being in

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contradiction to previous decisions. He believed that a case was about to be carried to the House of Lords, where the matter would be finally settled. Pending that decision, there was no intention to introduce a Bill on the subject.

ARMY—THE TESTING OF SIDE ARMS.

MR. SEXTON for Mr. DWYER GRAY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the bayonets now being tested are tested fixed on their rifles, as they would be used in actual war; and, if not, whether there is to be a second test, to ascertain how many rifles will stand the strain to which the surviving bayonets have been subjected?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. WOODALL) (who replied) said: The present trials have not been made with bayonets fixed to the rifles; but before the barrel of the Martini-Henry rifle was adopted it was subjected, with bayonet fixed, to so severe a test of its stability that no doubt is entertained of its power to withstand in that regard the roughest usage that may be expected during war. Consequently, no further test has been considered necessary.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—LISTS OF VOTERS.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is aware that, in the preparation of the Lists of Parliamentary Voters in 1885, the overseers in many parishes omitted or misdescribed either the nature of the qualification or the description of the qualifying property of the voter, or both, and that the Revising Barristers are, in many instances, not empowered to rectify such omissions or misdescriptions except upon declarations or claims made by the voters, who may be unaware of the defect in the Lists, and, if aware, can only take the steps necessary to rectify them at considerable trouble and expense; and, whether, pending the preparation of any general measure dealing with the Registration of Voters, the Government will introduce a short Bill giving power to Revising Barristers to retain on the Lists of Voters the name of every person inserted therein who shall be shown to have a proper qualification,

notwithstanding any mistake in the Lists as to its nature or description, and for that purpose to make any necessary amendment in the Lists, and giving power to Revising Barristers to enforce the payment of costs by an overseer guilty of negligence in the preparation of any List?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (who replied) said: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that I am aware that the overseers in many parishes make mistakes in the preparation of their lists. I am also aware that the power of the Revising Barristers to rectify such mistakes is limited, and might advantageously be enlarged; but I do not think that a Bill can well be brought in for this purpose only independently of a general measure dealing with the registration of voters. That, however, is a matter more for the Local Government Board than for the Home Office; and I hope to be able to confer with my right hon. Friend the President of that Board on the subject. I may, however, say that, under the law as it stands, Revising Barristers have the power to fine overseers for neglect; but I do not think it possible to make the overseer responsible for the cost of claimants incurred in making the necessary amendments.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES—ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

MR. MARK STEWART asked the Secretary of State for War, If Her Majesty's Government will make provision in the Estimates in the present year for an additional capitation grant to the Artillery Volunteers; for the substitution of 40-pounder rifled guns in position for old 32-pounders for batteries; for a certain number of 20-pounder field guns, with necessary equipments for Corps; and, also, for the substitution of Martini-Henry carbines for the old ones now in use?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: As regards the capitation grant, I must refer the hon. Member to my recent reply to the hon. Member for Central Sheffield. The Artillery Volunteers have already in their possession 150 rifled muzzle-loading 64-pounders and 137 rifled breech-loading 40-pounders, besides having at their disposal for practice, &c., 77 additional

hands. I understand that the three Water Companies in regard to whose Bills my Motion is directed have issued a paper to-day imputing to me certain improper motives in bringing forward this proposition. Now, I have no motive whatever, except that of a consideration for the ratepayers of London, whose interests cannot be looked after except by the Metropolitan Members, as they have no real Municipal Institution upon which they can fall back. It is upon that ground that I deem it to be the duty of every Metropolitan Member to deal with every measure which may appear to involve the welfare of the Metropolis, especially where there is a total absence of information as to the manner in which the provisions of a Private Bill may affect the interests of the ratepayers they represent. I may add that in making this Motion I have the support of the hon. Baronet the senior Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler). The City of London have determined to appear by counsel against this Bill, with a view of preventing a large and unnecessary expenditure from falling hereafter upon the ratepayers of the Metropolis. I have also had an opportunity of speaking to the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross), who is well known to take a great interest in these matters, and I believe I am fairly entitled to say that I have his sympathy and goodwill in the Motion I now make. I hope that in the interests of good government in London, and the prevention of an extravagant outlay of the public money at a large loss to the mass of the ratepayers, the House will agree to my proposal, which is simply to refer all these Bills to a Hybrid Committee under conditions which will secure the representation of every interest concerned. If this is done the expense to the ratepayers of the Metropolis will be greatly diminished, because they will have to appear before one Committee only, instead of having to instruct counsel to appear against three Bills which may be heard by three separate Committees. My Motion will give the parties who are interested in opposing the provisions of these Bills an opportunity of being fairly heard on the matter; and there will undoubtedly be sufficient in the way of instruction to the Committee to induce them to devote their attention to

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this branch of water finance, with a view of making it as little onerous to the ratepayers as possible. I beg to move that this Bill be referred to a Select Committee in the terms of the Motion which I have placed upon the Paper.

MR. T. H. BOLTON: I beg to second the proposal of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers).

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words, "to a Select Committee, to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection."—
(*Mr. Thorold Rogers.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I trust the House will allow me to say a word upon this Motion in favour of the Bill which is now under consideration. The hon. Member (Mr. Thorold Rogers) has said that certain motives have been attributed to him in papers alleged to have been put forth by the Water Companies—I think he said to-day. I am bound to say that I have not seen those papers, nor shall I, or the Company which I have the honour to represent, attribute any personal motives to the hon. Member on this occasion. The object of this particular Bill—the Lambeth Water Bill—is to raise the sum of 150,000 by means of Debenture Stock at 4 per cent, and to meet the requirements of an ever-increasing district. The district supplied by the Lambeth Water Company is increasing at the rate of something like 4,000 houses every year; and the Company ask to be allowed to supply this increasing district with an increased water supply. In the year 1883 the Company applied to the House for power to raise a capital sum of £375,000. Of that sum only £75,000 were granted by the Committee, presided over, I believe, by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the senior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket). Looking at the Report of that Committee, I find it is stated that the Preamble of the Bill was proved; but that, having regard to the Report of the Committee on the London Water Supply in 1880, they were not willing to grant powers beyond what were absolutely necessary to meet the actual demands of the public which might interfere with future legislation. The

amount of capital authorized to be raised under the Bill was, therefore, limited to £75,000. What we ask for now is simply the means of living from hand to mouth, and in order that we may be enabled to carry out the necessary requirements of this ever-increasing demand. At that time, when the power to raise an additional capital of £75,000 was granted by the Committee to the Company, there was a sum of £90,000 in hand, and the annual expenditure on capital works amounted to something like £50,000 a-year. More than two-thirds of the amount granted in 1883, besides the £90,000 in hand, have been expended, in order to meet these requirements; and I do not think, therefore, that the Lambeth Water Company are asking for very much in the very modest amount of increased capital they have inserted in the Bill. If the Motion of the hon. Member for Southwark is carried the Company will be put to a greatly increased expense; and they will be obliged to admit, as Petitioners against the Bill, persons whose claims have not been passed by the proper authorities of this House. The hon. Member for Southwark Mr. Thorold Rogers alluded to the fact that the Corporation of the City of London intend to present a Petition against the Bill. Well, Sir, if the authorities of the City of London represented here by the hon. Baronet the senior Member for the City Sir Robert Fowler intend to petition against the Bill, I would ask why they did not petition against it in the ordinary way, and allow their Petition to go before the Court of *locus standi*. I really do not see the slightest reason why this Bill should not be treated in the ordinary way. If it is sent, in the usual manner, before a Select Committee upstairs, the public interests will be duly guarded by the Metropolitan Board of Works, who have already petitioned against the Bill, and whose Petition has been passed by the authorities of the Court of *locus standi*. Then, I trust, without taking up further time, that the House will not agree to the Motion of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers). I take it that, if there is any real objection to the principle of the Bill, the proper course would have been to oppose the second reading of it, and that it is not desirable now to depart from the ordinary course of re-

ferring a Private Bill which has been read a second time to a Select Committee.

Mr. T. H. BOLTON: The hon. Member who has just addressed the House tells us that it is the duty of the Metropolitan Board of Works to take charge of the opposition against this Bill, and that they have already been granted a *locus standi*.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in Order in speaking again, inasmuch as he seconded the Amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. COURTNEY): If this Bill were the only Bill relating to the supply of water to the Metropolis which has been introduced this Session, I think there would be much force in the objections which have been raised by the hon. Member for Kent (Mr. Akers-Douglas). But it will be observed that there are two other Bills which also deal with the supply of water to parts of the Metropolis; and the three Bills, taken together, cover a very large proportion of the whole Metropolitans supply. Upon that ground I conceive there may be reasons for departing from the ordinary Rule of the House to refer Private Bills to the consideration of a Select Committee of four Members of the House, and for referring these particular Bills to a Hybrid Committee. I am sorry to say that the practice of referring Private Bills to Hybrid Committees is rather a growing one; and I think it ought to be watched with a certain amount of care. It must be remembered that it opens the door to a good deal of wrangling with regard to the provisions of a Bill, and that it involves a considerable amount of expense being thrown on the consumers of water, as well as upon those who supply the water. But, at the same time, I think that it is possible to meet this particular case in a satisfactory manner by a modification of the proposal of my hon. Friend Mr. Thorold Rogers. He proposes to refer this and other Bills to a Hybrid Committee to be nominated by the House and the Committee of Selection, and to allow all Petitions against the Bill presented not later than six days before the meeting of the Committee to be referred to the Committee, giving the Petitioners the right of being heard against the Bill by counsel, agents, and witnesses. Now, I

think that that amounts to an invitation for the presentation of Petitions which may be carried out to an alarming and unnecessary extent. I think it is quite sufficient that we should allow such Petitioners to be heard before the Hybrid Committee who presented their Petitions within the time allowed by the Standing Orders. In that case the Corporation of the City of London, as well as the Metropolitan Board of Works, will be heard in opposition to the Bill; and the two acting together may be fairly taken to represent the interests of the rate-payers of the Metropolis. Under these circumstances, I propose to amend the Motion of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) by omitting the words "presented not later than six days before the meeting of the Committee," with the object of having the Bills referred to the Committee in the usual way; and upon that understanding I would advise the House to assent to the Motion.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I have no objection to adopt the suggestion of my hon. Friend.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Bill committed to a Select Committee to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection.

MR. COURTNEY: I have now to move the next paragraph in an amended form—

"That all Petitions against the Bill, presented within the time limited by the Standing Orders, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions."

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I have no objection.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered accordingly.

SOUTHWARK AND VAUXHALL WATER BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Bill read a second time.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I beg to move the Motion which stands on the

Mr. Courtney

Paper in my name, simply altering the form of it so as to make it in accordance with the Motion just passed by the House in regard to the Lambeth Water Bill.

Bill committed to a Select Committee to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill, presented within the time limited by the Standing Orders, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions. — (Mr. Thorold Rogers.)

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION.

EVICCTIONS (IRELAND)—EMPLOYMENT OF THE MILITARY FORCES OF THE CROWN.

MR. LEWIS gave Notice of Motion for a Return of the number of cases in which, during the last two years, 1884 and 1885, the Military Forces of the Crown have been employed in carrying out evictions of tenants of land, or lands and houses, distinguishing each county in Ireland.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that I shall oppose the Motion.

MR. LEWIS: Having regard to that fact, I beg to give Notice that I shall ask whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland will voluntarily lay on the Table the Return I ask for?

MR. SEXTON: And I shall ask, in that case, whether the Return by the Government will be so extended as to make it of any use?

QUESTIONS.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, for the efficiency of the police and the convenience of the public, he will take immediate steps to provide a proper head quarters for the Metropolitan Police Force, with adequate office and barrack accommodation, and offering sufficient facilities for the training, and, when necessary, the concentration of policemen, in lieu of the present collection of inferior, detached, and

in convenient houses held on leases at costly rentals, which constitute the Metropolitan Police Force, in the thoroughfares of Great Scotland Yard and Whitehall Place?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the Question of the hon. Gentleman, I am fully aware of the present inconvenient and unsatisfactory character of the buildings comprising the head-quarters of the police at Scotland Yard, and it is one of the matters that will engage my serious attention in connection with the forthcoming inquiry.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Will the right hon. Gentleman be kind enough to say whether he has now formed his Committee of Inquiry into the organization of the Metropolitan Police; whether it will include other names than those already mentioned to the House; and, whether the Report of the Committee will be laid on the Table of the House?

Mr. CHILDERS: I stated that one of the Members of the proposed Committee under my Chairmanship will be the new Chief Commissioner of Police. Of course, until he is appointed, I cannot definitely say who will constitute the Committee. I did not limit the Committee to the names I mentioned to the House the other day. As to the last part of the Question, I imagine there is no doubt that the Report will be laid up on the Table. It is not usual to say so beforehand; but I think I may say it will be presented, though, perhaps, part of the evidence which may relate to the defective police could not be laid upon the Table.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would take care that, before any decision was taken as to the disposal of the vacant ground adjoining the present police station at King Street, Westminster, the fitness of that site to be devoted, either wholly or in part, to the erection of new central police offices for the Metropolis, should be fully considered?

Mr. CHILDERS: There were some interesting Papers on that subject presented many years ago, to which I intend to refer in conducting the inquiry.

LAW AND JUSTICE—SCOTLAND—THE PROCURATOR FISCAL OF ORKNEY.

Mr. LYELL asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the recent prosecution of the

Rev. Mathew Armour, at Kirkwall, was undertaken after communication with the Crown Office, or on the sole responsibility of the Procurator Fiscal of Orkney; whether the Procurator Fiscal of Orkney, in addition to his official duties, acts as law agent to a number of Conservative landed proprietors in the county; and, whether the Procurator Fiscal in question is the same official whose proceedings in connection with a case arising out of a threatening letter received by General Burroughs was last year brought before this House?

Mr. MACDONALD-CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called to a report in *The Orkney Herald* of the 23rd of December last, where it was stated that seven men were accused before Sheriff Thoms of so-called rioting at the late General Election, and that one of these men was sent to prison for a period of 10 days without the option of a fine, although he did nothing at the riots except appear as one of the crowd; and, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman would inquire into the administration of justice in Kirkwall?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BAIRD), in reply, said, that the recent prosecution of the Rev. Mr. Armour was undertaken without communication with the Crown Office. Various riots occurred at the time of the election, and the Sheriff Principal of the county, Mr. Thoms, personally investigated and disposed of several of the cases; but before all of them were inquired into he had to leave for Caithness, where there had been a number of incendiary fires; and he directed the Sheriff Substitute—Mr. Menzies—along with the Procurator Fiscal and Sheriff Clerk, to make the necessary investigation in regard to rioting at Sanday. As the result of the investigation, the Sheriff Substitute directed that certain persons should be tried for rioting, and that the Rev. Mr. Armour should be charged on a charge of breach of the peace. These directions were carried out by the Procurator Fiscal, who, in addition to his official duties, acts as law agents for sundry landlords and proprietors, some of whom are Conservatives, and some of whom are Liberals. The Procurator Fiscal is the same official who acted along with and under the direction of Sheriff Thoms in investigation of the case of a threaten-

ing letter received by General Burroughs—an act which was brought under the notice of the House. In reference to the second Question by the hon. Member for the Wick Burghs, he was aware that there was a riot that took place at Kirkwall, and there were certain convictions; and he was under the impression that an appeal was made to the late Secretary of State for the Home Department to remit some of the sentences, and that the right hon. Gentleman did not see cause to do so. He was not aware of the particulars of these cases; but if Notice were given he would make inquiries. He knew generally, however, that there was a good deal of rioting at that election, and that the Sheriff, who was responsible for the peace of the county, took himself the superintendence of the investigations until he was obliged to go to Caithness in regard to the incendiary fires.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON: I wish to explain—"Order, order!"

MR. J. B. BALFOUR: If there is anything more my hon. Friend desires, I shall be very glad to get the necessary information.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON: It is not in regard to that—"Order, order!" You have not answered the Question.

DR. CAMERON: Can the Lord Advocate, at his convenience, state to the House what were the expenses connected with the Sanday riots?

MR. J. B. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman gives Notice I will endeavour to find out.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—PRIVILEGE—INTERFERENCE OF PEERS AT ELECTIONS.

MR. T. H. BOLTON asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he is aware of the interference of certain Lords of Parliament in the election of Members of this House, especially in the Metropolis, by those Lords sending their carriages and hired servants to convey voters to the poll; and, whether, having regard to the Resolution of this House, which declares that—

"It is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament . . . to concern himself in the election of Members to serve the Commons in Parliament,"

he will consider the propriety of advising

The Lord Advocate

proceedings to support the Resolution of this House?

COLONEL BROOKFIELD asked, whether the hon. and learned Gentleman was aware of and would inquire into the interference of certain Lords of Parliament in the election of Members of this House, especially in the North Riding of Yorkshire; whether he was aware also that the interference of a Lord of Parliament in one case took the form of sending £1,000 to an election committee for election purposes?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR. CHARLES RUSSELL), in reply, said, that he was not aware of the matters to which the hon. and gallant Member for Rye referred; but perhaps he would put his Question on the Notice Paper, in which case inquiries should be made. As regarded the Question of the hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. T. H. Bolton), it was the fact that carriages had been sent by Peers to convey voters to the poll. As to the Resolution of the House relating to the liberties and Privileges of the Commons, he must repeat what he said the other day—that that was not a subject which was at all in any special sense within his sphere of duty. It was a matter for the House to deal with; and if the hon. Member desired information with regard to it, he should address his Question to the Leader of the House. With reference to the latter part of the Question, he did not propose to offer an opinion about it, unless it was asked by the Government.

THE COINAGE.

MR. S. MONTAGU asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether his attention has been called to the condition of the coinage; whether he is aware that about sixty millions, or in other words sixty out of every hundred, of the gold coins in circulation have ceased to be legal tender, in consequence of their worn condition; and that, in consequence, many millions in gold lie idle in the hands of bankers and others; whether it is a fact that the silver currency, originally issued at a premium of less than ten per cent., is now, owing to the diminished value of the metal, circulating at a fictitious value of forty per cent. when of full weight, and fifty per cent. when worn, above its market price; whether he has reason to fear

illegal coinage in consequence; whether he has directed any inquiry into the practice of importing French one and two sous pieces and putting them into circulation, at a profit of about five per cent; and, whether he has any reason to fear that the ultimate loss arising out of this importation may fall upon the poorer classes?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): As to the first two parts of the Question, the actual figures and the whole circumstances of the matter were brought before the House by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary two years ago. As to the next two parts on the subject of the silver coinage, it is true that the premium at which our silver coin circulates is nearly as stated; but I learn, from the Mint Authorities, that there is no apprehension of illegal coinage, and, indeed, that there is no such thing as forged silver coin. With regard to the copper coinage, we all know there is a certain number of small copper or bronze coins imported from France; but there is no reason, however, to think it is done for purposes of profit, and in any case no inconvenience has been proved to exist.

MR. BROADBENT: Could the right hon. Gentleman say whether he intends to re-introduce the Bill for the debasing of the gold coinage, or otherwise dealing with it, that was introduced by his Predecessor?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not think that is a Question which ought to be put to me. It does not arise out of my reply, and I do not recognize a Bill by that description; therefore I am not prepared to answer it.

SCOTLAND—THE SHERIFF CLERK DEPUTY OF SKYE

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House, Papers connected with the dismissal from his office of Mr Dugall MacLachlan, bank agent, Portree, sheriff clerk deputy of the Skye District of Inverness-shire?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR) who replied said: I shall inquire whether it would be according to usage to lay on the Table of the House certain telegrams which formed an important ingredient in the case. There

are no other documents which could properly be laid upon the Table; but my right hon. and learned Friend the late Lord Advocate and I will be ready to give full information to the House as to the causes of the dismissal if any question in regard to it is raised.

SCOTLAND—ARREARS OF RATES IN SKYE.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether, in the peculiar circumstances of the Island of Skye at present, he will lay upon the Table of the House Returns showing the arrears in the whole Island, as at 14th February, of school and poor rates, under the heads of landlords, tenants paying over £30 a-year, and tenants paying under £30 a-year?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (MR. TREVELYAN): The Board of Supervision intended to obtain Returns of the arrears of poor rate at the beginning of April, in which the information as to the arrears of school rates which my hon. Friend wishes to get can be included. There is a difficulty about obtaining frequent Returns, as the duties of the Inspectors of the Poor are at present very onerous. The best plan will be for these Returns to be taken in hand at once, and put into the shape, as far as it can be accomplished, which will meet the wishes of my hon. Friend. When I have got them they will be laid upon the Table.

IRELAND—RAFFLES FOR LANDS OF PROTESTANT LANDLORDS.

MR. SEXTON for **MR. DWYER GRAY** asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there is any truth in the statement published in *The Dublin Daily Express* and subsequently in *The Times* last month and reported in *The St. James's Gazette* of the 12th instant, on the authority of a letter "from a responsible person in Ireland to a distinguished person in England," to the effect that raffles are being held by Catholics in various districts in Ireland for the reverendary possession of farms held by Protestants?

MR. ALBERT GREY: In reference to this Question, I would, at the same time, ask my right hon. Friend whether he has seen similar statements explicitly made in the columns of *The Belfast*

News Letter, and reported in *The Times* of to-day.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Question on the Paper, I have to say that the authorities in Dublin have no official knowledge of these alleged transactions; and the police authorities in the North of Ireland, to which most of the statements are confined, have not heard of them. In answer to the Question now asked by my hon. Friend (Mr. A. Grey), my attention has been called to the specific statement to which he refers, and in consequence of that I shall have further inquiries made.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that, on a future day, I will ask if the Government will consider whether the wilful and persistent publications by newspapers of false news, calculated to endanger the public peace, should not be constituted an offence?

IRELAND—CONDITION OF THE WESTERN ISLES.

MR. SEXTON (for Mr. DWYER GRAY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether an inspector of the Irish Local Government Board visited the Island of Boffin last month in order to ascertain the condition of the potato supply on the island and the probability of famine; and, whether he can state the result of that inquiry?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): An Inspector of the Local Government Board visited Boffin Island last January, and his Report has been laid before me. I expect it will be my duty very shortly to make a statement embodying the result of this and other inquiries into the condition of the Islands on the West Coast of Ireland; and I am glad to say I believe I shall be able to make a statement that will be satisfactory to hon. Members in all parts of the House.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED OUTRAGES NEAR DUNDALK.

MR. JOSEPH NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the Dundalk constabulary received information recently that in one night several outrages had been committed in the neighbourhood, including the breaking

of windows, setting fire to a haystack, and setting fire to a dwelling house; whether the constabulary, on making inquiry, learned that these outrages were committed by a landlord and magistrate in the locality with some friends of his; if it is true that the inspector of police in Dundalk used his influence to have a compromise effected between the injured parties and the perpetrators of the outrages, pointing out to the former that it was only by suppressing the names of the offending parties that compensation could be procured from the grand jury; and, whether any effort has been made by the police to bring the guilty parties to justice? In putting this Question he desired to substitute for the words "a landlord and magistrate in the locality" the words "brother of a landlord and magistrate in the locality."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The attention of the Inspector General has been called to this matter, and he has thought it necessary to order a special investigation into the circumstances of the case; but the Report of it has not yet reached us.

POOR LAW—DERIVATIVE SETTLEMENTS.

MR. NORTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that a great deal of litigation has arisen in consequence of the enactments relating to the abolition of derivative settlements comprised in section 35 of the Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act of 1876, 39 and 40 Vic. c. 61; whether the Judges of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice have frequently remarked, in their judicial decisions, upon the obscurity of that section of the Act, as to whether a widow does or does not derive the settlement of her deceased husband; and, whether he will introduce an explanatory or amending Act, with a view to define clearly the Law with regard to derivative settlements?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN), in reply, said, it was a fact that there had been a good deal of litigation in reference to this question of derivative settlements; but he believed the difficulty had chiefly arisen with regard to the settlement of children, not of widows, and in consequence of a decision of the Court of Appeal being in

Mr. Albert Grey

contradiction to previous decisions. He believed that a case was about to be carried to the House of Lords, where the matter would be finally settled. Pending that decision, there was no intention to introduce a Bill on the subject.

ARMY—THE TESTING OF SIDE ARMS.

MR. SEXTON for Mr. DWYER GRAY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the bayonets now being tested are tested fixed on their rifles, as they would be used in actual war; and, if not, whether there is to be a second test, to ascertain how many rifles will stand the strain to which the surviving bayonets have been subjected?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. WOODALL) (who replied) said: The present trials have not been made with bayonets fixed to the rifles; but before the barrel of the Martini-Henry rifle was adopted it was subjected, with bayonet fixed, to so severe a test of its stability that no doubt is entertained of its power to withstand in that regard the roughest usage that may be expected during war. Consequently, no further test has been considered necessary.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—LISTS OF VOTERS.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is aware that, in the preparation of the Lists of Parliamentary Voters in 1885, the overseers in many parishes omitted or misdescribed either the nature of the qualification or the description of the qualifying property of the voter, or both, and that the Revising Barristers are, in many instances, not empowered to rectify such omissions or misdescriptions except upon declarations or claims made by the voters, who may be unaware of the defect in the Lists, and, if aware, can only take the steps necessary to rectify them at considerable trouble and expense; and, whether, pending the preparation of any general measure dealing with the Registration of Voters, the Government will introduce a short Bill giving power to Revising Barristers to retain on the Lists of Voters the name of every person inserted therein who shall be shown to have a proper qualification,

notwithstanding any mistake in the List as to its nature or description, and for that purpose to make any necessary amendment in the Lists, and giving power to Revising Barristers to enforce the payment of costs by an overseer guilty of negligence in the preparation of any List?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (who replied said: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that I am aware that the overseers in many parishes make mistakes in the preparation of their lists. I am also aware that the power of the Revising Barristers to rectify such mistakes is limited, and might advantageously be enlarged; but I do not think that a Bill can well be brought in for this purpose only independently of a general measure dealing with the registration of voters. That, however, is a matter more for the Local Government Board than for the Home Office; and I hope to be able to confer with my right hon. Friend the President of that Board on the subject. I may, however, say that, under the law as it stands, Revising Barristers have the power to fine overseers for neglect; but I do not think it possible to make the overseer responsible for the cost of claimants incurred in making the necessary amendments.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES—ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

MR. MARK STEWART asked the Secretary of State for War, If Her Majesty's Government will make provision in the Estimates in the present year for an additional capitation grant to the Artillery Volunteers; for the substitution of 40-pounder rifled guns in position for old 32-pounders for batteries; for a certain number of 20-pounder field guns, with necessary equipments for Corps; and, also, for the substitution of Martini-Henry carbines for the old ones now in use?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): As regards the capitation grant, I must refer the hon. Member to my recent reply to the hon. Member for Central Sheffield. The Artillery Volunteers have already in their possession 180 rifled muzzle-loading 64-pounders and 137 rifled breech-loading 40-pounders, besides having at their disposal for practice, &c., 77 additional

64-pounders and 14 additional 40-pounders. Every year as many guns of these classes as become available are issued to them in substitution for, or in addition to, the smooth-bore guns which they already have. Field guns are not issued to Artillery Volunteers. The store of Martini-Henry carbines is not such as will allow of their issue to Artillery Volunteers in substitution for the Snider carbines they now have in use.

MR. MARK STEWART gave Notice to call attention to the subject on going into Committee of Supply.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—
PROCURATORS FISCAL.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Lord Advocate, with reference to the information he gave the House of Commons last year, that he was endeavouring to arrange that certain Procurators Fiscal in the West Highlands of Scotland should not in future engage in private practice, Whether such arrangements have been carried into effect; and, should he have found them impracticable, whether he will bring in a Bill to give the Executive sufficient power to provide that the Public Prosecutors should occupy an independent impartial position with respect to the administration of the Law?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): Arrangements had not been concluded when I left Office in June last, and I have not yet learned whether they have been carried into effect since; but I shall immediately inquire; and if it should prove that arrangements cannot be effected on reasonable terms, the question will be considered whether legislative authority should not be asked from the Executive to require the officials referred to to confine themselves to their official duties upon fair terms.

SCOTLAND—THE EDUCATION CODE—
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether the Education Department will so amend the Education Code for Scotland that the two hundred and fifty annual attendances by pupils required to earn the grant may be made, under proper safeguards, at two different schools; and, if not, if he will be good enough to state the objections of the Department to amend a rule which is stated to act prejudicially to country ratepayers and to the children

of farm servants, who have frequently to change their places of abode?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (MR. TREVELYAN): The question referred to by my hon. Friend has been frequently considered by the Department. It must be borne in mind that if the present restrictions were removed the Treasury would probably require that the scale of grants should be lower. With regard to the alleged injustice to the children, it should be understood that the want of the qualifying attendance is no reason why a child should not be presented for examination to earn an exemption certificate; and it is for school managers to prevent any injury being done to the children with the view of increasing the grant.

POST OFFICE—POST CARDS.

MR. NORTHCOTE asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If post cards are purchased by the Post Office by number or by weight; if it is the case that in all tenders called for by the Stationery Office it is stipulated that the goods to be delivered shall be free from clay; if the attention of the Postmaster General has been called to a report that the post cards received from Germany are said to contain 28 per cent of clay; and, if any analysis of the composition of German post cards has been made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government; and, if not, if he will cause such an analysis to be made?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): Post cards are supplied to the Inland Revenue Department (which is charged with the manufacture of stamps) by numbers and by bulk, not by weight. It is not the case that, in all tenders, the Stationery Office stipulates that goods supplied to them shall be free from clay. The post cards are supplied to us by Messrs. de la Rue in a complete state as issued to the public, under a contract which in no way binds the contractors to the place or country whence they obtain the material from which the cards are made. We look entirely to the post cards as completed being suitable for the Post Office Service, and up to the standard of the sample originally agreed upon. This matter formed a subject of inquiry during the last Session of Parliament, and was exhaustively dealt with by the late Mr. Fawcett, in his reply to

Mr. Campbell-Bannerman

Mr. Northcote 3 *Hansard*, 289, 1862), and by letters to the public Press. *The Times*, October 27, 1884. A certain proportion of clay, while not adding really to its thickness, is of importance as giving firmness and evenness, and rendering the post card fitter for writing and for printing. Early last year the attention of the Inland Revenue was called to a report that the post cards contained clay. Though this did not affect the question of bulk, a crucial examination was made, which proved that the cards were fully up to the standard of thickness, and that they completely met all the requirements of the Post Office Service. No chemical analysis has been made of the paper which is now used, which is considered to be, if anything, superior in thickness and in quality to the standard laid down; and in these circumstances it is not proposed to make any analysis.

POST OFFICE—ADDRESSES OF TELEGRAMS.

MR. SEXTON (for Mr. DWYER GRAY) asked the Secretary to the Treasury. Whether, when a telegram is sent from a local post office to an address in the same town, the postal authorities insist on the name of the town being inserted in the telegram, and for what purpose such a regulation is enforced?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY. MR. H. H. FOWLER: There is no regulation such as that described; but it has been ascertained that in Belfast and Cork, under a misapprehension, senders of local messages in those towns have been required to insert the name of the town; but instructions have been given to discontinue the practice.

IRELAND—ALLEGED "BOYCOTTING."

CAPTAIN MCALMONT asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Whether his attention has been called to the following letter in *The Daily Express* of the 23rd February:—

Sir, I am a widow in the County Roscommon. I have got my rent fixed, and am satisfied to pay same. I now am boycotted, and my name put up on posters all around Ballyfarnham, for no reason only that my son bought 25 6d. worth of timber from the Earl of Kingston. My hay has been burnt about three years ago. I know no other reason why I should be boycotted only that I am a Protestant. If this state of things is not put a

stop to, I do not know what honest peaceable people will do. We are compelled to pay money to every collection that the ruffians choose to demand. They now have my servant boy taken from me. They also cautioned my messenger not to bring me any shop goods. This is the position that County Roscommon Protestants are placed in. There are three Protestant families boycotted as well as me.

"I am, Sir, yours obediently,

"Mary Hamilton

"Larigan, Ballyfarnham, County
Roscommon."

and, whether he will make inquiries as to Mrs. Hamilton's position, and see that she receives the protection to which every subject of Her Majesty is entitled?

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to ask, at the same time, if he is aware whether this newspaper, referred to in the Question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman as an authority, *The Daily Express*, has been obliged within the last few days to give a public apology, under threat of an action for libel, for a communication of a similar character to this, and which it acknowledged to be false and unfounded?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I am not aware of the circumstances to which the hon. Member (Mr. W. O'Brien) refers; but I have no doubt about its being true. In reply to the hon. and gallant Member (Captain McAlmont), I have to say that no complaints have reached the police of Mrs. Hamilton having been "Boycotted." A notice, in which she and others was described as violating the National League rules by buying timber from the Earl of Kingston, was posted on the 12th January last; but no other notices referring to her have been found by, or reported to, the police. Some hay, her property, was burned about four years ago; but it was in consequence of a personal dispute which she had with some of her neighbours. She never spoke to the police about having to pay money for collections, though—as states the officer of police—she had every opportunity of doing so. Her servant boy left her some time ago, owing, as she alleges, to intimidation; but the police have since closely inquired into the allegation, and find no evidence to sustain it. There are several other Protestant families living at or near Ballyfarnham; but they are not "Boycotted," or in any way interfered with.

whether the Lower Division Clerks in nearly all Public Offices are in the enjoyment of at least twenty-eight days' leave, and that even in the Inland Revenue Department a number of Officers of the Minor Establishments are already in the enjoyment of twenty-eight days' annual leave; whether the prayer of the petitioners has received the approval of the head of their Department; and, whether, in these circumstances, the Treasury will sanction the extension of leave prayed for?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): The Petition of the Lower Division Clerks of the Inland Revenue Department was received in the Treasury in August last. Heads of Departments fix the amount of leave to be given to clerks of the Lower Division in their offices within a maximum of 28 days; but many important Departments, including the Treasury itself, allow less than 28 days. The Commissioners of Inland Revenue advocate a uniform rate of leave to clerks of the Lower Division. The persons in the minor establishments of the Inland Revenue Department, referred to in the Question as enjoying 28 days' leave, were appointed before the establishment of the Lower Division, and new appointees do not receive more leave than is granted to Lower Division Clerks. With regard to the last paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, I beg to state that, pending the decision of the general questions raised by the Lower Division Clerks, it would, in my opinion, be inexpedient to decide this particular question.

SAVINGS IN IRELAND—REPORTS.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any Reports on Savings in Ireland, such as was supplied by Dr. Hancock in 1875, have been made to the Government; and, if so, whether he will lay Copies of them upon the Table of the House; or, if not, whether he will direct that such Reports be prepared by the present Registrar General?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): Yes, Sir; a Report was made on this subject so late as the 10th of last month, and I shall be happy to lay a copy of it on the Table.

Mr. Pickersgill

METROPOLIS—ORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE.

COLONEL SANDYS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will be prepared shortly to recommend for the consideration of this House a complete scheme for the organization and better administering of the Metropolitan Police Force, including the building of proper police barracks at various tactical points in the Metropolis; and, whether, having in view the increasing audacity of the criminal classes, he will be prepared to recommend the formation of an efficient detective force, separate in administration from the remainder of the police, and composed of men specially qualified for the tracing and detection of crime?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): The hon. and gallant Member may rest assured that I will lose no time in forwarding the inquiry I am about to make into the organization of the police, and in communicating my action upon it to the House. A detective force, such as the hon. and gallant Member describes, is already in existence, having been constituted subsequently to the Report of a Committee appointed to inquire into the detective system in 1877. But I must dispute altogether the hon. and gallant Member's assumption that the audacity of the criminal classes is increasing. On the contrary, they are, I am glad to say, from year to year diminishing in number, and are becoming much less formidable.

METROPOLIS—POLICE REGULATIONS FOR DOGS.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the Police Regulation enforcing the muzzling of dogs in the Metropolis, and to the inefficacy of such a regulation while the importation of dogs into London from all parts of the Kingdom is permitted; and, if he will consider the propriety of extending the order over the whole Country, or of withdrawing it in London?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to my hon. Friend, I would say that I have no means of preventing the importation of dogs into London. Of course, when they once

arrive here they become subject to the police regulations, and have to submit to them. How far those regulations can be relaxed will depend upon what the Police Authorities report to me, and what they consider to be consistent with the public safety. I have no power to extend the order over the whole country; but a Circular was issued by my Predecessor in December last, calling the attention of the Local Authorities to the increase of rabies, and suggesting the enforcement of the Dog Act.

MR. MACFARLANE asked whether it was not the fact that dogs might go unmuzzled in the City; and, were there any means of preventing unmuzzled dogs straying from the City to the West End?

MR. CHILDERS, in reply, said, the regulations applied both to the City and the West End; but there were many regulations as affecting the City and the rest of the Metropolis which it would be difficult to justify.

SIR R. ANSHETON CROSS asked to what extent had there been a decrease in the number of cases of rabies and of hydrophobia since the police order had been issued?

MR. CHILDERS said, he would be quite willing to give a Return of the number of dogs arrested since the order for muzzling, and also the number of cases of rabies, if it were moved for by the right hon. Gentleman.

EGYPT—BRITISH FORCE IN EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can state approximately the number of men now in the Military service of the British Government in Egypt and the Soudan, including both British and Native Indian Troops, Commissariat, Transport, and other employes, and Marines doing Military duty; if the cost of the 142,194 men voted in the ordinary Estimates for 1885-6 after deducting refunds other than real cash contributions is about £133 10s. per head, including both Effectives and Non-Effectives; if he can make a rough approximate Estimate of the additions to the cost of the Effective Force in Egypt, on account of Foreign allowances, transport, commissariat, and other expenses in excess of the ordinary average, also of the proportion of Non-Effectives belonging to Regiments in Egypt, and so roughly estimate the total cost of the Force now

in Egypt; and, if he will state how much of that approximate cost has been received from Egypt in the present year, how much is expected in the ensuing year, and how much will fall upon the British taxpayer in 1886-7, supposing the Force to be maintained at its present strength?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The approximate number of troops in Egypt and the Soudan may be taken as 17,600 British troops, 2,900 Indian troops, and 4,000 employes, for the most part Natives. These do not include the regimental Indian followers at Suakin. While giving my hon. Friend this answer as to matters of fact, I cannot undertake to follow him into his calculation of cost, or to commit myself to any rough approximate estimate of expenses connected with the occupation of Egypt. There would be many debatable items in such an estimate, and it could not be explained within the ordinary limits of an answer to a Question.

MR. O'KELLY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would have any objection to give a Return, showing the whole cost of the occupation of Egypt since the English troops first went there?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, the Question had better be addressed to the Treasury.

In answer to Mr. DILLON,

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he could not now state the number of British soldiers at Suakin; but if the hon. Member moved for a Return he would be happy to give it.

SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT—THE SEED RATE—POSTPONEMENT OF PAYMENT OF FOURTH INSTALLMENT.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can now state whether he will, in consequence of the present depression, permit such unions as may apply for delay to postpone the payment of the fourth instalment of the Seed Rate for another year?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY MR. JOHN MORLEY: I am at present unable to answer the Question of the hon. and gallant Member. I have, however, to say that communications are now in progress between the Irish Government and

the Treasury, and the result I shall be able to state in a few days.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE
GALWAY MAILS.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If any memorials or reports have been received at the Post Office stating that Tuam and North Galway have been injured rather than helped by the recent acceleration of the mails to the town of Galway, and if he would take steps to enable Tuam to benefit by the acceleration of the mails; if it is a fact that the Railway Company which leases the Tuam line only receives 19s. a-week for carrying the mails by day 16½ miles, and if the mails are carried by night at a cost of £165 by car; if it is possible to come to some agreement with the Railway by which the mails could be forwarded at once to Dublin or Tuam, instead of waiting two and a half hours at Athenry; and, if he could, at night, replace the car service by a train service to and from Tuam?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): Memorials have been received on the subject referred to, including a written statement from the hon. and gallant Member himself, and are undergoing careful examination. The existing payments for the mail service are correctly stated in the Question. It is feared that the substitution of trains for the car which conveys the night mail to Tuam would confer little, if any, postal advantage, while the cost would be undoubtedly large. But both this point and the question whether an improvement of the day mail is feasible shall be fully considered.

IRELAND—LORD RANDOLPH
CHURCHILL AT BELFAST — EXTRA
POLICE.

MR. JOHNSTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, At whose instigation the large extra force of police was brought to Belfast, on the occasion of the recent visit of Lord Randolph Churchill; and, from what fund the expense incurred will be defrayed?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The extra force of police was sent to Belfast on the occasion referred to on the recommenda-

Mr. John Morley

tion of the Mayor, the resident magistrates, the divisional magistrate, and the town inspector. In regard to the second paragraph of the Question, I have to say that it is usual to charge the moiety of the extra force on the locality. I am informed that it is the custom to abrogate that rule in the cases of Royal and Vice-regal visits; but this was not a visit of that character.

EGYPT—IRRIGATION WORKS AND
FORCED LABOUR.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any information has been received; recently from Sir Evelyn Baring, as to the progress of irrigation works and to the abolition of forced labour in Egypt; whether papers on these subjects will be laid before Parliament shortly; and, whether they can, without inconvenience, be presented separately from any other Papers relating to Egypt?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE): Some Reports as to the progress of irrigation works in Egypt have been received; but there is no detailed information of a very recent date. Colonel Moncrieff, who is at the head of the Irrigation Department, has obtained a grant from the proceeds of the Guaranteed Loan for the purpose of making preliminary studies before submitting plans for larger operations. Reports have been received, and correspondence is still passing, as to the means of effecting the entire abolition of forced labour in Egypt. A system of commuting the obligation for a money payment has already been tried as an experiment in certain districts. There will be no objection to presenting the Papers on these subjects in a separate form, as the hon. Baronet desires, as soon as a definite decision has been taken.

THE IRISH LAND COURT—APPEALS IN
WESTMEATH.

MR. TUIE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the injustice inflicted upon the tenant farmers of Westmeath by reason of their being obliged to go to Dublin to have their appeal cases heard before the Chief Commissioners of the Land Court; whether tenants of every kind are being

arrive here they become subject to the police regulations, and have to submit to them. How far those regulations can be relaxed will depend upon what the Police Authorities report to me, and what they consider to be consistent with the public safety. I have no power to extend the order over the whole country; but a Circular was issued by my Predecessor in December last, calling the attention of the Local Authorities to the increase of rabies, and suggesting the enforcement of the Dog Act.

MR. MAUFARLANE asked whether it was not the fact that dogs might go unmuzzled in the City; and, were there any means of preventing unmuzzled dogs straying from the City to the West End?

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In answer to Mr. DILLON,

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THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I am at present unable to answer the Question of the hon. and gallant Member. I have, however, to say that communications are now in progress between the Irish Government and

Major Warburton was allowed to use the gunboat referred to, the *Britomart*, by special permission of Dublin Castle. It was also true that a public steamer plied regularly in the bay. He had no information that Mr. Payne travelled in the *Britomart* with Major Warburton; but, if he did so, it was as a guest of the captain.

CYPRUS (FINANCE, &c.).

COLONEL BRIDGEMAN asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any part of the revenues of Cyprus is used to pay the interest of the Turkish Loan of 1855, guaranteed by England and France; whether France, who divides with England the responsibility for this payment bears her share, or whether the whole is paid by Cyprus; and, if Cyprus pays the whole, or a part, whether Her Majesty's Government propose to take any steps to relieve the Cypriots from paying the liabilities of England and France?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. OSBORNE MORGAN): Under Article 3 of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878, an annual sum, now ascertained to be £92,800, was agreed to be paid to Turkey out of the revenues of Cyprus. This sum when paid ceased to be part of the revenues of Cyprus, and became part of the revenues of the Ottoman Empire. Turkey having, since 1876, ceased to provide for the payment of interest on the Turkish Loan of 1855, guaranteed by England and France (excepting so far as that interest is charged on the Egyptian Tribute), this sum of £92,800 is paid over to a special account at the Bank of England, and is, with the acquiescence of Turkey, ultimately applied to make good the default of Turkey in payment of that interest. It is one of the first rules of equity that, where one or two guarantors gets hold of an asset belonging to the defaulting guaranteed person, he must share the benefit of it with his co-guarantor, and in compliance with this well-known rule the money so received is applied to make good payments which otherwise would have to be met by the two guaranteeing Powers, England and France. The ultimate application of the fund can make no possible difference to Cyprus; because, under the Anglo-Turkish Convention, that Island is bound in any case to pay the £92,800 a-year, and if it was not required for the ser-

vice of the Guaranteed Debt, it would go to Turkey.

EGYPT—MEDALS AND GRATUITIES— H.M.S. "JUMNA."

MR. VANDERBYL asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Lords of the Admiralty will be pleased to reconsider their Letter, A. G. N. 21, of the 27th November 1885, by which H.M.S. *Jumna* was omitted from the list of ships entitled to participate in the award of medals and gratuities for the late Suakin Campaign by Parliamentary grant, that ship having been seventeen days alongside the camp in the inner harbour of Suakin during a time of actual hostilities in the neighbourhood (and within the requisite dates), and employed embarking wounded, &c., having especial regard to the fact that in 1884, when the *Jumna* was similarly employed, her officers and men were granted both; and, whether, under these circumstances, the Admiralty will bestow the said medals and batta on those officers and men of the *Jumna* present in her at Suakin in April and May 1885 not already in possession of the decoration or previously granted batta?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (MR. HIBBERT): It is not considered desirable to reverse the decision arrived at by the previous Board, that the award of the medal and gratuity should be limited to warships engaged in the defence of Suakin and to store-ships and other vessels which had been employed for a lengthened period during the operations. The troopship *Jumna* was at Suakin on two different occasions, and only 15 days inclusive. It is true that the *Jumna* received the gratuity and decorations for the previous campaign in 1884; but the period of her service at the base of operations extended over nearly the whole period for which the award was made. I may also add, that it would be altogether a new principle to award medals or gratuities to some only of the crew, merely on the ground that they did not get them for the former campaign.

COMMUTATION OF PENSIONS.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Secretary to the Treasury, The name of the trustee now acting on behalf of the Crown in the matter of a sum of £229,000 invested to secure the per-

Mr. Hibbert

petual annual payment of £6,870 to the Duke of Grafton; and, whether he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Declaration executed by the present trustees?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): The Trustee on behalf of the Crown is the First Lord of the Treasury for the time being. The present Trustees were appointed by deed, and there was no express declaration of trust executed by the present Trustees. They were appointed for the purposes of the Acts 46 Geo. III. c. 79, and 55 Geo. III. c. 53. If the hon. Gentleman would refer to those Acts, they would put him in possession of all the circumstances.

Mr. BRADLAUGH asked whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that the Treasury had already said that there was no declaration of trust, and that the reason given was that it was not required?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: Yes; that is exactly the purport of my answer.

Mr. BRADLAUGH asked the Secretary to the Treasury, The respective dates of the several declarations of trust executed in reference to lands purchased out of the sum invested to secure the perpetual annual payment of £19,000 to the Duke of Richmond, and the names of the trustees in each case; and, if he will allow the several deeds to be inspected by honourable Members?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: There is no information at the Treasury as to the dates of the documents referred to, or the names of the Trustees in each case. I understand that the conveyance of the lands is made for the same uses as the annual payment of £19,000, and the hon. Member will find considerable information in the Act 1 Vict. c. 34, and the Duke of Richmond's Settled Estates Act of 1868. The Treasury has no control over those deeds, which are in the custody of the noble Duke, either at Goodwood or Gordon Castle.

BURIALS—LEGISLATION—BURIAL GROUNDS BILL.

Mr. RICHARD asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Government will, at an early period, re-introduce the Burial Grounds Bill brought in last Session, or some other measure which will remove the difficulties now experienced by burial

authorities in making suitable and equitable provision for interments in parochial burial places?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): My right hon. and learned Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) will ask leave to introduce, on behalf of the Government, a Bill similar to the one introduced in 1885.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—MR. JOSEPH D. GRIER, CLERK OF THE CAVAN UNION.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the conduct of Mr. Joseph D. Grier, clerk of the Cavan Poor Law Board, in connection with the coming election of Poor Law Guardians for that Union; whether it is a fact that the Nationalist ratepayers of the Union, having lodged a large number of claims to vote, Mr. Grier acting as returning officer, has issued an advertisement in the local papers (Anglo-Celt of the 20th instant) requiring "documentary evidence in support of all claims to vote" lodged since the last election; what powers a returning officer has to require "documentary" evidence in support of claims to vote, such claims being in many cases, from their nature, incapable of being so supported; whether he is aware that the medium of advertisement selected as a substitute for direct communication is one which is exceedingly unlikely to come under the notice of a large proportion of the claimants; whether the proceeding in question is taken under the 6 and 7 Vic. c. 92, s. 26; and, if so, whether that enactment, being limited to particular cases in which a returning officer "has reasonable cause to doubt the correctness of any claim to vote," the Local Government Board will direct Mr. Grier to abandon his proposed general court of inquiry, and to issue voting papers to all claimants except in particular cases in which doubt has been thrown on the correctness of any claim, and the claimant, after notice directly given, has failed to satisfy him; whether it is the fact that a large number of the claimants live at considerable distances, in some cases as much as ten miles, from the board room where Mr. Grier proposes to hold his court, and would be put to great inconvenience by being

compelled needlessly to attend there; and, whether it is the fact that Mr. Grier's action is entirely without precedent?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The Local Government Board assure me that they are unable, at this moment, to give any information in answer to this Question, it not having appeared in time. I shall ask the hon. Member to repeat the Question in two or three days.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I shall repeat it in its original form.

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. Member that the Question to which he refers in its original form as put at the Table was out of Order, and I disallowed it.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I will have the Question in such a form as will conform with the Rules of Order.

METROPOLIS—SUNDAY MEETINGS IN THE PARKS.

CAPTAIN FELLOWES asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in consequence of the permission accorded to Socialist and other societies to hold meetings in the public parks on Sundays, it is intended on such occasions to confine the Troops to barracks; and, if so, whether notice to that effect will be given to Commanding Officers of regiments in London, in order that they may be able to grant the usual weekly half-holiday on some other day of the week to men who are not on duty?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have to say that the course to be taken in each particular case must necessarily depend on the circumstances of the case. If those circumstances should require that troops should be held in readiness, the earliest possible notice would be given to the commanding officers. I hope that in the future, as in the past, this necessity may seldom arise.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—FALSELY MARKED GOODS.

MR. HICKMAN asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will give instructions to stop at the port of entry all goods coming from abroad which bear marks falsely indicating that they are manufactured in this Country?

Mr. Maurice Healy

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA): The Customs do not in this matter act under the direction of the Board of Trade, but of the Treasury. They inform me that they do their utmost to stop the importation of goods bearing the name of a place in this country which would, from its reputation for particular manufactures, impart a special character or reputation to the goods bearing such name; and they have recently seized and condemned several cases of cutlery imported from abroad, marked with the brand of Sheffield, which were not of Sheffield manufacture.

In reply to Mr. A. O'CONNOR,

MR. MUNDELLA said, that he was not aware of foreign goods being marked with Sheffield brands by Sheffield men; but he had heard that such was the case, and he would be very glad to see such fraudulent practices stopped.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the right hon. Gentleman, Whether the only case of false marking discovered in Sheffield was not in the case of a charge brought against the proprietor of a local Radical paper, who had sold very cheap and bad spectacles under a description which did not belong to them?

MR. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, that he was not aware of anything of the kind having occurred. If the proprietor of the Radical paper in question had sold spectacles of foreign make marked as English, the probability was that he had been also imposed upon, as others might be, by goods so imported and falsely marked. He thought it was a deplorable thing that, either at home or abroad, the good name of any town should be pirated by a false mark.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN— ENGLISH AND AMERICAN PUMPS.

MR. HICKMAN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has received any information as to the respective behaviour of the English and American pumps that were sent to Suakin; and, if he has, if he will communicate it to the House?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. WOODALL) (who replied) said: The advance on Berber having been countermanded before the landing of the pumps sent to Suakin, there was not an opportunity for testing

the merits of the respective systems. Later trials made in England have, however, led to the conclusion that it is possible to obtain the results produced by the American pumps, with English apparatus which requires much less fuel.

ARMY—PRINCE HENRY OF BATTENBERG.

Mr. LABOUCHÈRE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will inform himself if the appointment of Prince Henry of Battenberg to a Captaincy in the Regiment of the 1st Life Guards is contemplated; and, if so, whether the Prince Henry will be called upon to pass the usual examination; and, whether the rank will be honorary, or he will receive the pay attached to a Regimental Captaincy?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): It will be time enough to consider these Questions when any proposal on the subject is brought before me. I informed my hon. Friend on Friday last, that no proposal on this subject had been submitted to me. No trace of any such proposal exists in the records of the War Office; and I am afraid I can hardly undertake, as he now suggests that I should, to inquire whether this non-existent proposal is, or may have been, contemplated. I am at a loss to know how I should proceed, or where I should stop, if I commenced such inquiries; and I think my hon. Friend will agree that it is better for me to content myself with the consideration of cases when they actually arise. I have, therefore, not considered the points of detail to which the latter part of his Question refers.

ARMY—EFFECTS OF A DECEASED SOLDIER—CASE OF DENNIS M'DONNELL.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Dennis M'Donnell, of the 37th Foot, died 19 years ago, leaving effects valued at £14 2s. 7½d.; whether application was made by Michael M'Donnell, of Curgowan, Strokestown, for this property as next heir; whether he received the sum of £2 17s. 6d. sixteen years ago; and, whether there is any other claimant for the balance; and, if not, why the sum still in the hands of the War Office is not paid over to Michael M'Donnell?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): The facts are as stated in the Question. The soldier's name was, however, Ennis, and the relatives who have applied have received their share as such. As to the other representatives, none others have made any claim, and there would be no motive for inquiry.

Mr. O'KELLY: Could the right hon. Gentleman say how long it was since the money was paid, and whether there have been any appeals for the balance; and, also, whether the Statute of Limitations would not be a bar?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is not a bar.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POST OFFICE AT CLASHAGANNY.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is true that, in October 1881, a guarantee of £5 was paid for the establishment of a post office at the Cross Roads of Clashaganny for the accommodation of the householders of about twenty townlands in that neighbourhood; whether, on the receipt of the £5 so paid, the authorities in Dublin established an office a half an English mile away in an inconvenient and unsuitable spot, on the borders of the waste farms of Roscommon; whether seven-eighths of the householders, including the original guarantors, protested by petition against the establishment of the office at any other place than the Cross Roads of Clashaganny; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will take steps to remove the post office to the Cross Roads?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): Under a guarantee of £5 a-year a Post Office was opened on the 1st February, 1883, at the house of Mr. James Flanagan, in the centre of the townland of Clashaganny, at a distance of between 300 and 400 yards from the Cross Roads. No pledge was given that the office should be at the Cross Roads. On the contrary, the guarantor was expressly informed that the Department could not undertake to secure the appointment for his nominee. After the establishment of the office a Memorial was received praying for the removal of the office to the Cross Roads; but nothing would be gained in point of public convenience by the removal of the office, and the application was not

complied with. I understand that the guarantee will not be continued, and in that case I fear there will be no alternative but to close the office altogether.

ADMINISTRATION AND EXPENDITURE.

MR. RYLANDS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government, at an early period this Session, to take steps for the appointment of Select Committees to inquire into the Administration and Expenditure of the great Spending Departments of the State?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, he had not abandoned the idea referred to in the Question of his hon. Friend; but he must take a week or two to consider whether they could carry out their intention during the present Session, having regard to the number of important Select Committees which either had been or were about to be appointed. Such a Committee, whenever it was appointed, should be of the strongest character.

PARIS INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION.

MR. SPENSLEY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If Her Majesty's Government propose to take part in the International Exhibition which the French Republic has announced its intention of holding in Paris during 1889?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, that no communication with respect to the Exhibition had as yet been received from the French Government; and, therefore, the time had not yet come for Her Majesty's Government to decide whether they would take part in it.

IRELAND—LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL AT BELFAST.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I wish to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, with regard to a Notice of Motion which stands tenth on the Paper to-morrow, and which has been placed there by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). It relates to certain speeches of my noble Friend near me (Lord Randolph Churchill). I was unable to be in my place, unfortunately, when the right hon. Gentleman on Friday, as I under-

stand, declined to afford facilities to the hon. Member for Sligo for the purpose of the discussion of the Motion. Sir, on behalf, not only of my noble Friend, but of his Colleagues in the late Government, I venture to ask the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider that decision. The charge made against my noble Friend is a very grave one—that he has attempted to intimidate this House, and been inciting Her Majesty's subjects to civil war. The circumstances of the case show that it is not merely a charge made by one private Member of this House against another private Member; and, therefore, what I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to do is this—to exercise his influence with those hon. Members on his side of the House who have given Notices of Motion anterior to the Motion of the hon. Member for Sligo, in order that the Motion of the hon. Member for Sligo may be taken as the first Business of the evening to-morrow. Of course, Sir, I may say we would use a similar influence on our side. I think, on reconsideration, the right hon. Gentleman will see that it is a matter which ought to be discussed without loss of time.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): This is a matter which it is rather difficult to deal with in a way of Question and Answer, because it is almost inevitable that the Question and the Answer should assume more or less of an argumentative character; and I am not sure that my memory serves me with sufficient accuracy to enable me to give a positive reply to the right hon. Gentleman. There is much greater difficulty in the case, I think, than he appears to suppose. I am bound to say that, so far as I am aware, Notices of the kind have been given frequently by independent Members, but have not been permitted to cause any interference with the ordinary Business of the House, in order that they should take precedence. A Notice of this kind, charging my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chamberlain) with very grave offences indeed, was given by the noble Lord who himself is the subject of this present Notice. If I remember aright, my right hon. Friend was content to take his chance, and no attempt was made to obtain any alteration in the course of Business in this

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House. I may say, Sir, that in the last Parliament, stretching my memory a little bit further back, I was myself the object of a Notice of a similar character, given by a Member sitting upon the then Government side of the House. The terms of that Notice of Motion I am bound to say I have totally forgotten; but it was a Notice of a character which would have expelled me from this House if passed. At that time I had been a Member for more than 40 years, and for many years Prime Minister of this country; but I do not know that anyone attempted to interfere with the course of Business of the House in reference to that Notice. I should have thought it a great—well, I will not say what I should have thought it—because it would seem that I was finding fault with the right hon. Gentleman and those who have pursued a different course. I do not know whether anything else is to be said of this matter which would throw further light upon it. I admit that it is one matter to ask that a Government might should be given for the discussion of a subject, and another to ask for such kindly intervention as the right hon. Gentleman has now asked for. Out of respect to the right hon. Gentleman, I should be willing to forward the matter as he desires; but it seems to me that to do a thing of that sort would be establishing precedents which might be the means of causing inconvenience to the House. We will take two or three hours to consider the matter, and I will inform the right hon. Gentleman as soon as I can. It is not, however, the plain and straightforward matter that it seems to be; for, of course, new cases of this sort may arise, differing from some that have occurred, and one must be cautious in establishing precedents.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE said, that as one of those who had Notices on the Paper having priority over that of the hon. Member for Sligo, he would be very glad to waive his right, in order to afford the noble Lord the opportunity of making the explanation he desired in reply to those charges, which he felt to be affecting his character. So far as he was personally concerned, he should be willing to waive his right to oblige the noble Lord, feeling sure that the noble Lord would act in a similar way towards him (Sir Joseph Pease) if he

wished to hasten on the discussion of a question affecting his public utterances.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £25,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Expenses of Her Majesty's Embassies and Missions Abroad."

MR. BRADLAUGH: In moving to reduce this Supplementary Vote of £25,000 by the sum of £12,500, I shall confine myself to such part of the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff as relates to Constantinople, because it is only on that part that Papers are in the hands of Members. It is possible that, to some extent, I may misrepresent some of the facts, because I see that, having regard to the amounts spent in telegrams at Constantinople, it is quite evident that only part of the telegrams which passed between Sir H. Drummond Wolff and the late Government have been communicated to the House. My first point is, that Sir H. Drummond Wolff ought not to have been appointed to this Mission at all, and that, if he was appointed, a new Writ should have been at once issued in compliance with the VI. *Ann.*, c. 8, s. 26, which provides that in the case of any person, after having been chosen a Member of the House of Commons, accepting any office of profit under the Crown, his election shall be declared void, and a new Writ issued as if such person were naturally dead. I contend that, in this case, Her Majesty's Government have been guilty of a clear breach of duty in not having at once moved for a new Writ directly they appointed Sir H. Drummond Wolff to this Mission. But I see, from the Convention set out on page 37 of the *Papers*, Egypt, No. 1., that as late as the month of October Sir H. Drummond Wolff continued to describe himself as "Membre du Parlement." I maintain

that he ceased to be a Member in the month of August, and I submit to the Committee that the Government ought not to have allowed the law to be violated. I further maintain that if it was intended that this Mission should have a good effect at Constantinople and Cairo, the choice of Sir H. Drummond Wolff was a most unhappy one, unless the happiness of the choice may be illustrated by the need that was found to appoint to some places of profit the whole of the Members of the Fourth Party, which determined the policy of the Conservative Party. Sir H. Drummond Wolff, while in this House, supported the express declarations of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill). That noble Lord declared that the Egyptian Government—I am now quoting the language of the noble Lord, endorsed as late as October, 1885, from an authorized version of his speeches—was a bad Government; that no worse Government existed on the face of the earth; and that Tewfik and the Turk ought to be compelled to take their departure bag and baggage out of Egypt. It is right to add that the noble Lord has since changed his views on these points, and the same authorized expression of his opinion explains why he has changed them. He says that since 1880 there have been many sudden political changes in this country, and that no fair-minded person would expect any politician to maintain anything like an approach to rigid consistency in political utterances. It may be thought that views so vigorously expressed, and still entertained, would not be calculated to aid any Mission from that quarter, and I think the Committee will see from the Blue Book that on every single point on which Sir H. Drummond Wolff received instructions he failed. Every point in turn was insisted upon and abandoned, and the total result of the Mission may be summed up in the word *nil*, except so far as it was a visit of pleasure, which we may all hope Sir H. Drummond Wolff enjoyed, but for which a sum of £25,000 is a little too much to ask this country to pay. I do not propose to reject the whole of the £25,000. My Motion is only to reduce the Vote by the sum of £12,500. There seems to be a wide margin in the charge for telegrams to cover many contingencies. If

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the Committee will refer to the instructions contained in the Papers, Egypt No. I., page 1, they will find that Sir H. Drummond Wolff was specifically charged to obtain a military co-operation on the part of the Sultan in sending out troops to the Soudan. But the Sultan would not give a single man. The demand was insisted upon, and again refused, and ultimately abandoned. In the next place, the Sultan, after having refused to send troops, was asked to allow recruiting. That was insisted upon; but the Sultan's Advisers would do nothing of the kind, and that demand, too, was abandoned in turn. At last words were introduced into the Convention which were known to mean nothing, but which enabled the late Government, in a critical time, to announce to the country the great success of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission, when they knew, and had the means of knowing, that not only had that Mission been attended with no success, but that there was no shadow of justification for sending it out. In the next place, Sir H. Drummond Wolff was told to ask that some stipulation in reference to the Slave Trade should be made. It is well known on both sides of the House that there are kind-hearted and philanthropic Gentlemen who would be induced to vote a good deal of money if they were told something about its being necessary for the abolition of the Slave Trade. But Sir H. Drummond Wolff yielded even upon that point. It did not mean much; but the Sultan refused to comply with the wishes of the late Government. The Marquess of Salisbury telegraphed that it must be insisted upon; but the Sultan still remained obdurate and firm, and said—"I have kept all your Conventions. If anyone has broken the Convention by dealing with slaves, it is you; and you did it by the hands of General Gordon." Finally, this point, having been strenuously insisted upon at first, was also abandoned. It would not be fair if I did not deal with the one point of success, and that one point of success I would commend to the attention of hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, in view of many of the Election speeches which they have recently made. The one success is that the Sultan is recognized as Caliph of his religion and as spiritual Chief. [An hon. MEMBER: No.] I am sorry to disagree with the

hon. Member who interrupts me; but if he will refer to No. 66 on page 39 of the Papers relating to this matter, he will see that I am guilty of no misrepresentation. It will be found that if there is any misrepresentation, it rests with Sir H. Drummond Wolff and not with me, because in this Paper, carefully prepared and intended to be pressed upon the notice of the English public, Sir H. Drummond Wolff says that Her Majesty's Government recognizes that the Sultan is Sovereign of Egypt and Caliph of his religion. Sir H. Drummond Wolff is very likely wrong—for he is wrong in so many things, and it is just possible that he may be wrong in this—but, at any rate, that is what he says. Now, I submit that it is no part of the duty of this country to pay £12,500 for the services of a Gentleman, however able—and in this case I admit the ability—to go to Constantinople in order that the Sultan should be recognized as Caliph of his religion. It is true that a Special Commissioner was sent by Turkey to Egypt, and the circumstances attending that appointment deserve notice when you consider the bold way in which hon. Gentlemen opposite, in their Election speeches, asserted the supremacy of England abroad. In the Convention it was agreed that the Turkish Commissioner and the Commissioner of the Viceroy of Egypt were to settle everything by themselves, and then to communicate the result to the High Commissioner of England after an agreement had been come to, but not before. Thus, for £12,500, all you get is the right to be told what has been arranged, and of assenting to it if you like; but you have no power of dissenting from it if you do not like it. I submit to the Committee that the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff has been a lamentable failure, and that this Vote is one which the Committee ought not to pay. I beg, therefore, to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £12,500.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £12,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Expenses of Her Majesty's Embassy and Mission Abroad."—*(Mr. Bradlaugh)*

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID: In 1879 I ventured to call the attention of the

House to the policy adopted by the then Conservative Government in regard to Egypt, when the late Khedive of Egypt was deposed. I pointed out that that policy was entirely opposed to the policy which had always been followed by Lord Palmerston and the Earl of Clarendon. Lord Palmerston always tried to limit, as far as possible, the power exercised by Turkey over Egypt. There are numerous despatches of Lord Palmerston in existence which prove that abundantly; but the then Conservative Government, instead of following that example, increased the power of Turkey by going with France to demand of the Porte the deposition of Ismail Pasha the late Viceroy of Egypt. That question is a large one, and I will not go into it now; but here, again, we have been endeavouring to enlarge the power of the Sultan by asking the Porte to send Turkish troops to the Soudan, and to interfere in the internal affairs of Egypt. Now, interference such as that contemplated in the internal affairs of Egypt is specially objectionable. Look at the despatches of 1869, when the Earl of Clarendon pointed out that the Egypt of that day was not the Egypt of 1841, and that since that date the Porte had made concessions to the Khedive, among which the one relating to hereditary succession must be considered the most effective. The Earl of Clarendon added that Her Majesty's Government would deeply regret if the Porte were to overstrain its legitimate prerogative and rights in regard to Egypt. Now, what I say is this, that in the present instance the late Government, through Sir H. Drummond Wolff's action, has again induced the Porte to overstrain its powers. It was expressly laid down that the Porte should not interfere with the internal affairs of Egypt; but the very object with which Sir H. Drummond Wolff went to Constantinople was to induce the Porte to interfere not only with the internal administration of the affairs of Egypt, but by sending Turkish troops to the Soudan, and possibly to Egypt, a thing which had not been done for many years—since the time of Mehemet Ali. Why was this course taken? I think the reason is perfectly clear. It is not desirable for us to day to go into all questions connected with Egypt. I shall only go into

them as far as Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission applies to them; but I think it is clear that, as has been suggested by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), there was a desire on the part of the Government to provide for Gentlemen of the Fourth Party, who had been extremely useful to them in this House. Therefore it was necessary to find places for them. First of all, there was the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), who led the Party with great ability. He was made a Cabinet Minister. Next, there was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Manchester (Mr. A. J. Balfour). He was made President of the Local Government Board. And my pugnacious Friend the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Sir John Gorst) was made Solicitor General. But for the life of them they did not know what to do with Sir H. Drummond Wolff, until a brilliant idea suggested itself to someone. There had been several Special Missions to Egypt—Sir Stephen Cave and Mr. Goschen and Lord Northbrook had been there—why not, then, have a fourth or fifth Mission, and send out Sir H. Drummond Wolff to complete the work? That was seized upon as a splendid idea, and Sir H. Drummond Wolff was sent to Constantinople, first to negotiate affairs there, and then to go on to Egypt, in order to do what he could there to improve the condition of the country. I do not think it is desirable to go into the whole question of the condition of Egypt; but I think it is desirable to see exactly why we are asked to vote a sum of money for the salary of Sir H. Drummond Wolff and the heavy expense of his Mission. No doubt, there has been extravagance in the expenditure upon telegrams; but that is a very small matter in comparison with the great principle which is here at stake. In regard to one point which has been raised by the hon. Member for Northampton, it seems that when Sir H. Drummond Wolff accepted his appointment to this Mission, he ought to have vacated his seat, and a new Writ ought to have been issued. But the House of Commons was not sitting at the time, nor did the same Parliament re-assemble, and practically no serious damage was done, and the principle of vacating a seat on appointment to Office under the Crown was not infringed. But it is a far more

serious thing that a Special Mission should be created in order to find a post for a Gentleman, whose services were not required in England, to satisfy the desires of his Friends, when the Mission itself was not likely to accomplish any useful results. So far as Sir H. Drummond Wolff is concerned, he must have known that he was despatched upon a Mission which was empty and illusory, and doomed to be a failure from the first. I have looked back to some observations made by Sir H. Drummond Wolff in this House in 1879. The hon. Member who was then Member for Staffordshire (Mr. Hanbury) made a Motion in reference to Egypt, which was seconded by Sir H. Drummond Wolff, who stated on that occasion—

"For his own part—speaking with a strong sense of responsibility, and being desirous of maintaining the Turkish Empire—he felt convinced that that Empire could only be maintained by a complete system of decentralization. The state of Constantinople was something perfectly appalling, and he scarcely liked to tell of all the instances of corruption that had come under his notice."—(*3 Hansard*, [248] 1059.)

In the year 1879, therefore, Sir H. Drummond Wolff thought the state of Constantinople and of the Turkish Government not only bad, but full of corruption. In 1886, I suppose, he thinks that such a great improvement has taken place that he was justified in going out on behalf of his Government in order to induce the Turks to send troops to Egypt, and to appoint a Minister to interfere in the internal affairs of that country. Now, the Convention yields very little. Only one thing—namely, that two Commissioners—the Turkish Commissioner and a Commissioner appointed by the English Government—were to discuss the various questions, and lay their conclusions before the Government of the Khedive. And when they agreed, the matter was to be brought before the English Government. But surely that could have been done without the assistance of a Turkish or English Special Minister. I do not see that anything was gained at all by the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff, beyond the fact that that Gentleman had three months' employment at a very satisfactory salary. I believe it is a fact that our public men are far too badly paid. Thus, for example, I do not think that the mere salary alone would ever have induced the

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Prime Minister to go through the work which naturally falls to him; but in this case I must confess that I fail to see what good work was done for the salary; in fact, the total result of what was done has been the making of an illusory Convention with the Porte, by which they have agreed to send a Commissioner to Cairo, which admits a principle to which I, for one, am entirely opposed. If you will look to every paper written by every Minister of either political Party during the last 20, 30, or 40 years, you will find that every one of them strongly insists on the view of the Earl of Clarendon—that the Egypt of to-day is not the Egypt of 30 or 40 years ago, and that although the Sultan of Turkey is the nominal Suzerain, nevertheless the power and authority of the Sovereign of Turkey can never be exercised in that country. In this case we see the late Government departing from that ancient principle, proposing that Turkish troops should be employed in Egypt, and proposing, further, that a Turkish Commissioner should be appointed to interfere in the internal administration of Egyptian affairs. Sir H. Drummond Wolff, in adopting that principle, rendered bad service to the country. I do not, however, find fault with him, but with the late Government, which wanted to make a new departure, and did not care what it was so long as it was a policy which differed from that of their Liberal Predecessors. I do not say that the Liberal Government made no mistakes with regard to Egypt; but, while I admit that they did, I maintain that, on the other hand, the Conservative Government commenced on this occasion by committing a great blunder. If you will look at Lord Palmerston's despatches in regard to Egypt, you will see how he always vindicated the right of according to Egypt sole control over its internal administration. Therefore, the departure of the late Government was one of a very serious nature, and they ought to give some reason for having departed from the traditional policy of the country. I suppose that they had some reason, and probably a strong reason. Did they imagine that this Special Mission was so likely to prove successful that they were justified in entering upon a new path? Were their experiences of the Conventions with Constantinople so favourable that they

thought the same principle ought to be encouraged and further extended? Had they forgotten the Treaty of Berlin, to which they themselves were parties, and in which they had insisted upon the separation of the two Roumelias? Were they not aware of what the result of that separation had been; that it had only lasted for a period of seven years, and that they themselves had been the very persons who had been obliged to admit that the Treaty of 1879 had entirely failed? Were they encouraged by the result of that Treaty to believe that they would be more successful in entering into any Convention with Turkey? I set out with a passage in a speech delivered by Sir H. Drummond Wolff in this House in 1879, in which he stated that so much corruption existed in Turkey that he did not believe in the possibility of forming a good Government there. If there was no possibility of our securing good government in Turkey, did he imagine that the Turkish Government were likely to improve the condition of affairs in Egypt? I remember, in 1879, pointing out, when it was proposed that the Turkish authorities should call Egypt to account for its Debt, that the person who was to call her to account was a person who had got into debt himself. Probably it was on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief. Turkey had never shown by its own work in the past any capacity for performing the task she had undertaken. I submit that it was a mistake to employ Sir H. Drummond Wolff in the first instance, and that it was a still greater mistake to give him the instructions which are to be found in these Papers; and I contend that Her Majesty's late Government are responsible for departing from that policy which had for a long series of years been successfully pursued by successive Ministers—Viscount Palmerston, the Earl of Clarendon, the Earl of Derby, the Earl of Malmesbury, and others. I trust that the Committee will have a complete explanation in justification of this Vote from some Member of Her Majesty's late Government.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I cannot altogether agree with my hon. Friend who has just spoken. I do not think that Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission may not be productive of some useful result. I confess that I was myself

somewhat alarmed at expressions which fell from Her Majesty's late Government in regard to that Mission. I certainly supposed from what they stated that they had in their minds some idea of making over Egypt to the rule of Turkey; but when I came to look at the Papers, I found that that was not so. I find that the object of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission was not to make over Egypt to the Turks, but to get the Turks to assist us by taking over the management of the Soudan. Now, what is present to my mind is this—that whether we deal with Turkish or any other Oriental Government, we seem to treat them in a very foolish way, as if they were mere children who might be easily bamboozled. Now, why on earth should the Turks be such fools as to leave us in the possession of Egypt while they take up a position in the Soudan? Egypt is certainly the oyster, while the Soudan is only the shell. Therefore, the sending out of a man of high experience and knowledge to endeavour to induce the Turks to undertake this task was one which was not likely to be successful, and, therefore, so far as that part of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission to Constantinople is concerned, I am not surprised at its failure. But when we come to the question of Egypt, our position there seems to me to have been so bad that it was not possible for a Gentleman of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's experience—although he was acting under what I admit to be vague, although reasonable, instructions on the part of the Marquess of Salisbury—it was impossible for him to make things worse, while, on the other hand, there was the possibility of making them better. So far as financial matters are concerned, the only result that I can see of recent transactions has been to add £9,000,000 to the Egyptian Debt, and to induce us to undertake a military occupation at an enormous expense to this country. I have tried to extract from my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) some figures which might give us an approximate estimate of the cost to the people of this country of that military occupation. My right hon. Friend very cautiously told us that he could not undertake to estimate the total cost, and he could not even tell us what Egypt would repay. Now, what is the cost of the military

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defence of Egypt to this country? It seems to me that this expense is so enormous that the cost of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission, large as it is, is a mere bagatelle if there is the least hope that, by any arrangement Sir H. Drummond Wolff may make, this country will be able to get rid of that expense, and come away from Egypt altogether. I believe I am not guilty of exaggeration when I say that the arrangements for the military defence of Egypt are costing the taxpayers of this country at this moment something over £4,000,000 per annum. Mr. Giffen, in an article which he published the other day, calculated that the cost of a British soldier, combatant and non-combatant, effective and non-effective, is about £150 per annum. Now, I did succeed in extracting one piece of information from my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War, and it was that, all told, there are at this moment in Egypt, employed in the defence of that country, 17,600 British troops, 2,900 Indian troops—and we have the authority of the late Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. Cross) for saying that the Indian troops cost just as much as British troops—and 4,000 others employed in transport and such work. Adding those together, we have a total number of 24,500. We are told that the average cost of a British soldier, including non-combatants, comes to something like £150 per annum. But we must add to that the extraordinary expenditure occurring in Egypt—the transport expense, and the large additional expense for the non-effective force; and I believe it will be found, after making allowance for these additional expenses, that the minimum cost of every man now employed in the defence of Egypt is at least £200 per annum. Then, if you multiply £200 by 24,500, you will find that the defence of Egypt is costing this country at the present moment upwards of £4,900,000 per annum, of which but a small sum will be repaid by Egypt. I know that I may be told that, if the troops are not employed in Egypt, they will be employed somewhere else. Now, I deny that altogether, notwithstanding the increase in the strength of the British Army. I take it, from a speech delivered not long ago by Lord Wolseley, that we are at this moment short of

soldiers for our own Imperial purposes. We have, therefore, no troops to spare for other purposes, and every soldier employed in Egypt is a deduction from the proper strength of our Army, in addition to which he remains as a burden, and a heavy burden, too, upon the taxpayers. Sir, if there is the least chance of Sir H. Drummond Wolff doing anything to relieve us from that burden, I think his Mission will have been a very cheap one. I must say that, in my opinion, the instructions of the Marquess of Salisbury, although vague and indefinite, are in the main good as regards Egypt, and we may hope that Sir H. Drummond Wolff may do something of advantage, both to the interests of this country and of Egypt, before he leaves Cairo. I confess that I was somewhat disappointed that in proposing this Vote the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs did not make some statement as to the instructions which Her Majesty's Government proposed to give to Sir H. Drummond Wolff. Be that as it may, I suppose they will not materially differ from those which the Marquess of Salisbury gave, and I am bound to say that, considering the state in which Egypt is now placed, I am not able to oppose the Vote. I think it is yet possible for competent men to do something towards putting the internal affairs of Egypt in a more satisfactory condition than they have occupied for a good many years, and to rid us of the enormous expenditure of upwards of £4,000,000 ~~per~~ annum, in retaining in Egypt a British Army of Occupation. I hope that the Committee is alive to what has been going on in Egypt, and that it will realize what all this expenditure means. For this sum of £4,000,000 what might we not be able to do in regard to our own country? For a sum of £4,000,000 expended in this country, we might have free education, or we might be able to free Ireland from the domination of the landlords. There are many other things which are most desirable, which a sum like that would enable us to carry out. I do trust that, if Sir H. Drummond Wolff is to remain in Egypt, he will make his Mission as effective as possible, and that he will prepare the way, at any rate, for relieving this country of the burden which it is now called upon to bear. I am very

much afraid that things are still in such a state that although many Missions have been sent to Egypt, altogether there is ample room for another, if it is to be a real and effective Mission. I am certainly unable to see what steps we are taking in the direction of securing a settlement of the financial difficulty in the interests not only of this country, but of Egypt itself. Our Representatives have hitherto tried to show the necessity for the reduction of taxation; but now they are afraid that this and other matters must bring about an European inquiry in the course of next year. We know that the finances of Egypt are incapable of making both ends meet; but those who are responsible for the finances of Egypt, endeavour to get rid of the difficulty by throwing on the taxpayers of this country the burden of the military defence of Egypt. That is a question which requires a great deal more attention than it has yet received. I hope, that when my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State rises, he will be able to tell us something with regard to the proposals of Her Majesty's Government as to this Mission. What were the end of the instructions of the Marquess of Salisbury? They aim at the establishment of that Millennium which successive Governments have been anxious to bring about—namely, the securing of that good and stable and debt-paying Government in Egypt, which has often been stated in this House; and I say again, that if we have to stay in Egypt until we have established all these things, we shall have to stay there until the end of time. There must be found a way of dealing with Egypt much shorter than that, and I hope that Her Majesty's Government will tell us what the lines are of the policy they intend to pursue.

MR. HANBURY: Allusion has been made to the fact that Sir H. Drummond Wolff was a Member of the House at the time he accepted this appointment. But, within my own experience of the House, I can remember at least three similar cases in which Missions of the same character as this have been undertaken by Members of the House. In the first instance, there was the Mission of Sir Stephen Cave; and then there was the Mission of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh

(Mr. Goschen); and the case of Sir H. Drummond Wolff himself, when he was sent out as a Member of the Roumelian Mission. [An hon. MEMBER: He had no salary.] I have yet to learn that this salary commenced before Sir H. Drummond Wolff ceased to be a Member, and that is an important point upon which I should like to have information. There is another point which I ought to mention—Sir H. Drummond Wolff acted on this Mission with very peculiar advantages. He was well acquainted with the East and with Egypt before he went on this Mission. He had acted with men like Hussein Pasha as a personal friend, and, therefore, was likely to conduct a Mission of this kind with amicable and friendly relations. I regret to see that Sir H. Drummond Wolff is no longer a Member of this House, and I attribute that fact to a great extent to the circumstance that he was not able to be present at Portsmouth during his candidature. Then, again, we are told that Sir H. Drummond Wolff must be a bad Commissioner to have sent out, because he had made certain remarks of a somewhat strong character in regard to the Khedive. But anyone who has studied these Papers must see that, in the eyes of the Sultan, that was a recommendation rather than the reverse. In reading these despatches, it is most remarkable to notice the extreme jealousy with which the Sultan regards everything the Khedive may do in Egypt. Therefore, so far from Sir H. Drummond Wolff's remarks having been of disadvantage to his Mission, they seem to me to have had the opposite effect. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) makes a charge, which is a curious one, coming from that side of the House. He charges Sir H. Drummond Wolff with having used words in the Convention which mean nothing. Now, if there is one charge which is made at the present day, it is that, in regard to our foreign relations, there has been too great a habit on both sides of the House of using words that mean nothing. One of the most serious charges which the Conservative Party have made against the Leader of the House is, that they never know exactly what he means. Then, again, with regard to the Slave Trade, the hon. Member for Northampton points to the

fact that any provisions in regard to the Slave Trade are left out of the Convention. If the hon. Member knew the facts as well as I do, he would know that the Sultan was perfectly justified in the course he took. There have been Conventions and Treaties one upon the top of another, and it has been by no means the fault of the Sultan that they have not been carried into effect. The fault has to a considerable extent rested with our own Government. We have never sent out a sufficient number of ships to see that the Slave Trade was suppressed, and the failure of our efforts to suppress the Slave Trade are due, not to the Porte, but to the false economy of our own Government. Then the hon. Member for Northampton complains that the late Government re-established the authority of the Sultan as Caliph in Egypt. If the hon. Member knows anything, he must know that it was to our interest, as a great Mahommedan Power, to recognize that, and to be on amicable terms with the Sultan. It is a matter of the greatest importance, and one which has to be carefully guarded by our Foreign Minister, that the interests of India—the greatest Mahommedan country in the world—are dealt with in concert with the Sultan of Turkey. I agree with the hon. Member for Northampton, to a certain extent, in the remarks he has made as to the employment of Turkish troops in Egypt, or in any other part of Arabia, because the Arabs have very little love for them; and even greater danger must arise from employing them among an Arab population than among Christians, for this reason—that when they are employed among a Christian population, there are European Ambassadors and Consuls, who keep a careful watch over their proceedings, and see that no ill-treatment of the population on their part takes place. But when they are sent among Mahommedan races, they act without the slightest restraint, and their cruelty and arbitrary conduct becomes intolerable. We are told that no result followed from the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff. Now, it seems to me that very great results have followed, because what was wanted was to get from Egypt something like guarantees for the future, which would be wiser and better than bombarding Alexandria and shooting down the Sou-

Mr. Hanbury

dances by tens of thousands. A question has been raised in regard to the legality of our presence in Egypt. No doubt, our presence there before the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff was entirely illegal; but by the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff we made a great step in advance, and secured legality for that which was before absolutely illegal; and we are now remaining in Egypt in order to re-establish that order which we so miserably upset. We remain there, not only with the sanction of Europe, but of the Sultan, who is the Sovereign of the country. Another result has been achieved which is of the greatest importance. There was always a fear that when we left Egypt, sooner or later, France might go there for purposes of her own. It is satisfactory to find, from the declaration of M. Waddington, that when the English troops leave Egypt there is no fear of French troops taking their place. I regret, Sir, that the hon. Member for Northampton has made a personal attack upon Sir H. Drummond Wolff, and that he has imported a Party character into the debate. We are all, I think, of one mind on both sides of the House that in this Egyptian Question, as well as in some others, there is a great deal on which moderate men on both sides of the House are agreed. This Egyptian Question is really such a national matter that I do hope we shall try to work together in order to secure some good result for that unfortunate country, entirely independent of old Party lines. It must be borne in mind that the policy of the late Government, as is always the case in a change of Ministry, has been thrown overboard, as it were, by the appointment of a new Foreign Secretary. Under these circumstances, I think a little fair play ought to be shown. I entertain some hope that this Egyptian Question will be treated without reference to Party lines, and that this country will recollect, apart from mere Party considerations, that we have many duties to perform in Egypt, and that we cannot scuttle out of them without dishonour to ourselves.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I shall certainly support the Motion of my hon. Friend and Colleague (Mr. Bradlaugh); but not, as the hon. Member who has just spoken seems to think, from any personal feeling against Sir H. Drum-

mond Wolff. Undoubtedly, the expenditure upon these Special Missions is very large; and I think upon all of them the expenditure is much too large. At the same time, I do not think that Sir H. Drummond Wolff is to blame for that. He was to receive a salary, and to include certain expenditure which in the case of our Ambassadors is always very high. In this case the sum of money for which we are asked is very considerable, amounting to £12,500, inclusive of the pay of Sir H. Drummond Wolff. But if we take other Special Missions, and reckon up the items which generally accrue from Special Missions abroad, it will certainly amount to something enormous. I regard hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite as entirely responsible for the expenditure incurred in connection with Sir H. Drummond Wolff; and I hope we shall have as few of these costly Missions as possible. At the same time, I am not desirous of throwing a stone against any Gentleman in accepting a Special Mission as it is generally understood. I not only say this of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, but of right hon. Gentlemen who now sit on the Treasury Bench. The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) does not seem to me to have defended Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission wisely. He says that we ought to be exceedingly thankful to him for going out, and be ready to pay any amount of money that is asked for, because, if Sir H. Drummond Wolff had not gone out, he would have been Member for Portsmouth at this moment. But we ought to recollect that there was another Member for Portsmouth (Mr. Bruce) who, on personal grounds, was as good a candidate for the borough of Portsmouth as could have been found. But Mr. Bruce was defeated, as well as Sir H. Drummond Wolff. He was not absent; and if it is supposed that Sir H. Drummond Wolff, if he could have been there, would have been returned, how was it that Mr. Bruce was defeated? The hon. Gentleman tells us that a special recommendation in sending out Sir H. Drummond Wolff was that he was a Gentleman who had condemned the Government of the Khedive, and suggested that it should be put an end to. This was done to please the Sultan. But where is Sir H. Drummond Wolff now? He is with the Khedive, and not

the Sultan. He took Constantinople on his way; but his Mission was to the Khedive. In my opinion, the Khedive is an unfit person to reign in Egypt. We have really had too many Missions to Egypt. We have had the Mission of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen), of Sir Stephen Cave, of the Earl of Dufferin, and of the Earl of Northbrook. We have the statement of the Prime Minister that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen) did not go out in a public capacity; but I think that he assumed a public capacity. The right hon. Gentleman went out because the house with which he is connected was interested in some Egyptian Loans; and when he was out there he wrote despatches to the then Government, which despatches have been frequently alluded to since. But, putting aside the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen), I think we have had a great deal too many Missions to Egypt, each proposing different plans for reforming Egypt. We have not adopted any of those plans. We received the Report of Sir Stephen Cave's Mission, and we set it aside. The Earl of Dufferin has since been sent out, and his recommendations have been set aside. I remember that the Earl of Northbrook sent in a Report; but although there has been a good deal of conversation about it, we have never seen it—at any rate, no Report from him has ever been published. Sir H. Drummond Wolff has sent many despatches, but he has not yet sent a Report; and I am inclined to think that when he does it will not be adopted. Before the commencement of the last Parliament, the Prime Minister wrote an excellent essay in which he stated his views in regard to Egypt. He said that the less we meddled with Egypt the better, and that we should not remain there. In his address to his constituents in Mid Lothian, I think he said that he regretted not having acted upon the lines of the essay. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!] Well, I am doubtless expressing the views of the right hon. Gentleman in a rude fashion; but the conviction on my mind is that that was the effect of the right hon. Gentleman's action. I have protested over and over again against the action of the right hon. Gentleman in Egypt, and I regret seized every opportunity to vote against the cost which our Egyptian

policy has entailed upon the people of this country. I very much regret to see that the right hon. Gentleman has not recurred to the original views on which he based his action in the last Parliament. We are still there. Although everybody regrets that we are there, still there we are; and, as the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) says, we are spending the money of the English people at the rate of something like £4,000,000 per annum, in order to remain there. It is not suggested that a Turkish Army should be sent, and that we should come away. What I want to see is, not that this or any other man should be sent out upon a Mission to report upon the condition of Egypt; but I want no more troops to be sent there, and to secure that the troops which are there shall be sent back. As a humanitarian matter it is of the utmost indifference whether the Khedive or the Sultan is master in that country. That is a matter which concerns the Egyptians alone. What I object to, and what I have always always objected to, is that under any pretext whatever we should remain there, expending English blood and English treasure in a matter which does not concern us. I hope the present opportunity will be taken advantage of by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, or the Prime Minister himself, to tell us what the intentions of the Government are in regard to the future. Let us begin well; let us have a statement that we are not only going to withdraw at some future day, but that steps have been taken to enable us entirely to withdraw from Egypt, and to put an end to this wasteful expenditure of public money.

COLONEL DUNOAN: As a new Member I must ask the pardon of the Committee for intruding myself in the debate; but an official despatch of my own has just been laid on the Table, and my experience of Egypt leads me to differ very much from what has fallen from some hon. Members. I would like the Committee to understand that my experience has not been gained from gossip or quasi-diplomats in Cairo or Alexandria, but from having lived much in the towns and villages of the country—from having mixed with the people and commanded them, and from having helped in carrying on their civil administration

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in Upper Egypt. I have mixed with all classes—men, women, and children, from Khartoum and Dongola; and having acquired a little knowledge of Arabic I have been able to form my own opinion of the people themselves. From all the conversations one hears in this country, and in much that one reads it would be supposed that the last people to be thought about were the Egyptians themselves. Practically, we have ruled Egypt for the last three years as a Crown Colony. Egypt has no Representative in this House, and that is all the more reason why we should manifest great justice and generosity towards that unhappy people. I have no wish to speak with any Party spirit on this subject. I have recognized, from the first, the generous views of Her Majesty's Government when they went to Egypt first of all, and I entered heart and soul into the noble reforms which they initiated after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. But the reason why I would urge the Committee to support the Vote for Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission is that I consider that that Mission is taking up the threads of the action of Her Majesty's Government when at their very best—namely, at the time the Earl of Dufferin left Egypt. The Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff seems to be a distinct continuance of the Earl of Dufferin's policy. All the nightmare of suffering, blunders, and bloodshed has taken place since the Earl of Dufferin left; and there is a great similarity between the two Missions. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) may sneer at the Sultan being recognized as a Caliph of his religion; but, from what I have myself seen, I affirm that never, even among the Hebrews in the days of King David, has religion entered more into the national and political life of the people than in the present history of Egypt. What we want is some assurance that the reforms which have been commenced with the approval of the Earl of Dufferin will be carried out. Sir H. Drummond Wolff coming from Constantinople, as the Earl of Dufferin also did, makes his Mission doubly strong; and it does not follow that because he came with the patronage of the Sultan of Turkey, it is therefore necessary to inflict upon the people of Egypt the rule of the Turks. I cannot say that I like the

Turks; I think that Egypt is infinitely a better nation; and I think that among the Egyptian people may be found many who are perfectly capable of governing themselves. We may admire the Turk for his patience and courage. It is the ruling Turks who, though brave, and emphatically rulers, are often cruel and corrupt, and the less we have of them among the Arab people the better. What I ask is that we should do justice to Egypt through the Egyptians themselves. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), who spoke on the other side, made an allusion which it is impossible for me to pass by—namely, that it is not at all likely the Egyptians will ever be able to build up an army in Egypt sufficient for its own wants. Now, I take issue at once with the hon. Member there. I have lived in Egypt; I have commanded thousands of Egyptian soldiers; and I can speak with perfect confidence of the ability and courage of those men when properly treated. At the beginning of the reforms which were instituted some time ago, there were many who liked to decry the fellahs' soldiers; but those were the people who were interested in maintaining an English occupation. Those who, like myself, had to work with them gradually realized their good qualities. I do not believe in nations of slaves. I certainly believe that ill-treatment will weaken the manhood of any men; but there is nothing so elastic as courage and manhood, and under kindly treatment they will revive as surely as the sunflower turns to the sun. I see that steps have been taken to evacuate Suakin by our troops, and their place is to be supplied by Egyptian soldiers. During many weary days and nights at Suakin no troops were steadier than the Egyptian, and they will be quite fit to hold their own there. There may be a talk of our co-operating permanently with the Egyptians; but I maintain that there is no necessity for such co-operation. The time was when the annexation or permanent protectorate of Egypt might be discussed; but it has passed away. Let the dead past bury its dead. We have pledged our honour to leave the Egyptians to themselves as soon as possible; and we should meanwhile do all we can to encourage by this Mission the carrying out of reforms which will free the

Egyptians from our presence, and make them a nation again. If we can get rid of them in that way, parting on friendly terms with them, we shall do them a greater kindness than if we remain there. Let our policy be—"Egypt for the Egyptians." The religious question has been much misunderstood at home, and most of our blunders between the time of the Earl of Dufferin leaving Egypt and the time of the Expedition up the Nile can be traced to it. The question of the Mahdi has been thoroughly misunderstood in this country. This was not the first Mahdi that Musulman nations had known; nor is it only in Musulman nations that a Mahdi, under some other name, is known. It seems to be thought that the Mahdi creates a crisis in the national history, whereas it is a crisis in the national history that produces the Mahdi. The Mahdi, as such, never lives longer than is necessary; sometimes, intoxicated with power, he becomes a despot; sometimes he is thrown aside by an ungrateful people; and sometimes—like Mohamed Achmet—he is so happy as to die in the zenith of his success, and to live consecrated in the hearts of the people ever after. The whole of the Soudan, after General Gordon ceased to be Governor General, was tyrannized over by men of the most cruel and despotic disposition. They did all they could to rob and murder; and in this state of things the bitter discontent and irritation of the people offered a platform from which the slave-owners and slave-hunters were able to work, and which they manipulated for their own ends. They called upon the Mahdi to place himself at their head, when, but for the crisis which existed, he would have been leading a simple life and studying his Koran. The position was forced upon him; and if, instead of Sir Evelyn Baring announcing, in the rude way he did, that we were going to compel Egyptians to withdraw from the Soudan, and to send General Gordon to assist in withdrawing them, the Government had sent General Gordon to introduce justice to the Soudanese—where his name was associated with justice—and if it had been made known that behind him stood the power of England, I believe that Gordon and Stewart alone could have taken the Soudan in hand, and turned it into a contented population.

Colonel Duncan

I will not quote the words *vestigis nulla retrorsum*, for these are more frequently the words of the bigot than of the reformer; but I do not suggest the reconquest of the Soudan. A further mistake we made was in the evacuation of Dongola. I would not send a single English soldier there; but I think, with the assistance of an Egyptian force alone, Dongola may be occupied again. I would not ask for one man from Her Majesty's Government, nor would I send a single regiment of British soldiers back; but let us put into Dongola, as is suggested by one of the telegrams to-day, such a man as the Mudir of Dongola—a man of whom nothing has been heard except holiness, courage, and ability. Let us advise Egypt to subsidize him as long as he keeps peace on the frontier. Looking to the future I would say—"Let us withdraw to Assouan, and garrison that place with Egyptian troops." I think that, by degrees, it would be found that the spirit of nationality which had been stamped out in Egypt would again appear, and such a course would give them much greater encouragement than the presence of our bayonets. We might then gradually retire to Cairo, and then to Alexandria. Thus we might leave the country with honour to ourselves, and with the friendship of the Egyptian people, instead of producing a sense of irritation. I have spoken at some length and with some warmth on this subject; but, Sir, I have lived among these people till I have learnt to love them; and I have desired that the first words I should offer in this House should be offered on behalf of the Egyptians, who possess many unsuspected virtues, who are entitled to our respect, and who, at all events, have a right to be constituted into a nation.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON: I do not propose to follow the hon. and gallant Member who has just addressed the Committee. I would rather recall the attention of the Committee to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), which is to reduce this Vote by the sum of £12,500. Now, I find that that sum is precisely the sum which is put down for the telegrams. My hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in reply to a Question addressed to him on Friday by the hon. Member for North-

ampton, said that £3,964 had been expended upon telegrams; and before the Committee agrees to this Vote I should like to have some explanation of the difference between the sum of £3,964 and the £12,500 the Committee are now asked to vote. Of course, it was inevitable that whenever this Vote was brought forward there would be a discussion upon it; but I trust that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government will not be drawn into an immature declaration of Egyptian policy, unless he can do so in perfect consistency with the interests of the Public Service. I certainly hope that before we agree to the Vote we may have some further items, and some further reasons for expending what I am bound to say appears to me to be a very large and extravagant sum.

MR. RYLANDS: I quite agree with my noble Friend that it is impossible to keep our minds directed to the Vote now before the Committee if we are to be drawn into a discussion as to our general policy in Egypt. The able speech which has been delivered by the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Duncan), and which has excited the interest of the Committee, is certainly calculated to draw the minds of Members from the particular points they have to discuss under this Vote. When I asked my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the other day a Question in connection with this Vote and the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff, my hon. Friend said I should find full information in the Estimates. Now, I think that my hon. Friend was labouring under some mistake, because if he will look at the Estimates he will find that there is nothing whatever in reference to the salary, &c. attached to Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission. The only detail included in the Vote is "Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Special Mission to Constantinople and Egypt." Of course, this Estimate was laid on the Table by the late Government, and the present Government are in no way responsible for its preparation. I find that in the Estimate itself no sum is put down in the shape of salary, and I would ask the Government at what time it was decided that Sir H. Drummond Wolff should have a salary? It was generally understood in this House that Sir H. Drummond Wolff

was to have no salary. It was understood that he was simply to go out as Special Ambassador, with certain allowances which, no doubt, would cover all his expenses upon a very handsome scale; but he was to have no salary. The probability that that was the case is, I think, shown by the fact that if he had had a salary it would have been necessary for him at once to vacate his seat. My hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) has suggested that Sir H. Drummond Wolff with a salary occupied precisely the same position as if he had gone out on this Mission without a salary. But the circumstances of the two cases are entirely different. No doubt, it may be said that Sir H. Drummond Wolff only received this appointment towards the close of the last Parliament, when it might be supposed unnecessary that he should be re-elected, or required to vacate his seat; but if he had a salary I may mention that he was actually brought forward as a candidate for the borough of Portsmouth at the very time he was enjoying the appointment of a new Office under the Crown. Now, it is very clear that any Gentleman being a Member of Parliament is absolutely disqualified from taking a place of profit under the Crown without vacating his seat; and, therefore, I presume that while Sir H. Drummond Wolff was sitting for Portsmouth it was not understood that he should have a salary. I hope my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State will tell us something about that matter. I want to know if it was arranged from the first that Sir H. Drummond Wolff was to have a salary of £5,000 a-year? With regard to Sir H. Drummond Wolff himself, I have no complaint to make against the late Government for having sought to give him employment. I should have been glad indeed if the Government could have seen their way to placing him in some Office of responsibility, and of a permanent character. No one would have blamed them for placing him in a high position; and, on personal grounds, I have no complaint to make of Sir H. Drummond Wolff. I fully appreciate his great abilities; but I object to the course taken by the late Government, which appears to have arisen from the fact that they had no suitable permanent office in which to place Sir H. Drummond Wolff; and, therefore, they

sent him out to Constantinople. I think that the appointment of Sir H. Drummond Wolff to Constantinople was especially unjustifiable. Already our expenditure in connection with the Embassy at Constantinople is of the most scandalous character; and I use the word advisedly. Our expenditure in Constantinople is far in excess of that for any other Embassy in the world. At the moment the late Government considered the propriety of sending out Sir H. Drummond Wolff to Constantinople we had a large staff there. We have an Ambassador at a salary of £8,000 a-year, supported by a large number of officials, so that the entire salaries paid for the Embassy amounted to more than £14,000 a-year. In addition to that, we have to defray the expense of keeping the Embassy houses in repair, and that cost more than £2,000. Further, our Ambassador at Constantinople has authority to expend money in what are called extraordinary expenses; and the sum of money so expended last year at Constantinople was far in excess of any similar expenditure in the world. It amounted to no less than £5,446, and the total sum of money up to the end of the last Estimate charged for the Embassy at Constantinople for the year amounted to £20,724, in addition to which we paid £5,800 for a Consular Establishment. I have stated that there was an item of £2,000 for the repairs of the Embassy buildings. Now, the Embassy house is a building which originally cost between £100,000 and £200,000. It was, however, burnt down and rebuilt at a further expenditure of between £100,000 and £200,000. All these expenses, in addition to the sum of £25,000 now asked for, have to be defrayed in connection with our Embassy at Constantinople; and I would put it to the Committee whether it is decent or justifiable in any way that when we have an establishment of this kind, consisting of highly-paid officials—men well versed and experienced in diplomacy, and enjoying the highest character in connection with diplomatic negotiations—is it decent or justifiable that we should send out Sir H. Drummond Wolff at an additional expense of £5,000 a-year, with a large further expenditure for his maintenance, and that of his retinue? I am of opinion that, on that ground alone, considering the enormous sum expended upon our Em-

bassy at Constantinople, the late Government were not justified in sending out another highly-paid officer in order that he might do the work which our Ambassador at Constantinople was quite competent to perform. In point of fact, if hon. Members will look at the Blue Book, they will see that in one of the last despatches of Sir H. Drummond Wolff he very properly acknowledges that he received from Sir William White the very greatest possible assistance. Sir H. Drummond Wolff says—

“It is impossible for me to leave Constantinople without placing on record the deep sense of gratitude I feel towards Sir William White for his personal kindness during my stay here, and the cordial manner in which he has given me every assistance in his power to further my Mission. His advice, experience, and practical knowledge are of very great value, and of these he has constantly and ungrudgingly given me the full benefit in the course of my negotiations. My task would have been far more difficult, and at times almost impossible, without his kind encouragement and counsel.”

Here we have a Diplomatic Representative, with all this amount of ability, experience, and knowledge already at Constantinople; but, nevertheless, the late Government decide upon sending out another important official, to add very largely to the already enormous expenditure upon the Embassy at Constantinople. But I entirely agree with the remarks which have been made—that, as far as Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission to Constantinople is concerned, its success has been of a very slight character. The hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Duncan), who spoke so well from the opposite side, seems to think that the great advantage that would be derived from the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff is that it may lead to the establishment of Egyptian National existence; and he said that he altogether objected to the rule of the Turks. I object also to the rule of the Turks in Egypt. I have always thought that the sending out of a number of Turkish troops to Egypt would lead to disturbances of a most serious character; and if the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Duncan) is of the same opinion, why does he give his support to Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission, which was intended to bring the Turkish influence to bear upon Egypt? My hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) seems to fancy that it is possible for Sir H. Drummond Wolff to bring

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large expenditure, because I entertain grave doubts whether the policy of Sir H. Drummond Wolff is one which, if carried out, would promote the interests of Egypt.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I understood my hon. and gallant Friend who sits below the Gangway (Colonel Duncan) to say that this was a wise Mission, because it would lead to the English getting out of Egypt quicker than they otherwise would. Now, I have strong reasons for wishing to see the English out of Egypt. I think that the issue which is raised and the reason which is put forward for the presence of English troops in Egypt are altogether insufficient. It is said that we went to Egypt to insure the safety of the Suez Canal, which many people thought would be essential to this country in the event of our going to war. Now, as a seaman, I say that it would in reality be impossible to guard the Canal in such a contingency, and that it would require at least 50,000 men to guard it in a time of war. The Canal could easily be blocked by ourselves or an enemy in an afternoon watch. There are two places in the Canal in which a ship could be sunk, so as to render the Canal useless to you in the event of your being engaged in hostilities with another country. The other day a ship was sunk in the Canal, and it will be recollected by hon. Members that it was blocked for about four days; but that ship was sunk in a sandy part of the Canal, and not in a rocky part. There are two parts of the Canal which consist of excavations out of the rock, and if any ships were sunk there it would take six weeks or three months before the Canal could be cleared. It is a popular error to imagine that a ship in such a position could be easily blown up. You could blow the ship to pieces; but it would be necessary to employ divers to remove the various parts of it which had been dispersed. My particular reason for wishing to see the English out of Egypt is, because Egypt would be another vast place to defend, and so create another weak place in the large area of weak places to defend; and I really believe that that is the most humanitarian course which could be pursued. I agree with many of the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member for Finsbury (Colonel Duncan) in regard to the Egyptians, although I do not

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agree with him as to the zeal they are likely to display in instituting reforms. To a more or less extent they will always be slaves under the domination of some strong will; and what they really require is some strong and powerful leader to direct them in managing their own affairs. Referring back to the question of the Suez Canal, if ever we go to war I have no doubt that it will inevitably be blocked. Indeed, I will go so far as to say that if I were the Admiral out there I should block it myself, and report what I had done to the Government. I might be tried by court martial; but I should have saved the country an enormous expense and the employment of 50,000 men in guarding the Canal. I am in favour of using England's old highway round the Cape. That is a safe route which can never be blocked; and as long as we hold command of the sea we shall be able to fight the world. As to the question of giving up Egypt, some hon. Members say that if we withdraw our occupation the French will go there. I do not see why that should be so. At this moment the Debt of Egypt is guaranteed by six Powers; and why cannot those Powers guarantee that not one of them shall enter Egypt after our evacuation of that country? I imagine that an international guarantee of that description is all that is required. I feel very strongly upon this point. I should be very glad indeed to see the English leave Egypt as soon as possible, it being understood, of course, that the country must be left in such a state as England can leave her in with pride and satisfaction.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): It has been a great advantage and a great pleasure to listen to the speeches of the noble Lord who has just sat down and of the hon. and gallant Member for the Holborn Division of Finsbury (Colonel Duncan), who has now left his place. They have made us aware of opinions entitled to the greatest respect and weight in consequence of the abilities that the respective speakers have developed in a practical form in the service of their Queen and country in Egypt itself. I have listened with particular satisfaction to the speech of the noble Lord, who said much that we should do well to take to heart. His speech, like that of the hon. and gallant Member

who spoke near the Bar, has tended to elevate the Egyptian Question out of the region of the controversies of Party, and to enable all sides of the Committee to direct their mind to it with something, as I hope, of a common object. The hon. and gallant Gentleman and other speakers are very anxious that something like a continuous policy should be maintained in Egypt, and they anticipate great advantage from the adherence to a principle of that kind. Well, Members of the House of Commons and Ministers may have very good intentions, but, at the same time, may fail in giving effect to them; and that, in the opinion of some hon. Members opposite, was our case, because it was our extreme desire to support a continuous policy. I say this in the presence of my hon. Friend the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); and it was our sense of the force of binding engagements that led us to do in Egypt what we should not have done in other circumstances, because it was opposed to our views and the opinions and convictions which some of us had given expression to in the country. Many hon. Members who look back find it quite easy to point out how all the evils we have incurred might have been avoided. And here I would make one criticism upon the speech of the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Duncan). The hon. and gallant Member thinks that all the miscarriages and all the errors connected with the Soudan would have been avoided—in fact, he is certain about it—and dismisses the subject by saying that it is of no use to cry over spilt milk. He says there would have been no difficulty if General Gordon had been sent to the Soudan, and if it had been made known at the same time that he had the British Army at his back. There would then, he says, have been no difficulty. But, Sir, is that clear? The first thing which naturally occurs to the mind is that when General Gordon went to the Soudan it was his most distinct and strong conviction, as it was the conviction of Her Majesty's Government, that the thing essential to be known was that the British Army was not at his back, and that he should have no British troops sent to him, and no Turkish soldiers. After ascribing as much as you please to gratuitous and unnecessary error, I am bound to say that, as to

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most of the difficulties which we have had to encounter, they were inseparable from the nature of the operations we undertook, and the engagements we had entered into; and that the attempt to govern a country so different in religion and race, so remote, and subject to such jealousies and such intrigues as a byo-portion of a great Empire like this is will, and must, always lead to a great amount of miscarriage. There is, I am bound to say, one solitary topic which I cannot avoid to mention. It has been spoken of by my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), who said that the state of Egypt was so bad that it could not possibly be worse. Well, Sir, I have no doubt that when Sir H. Drummond Wolff reports upon the state of Egypt, as, I believe, he will in a few days, he will say that which Sir Evelyn Baring has already reported—about which I do not believe there has been the smallest doubt, and in regard to which the hon. and gallant Member for Finsbury (Colonel Duncan), who has now returned to his place, has supplied to-night one important item of evidence—namely, that immense practical improvements have been made in Egypt, whatever the burdens and suffering of the people have been, which improvements are intimately associated with the happiness and well-being of the people. About that there can be no doubt whatever, and I will just give the heads under which I will state those improvements. In the first place, then, the horrible condition of the prisons has undergone effectual and stringent reform—whether it is perfect now I will not undertake to say; but I will undertake to say that a vast improvement has been made. With respect to forced labour—one of the most cruel inflictions under which a people can suffer—an immense reform has taken place. With reference to taxation, and the enormous abuses which prevailed formerly in that country from the time of Mehemet Ali, I am inclined to think that, for many past years, the sufferings of the people in regard to the collection of the taxes were as great or greater than in any other portion of the Turkish Empire. These abuses have undergone the most effectual retrenchment, at least, if not extirpation. With regard to public works, no one acquainted with the state of Egypt can

fail to be aware that, under the able superintendence of Colonel Moncrieff, changes of the greatest importance and developments for good which had been previously initiated have taken place, and constitute an immense amelioration of the condition of the country. Well, Sir, the hon. and gallant Gentleman, speaking with undeniable authority, has told us that there has also been an improvement in that which at one time it was supposed was the greatest difficulty there was to contend with—namely, the Egyptian Army. We need not depend entirely upon the authority of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, great as it is, as, after all, his acknowledgments only brings us back to what was before the last few years well understood, and almost universally known. From the time of the Greek War of Independence it was well known how powerful was the assistance which the Ottoman Empire derived from its Egyptian troops. In the crisis of 1840 it was the formidable character of the Egyptian troops which constituted the great danger of the Turkish Empire which required the European intervention which it was believed at the time was necessary to save it. Again, at the time of the rebellion in Crete, about the year 1858, I think, it was the Egyptian troops mainly which enabled the Sultan to put it down, Turkish troops having long struggled against it in vain. All these, Sir, are points of the very greatest importance with regard to the future of Egypt; and although I do not say they can in all respects console us for what has taken place, yet they form something like a set off which ought not to be omitted from our calculations when we are speaking of the future of that country, and endeavouring to form an estimate of the condition of its inhabitants. Now, Sir, with respect to the Vote before us and the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff, it is very natural, when a sum of this kind is proposed to be taken for that Mission, that the Committee should look, in the first place, for some fulness of financial details; and, in the second place, it is natural that they should be anxious for an exposition of Egyptian policy. Unfortunately, so far as the nature of this Vote is concerned, we are to a great extent in the hands of Gentlemen opposite, and are unable to say anything with regard to it either one

way or the other. The attention of the present Foreign Secretary (the Earl of Rosebery) was drawn, immediately after his accession to Office, to what appeared to be the rather copious charges that had been made upon the people of England in connection with this Mission. My noble Friend at once took measures to impress that a considerable reduction should be made. Well, Sir, we have as yet no details; but we believe that before long, perhaps before many days are over, we shall be in possession of them. Still, it was not possible to keep this Vote hanging over when we had large Estimates and business of importance to deal with. But we have an assurance, on which, no doubt, we may rely, that from the 1st of January, which is a very recent date, there will be a large reduction of this expenditure. Into details, however, I cannot enter; but so much I say on the subject. With regard to the policy associated with this Mission, it is not in the power of Her Majesty's Government to give at present any conclusive reply. We are expecting to receive the Report of Sir H. Drummond Wolff, which will greatly improve our position in that respect. But hon. Gentlemen must not suppose that the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff is a small matter in relation to the Egyptian Question. I can give no opinion of it whatsoever, either in its favour or otherwise, until I am in possession of much more information. I only say that our desire and disposition are, if we can, to do nothing to break the continuity of the proceedings in Egypt connected with the Mission. Such a break in continuity is an evil in itself, and unless it is found to be necessary to do so we shall use the best efforts in our power to avoid it. But do not let hon. Gentlemen admit into their minds any idea that the importance of the Mission must be measured by the sum upon the Estimates. What does that Mission involve? It involves, in the first place, an International engagement. Now that is a very important result. I do not recollect that any former Missions which have taken place to Egypt involved such a result. The Mission of Mr. Cave, the Earl of Dufferin—his was hardly a Mission; he was Ambassador to the Turkish Government—or that of the Earl of Northbrook, involved any International engagements. This is a matter of the greatest

possible consequence. It may be, and no doubt will be, argued that it may have the effect of greatly enhancing the force of British influence with the Mahomedan population of that country and the Soudan, when the religious character of the Sultan's Office is taken into view, and when it is known that he is working in concert with the British Government. But whether what will naturally occur will apply in one direction or the other is a question which hon. Gentlemen will be entitled to say is one of great importance, and I will not attempt to appreciate it with precision at the present moment. On the other hand, it is quite plain, as has been stated by my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), that if the question of the admission of a High Commissioner from the Sultan into Egypt is to be discussed on a footing of parity and equal authority with that of the British Ambassador on the internal affairs of the country—if that be the true effect of the Mission, that, I admit, raises a very serious consideration which, the character of the Mission not being before us, I could not now attempt minutely or particularly to unfold. I reserve my judgment altogether on this subject, and only say that our desire will be to avail ourselves of all the capacities for good which this Mission may develop; and if there be any risk of opposite consequences to neutralize those consequences, but, as far as we are able, to maintain in all points to the utmost of our ability, where the interests and honour of the country admit, the continuity of our proceedings which, I am happy to think, with regard to other important matters of Eastern policy, have been materially recognized by the late Government and the present Government, and which I hope, under favourable circumstances, are destined to acquire solidity, that if it can be maintained will be highly beneficial both to the honour and best interests of the country. My view is that, where proposals of this kind are made to the House, it is right that we should give the Committee to understand in very few words what our position really is. The question as to the Vote is, in our opinion, secondary to the very important questions of policy which are involved in the Mission. We have not had time to obtain such information from Sir H.

Mr. W. E. Gladstone

Drummond Wolff with respect to his Mission as will enable us fully to appreciate his position under the circumstances; and we could not possibly make any change on the suggestion that has been made as to introducing economy into the working of the Mission. We cannot possibly make any serious change, or do anything which will tend to unsettle the position of Sir H. Drummond Wolff, or the position of Her Majesty's Government with regard to this matter. This is our position, and this is my excuse for making a claim on the patience of the Committee; and trusting that hon. Members will wait until we are ourselves able fully to command a view of the situation in Egypt, which has certainly become less complicated since the appointment of Sir H. Drummond Wolff; seeing that Her Majesty's Government is in need of information which at present it does not possess, and without passing any judgment on any part of the transaction, it is our opinion, having regard to the interests of this country and of Egypt, that the Committee should at once proceed to pass this Vote.

MR. BOURKE: Sir, I do not know whether the Committee will permit me to say very much after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister; at the same time, I do not think that the Committee will be satisfied if I were to allow this opportunity to pass by without saying something in connection with this subject. And it is also because I can assure the Committee and the right hon. Gentleman opposite that nothing is farther from the intentions of the Members of the late Government than to shirk in any way the responsibility justly attaching to us respecting the policy concerned in the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff and the expenditure incurred in connection with it. We accept all the responsibility of the expenditure incurred. Now, Sir, one or two observations with reference to the remarks which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. I am very glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman intends that there should be a continuity of policy; because as we prepared that policy it is, of course, very satisfactory to find that there is to be no break in the chain. One of the principles involved in this Mission, and in the instructions given to Sir H. Drum-

mond Wolff by the Marquess of Salisbury, was that the co-operation of the Sultan was desirable; and although I am glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that he does not consider that question at all important, yet he does not give any distinct opinion as to whether that co-operation is desirable or not—he wishes to see, before that admission is made, whether the co-operation of the Sultan is desirable or not for England. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman made one observation at the commencement of his remarks with regard to the policy of the late Government with respect to Egypt. He said that the last Liberal Government took the course they did in consequence of a desire to continue the policy of their Predecessors. I do not wish to enter upon any controversial matter; but I think I should not be doing my duty if I were not to protest against the view that the policy of the last Government of the right hon. Gentleman was a continuation of the policy of their Predecessors, because nothing could be more different than the policy pursued by the Administration of the right hon. Gentleman four or five years ago than the policy of the Government which they succeeded. Sir, there was an observation of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) which I will take notice of. The hon. Member seemed to think that, according to precedent, Sir H. Drummond Wolff ought to have vacated his seat for the acceptance of Office. I was somewhat surprised, having regard to the industry and ability of the hon. Member, that he had not made himself acquainted with the law on this subject, because it has been well ascertained. It has been laid down over and over again by the highest authorities, and in a paragraph of Sir Erskine May's work on *Parliamentary Practice*, that—

"The acceptance of the Office of Ambassador or other Foreign Minister does not disqualify, nor does its acceptance vacate the seat of a Member."

Now, Sir H. Drummond Wolff was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary and Special Envoy. It has been held in many cases—in the case of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, of Mr. Canning, and in the case of Sir Henry Bulwer, who sat three or four years in this House while a salaried and paid officer in the

Diplomatic Service, and also in the case of Mr. Sheil. The case of Mr. Sheil was one of the most remarkable cases which may be named, because with regard to it the point was raised in this House. Mr. Sheil was Member for Dungarvan when he was appointed Envoy Extraordinary to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and an hon. Member moved for a new Writ under the impression that the seat was vacated; but next day, or a day or two afterwards the Mover of the Writ came down to the House and stated that he had moved the Writ under an erroneous impression, and that he found that the seat was not vacated; and in that case the House granted a *supersedeas* to the Writ for the election of a new Member. Thus it was decided that not only the acceptance of the Office of Minister Plenipotentiary or Special Envoy does not vacate the seat, but that all proceedings taken upon such acceptance of Office fall to the ground. With regard to another observation which fell from the hon. Member, I should like the Committee to recollect what was the position of affairs with regard to Egypt when the Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff was proposed. I think it will be admitted by all that Egyptian affairs were in a very abnormal condition at that time. The finances were in a very critical state; and, although I quite agree with the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that a great deal of amelioration has taken place in many branches of the Administration, at the same time many branches of the Administration in Egypt were then in a state of very great disorder. The Daira and the Domain Administrations were and are, I am sorry to say, in a state of chronic deficit; the arrangements for the permanent establishment of the Egyptian Army are incomplete, and I may say inchoate; the condition of the Sudan, in a word, was a condition of armed hostility, and the armed hostility was rendered more formidable by the fact that after the capture of Khartoum there was an immense amount of guns and material in the hands of the rebels, and which I believe are in the hands of the rebels still. Then, the Province of Dongola was in a state of armed hostility also; and not only so, but all the inhabitants in that Province had joined the Mahdi's Force and were threatening Upper Egypt. Again, the Mussulman

population of the whole Empire of Egypt was in a state of ferment; and the relations, moreover, between England and the Great Powers were in a very unsatisfactory state—in fact, I may say, Sir, that both internally and externally the condition of Egypt was one which gave Her Majesty's late Government very great anxiety; and they considered it incumbent upon them on entering Office to take some step which they thought might, at any rate, produce a better state of things in that country. Well, Sir, the first duty which they considered was incumbent upon them was to make an honest attempt to restore confidence to the Sultan, and to the other Powers in that respect; and there were two points on which it was thought absolutely necessary to arrive at a conclusion—one was the restoration of order in Egypt, and the other was an arrangement for the ultimate withdrawal of the British Forces from that country. Those, after all, were the two great points on which Her Majesty's Government decided to send this Special Mission to Egypt. They thought that if they could establish a cordial understanding with the Sultan which would in no way excite, nor, at the same time, ruffle the sensibilities of other Powers, it ought to be done; and, Sir, with that object in view, they determined to send a Special Envoy to Egypt, with the power, with the authority, and with the dignity of Minister Plenipotentiary, to carry out their views. Everything which has taken place since then, every telegram that has passed, not only from Sir H. Drummond Wolff himself, but from Foreign Powers and from our own Ministers abroad, have convinced Her Majesty's late Government that the selection which they made was a wise one, for no person could have performed the duty of his office with greater ability, dignity, tact, discretion, and patience than has Sir H. Drummond Wolff. Sir, some observations have been made by hon. Gentlemen in the course of this discussion upon the question as to whether any alteration has taken place in the relations between the Sultan and the Khedive, and that point has been alluded to by the Prime Minister. All I can say, Sir, is that the instructions to Sir H. Drummond Wolff were definite on that subject, and to the effect that the position of the Sultan as Sovereign of Egypt was to be recognized in its full signifi-

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cases. And, so far as anything which has taken place under those instructions, and so far as relations are concerned, there can be no intention whatever to alter in any way the relations which exist at the present time between the Sultan and the Khedive. Sir H. Drummond Wolff proceeded, in accordance with his instructions, to Constantinople, and he had not been there very long when he established the most cordial relations, not only with the Sultan and the Porte, but also with the whole Diplomatic Body in that Capital; and, Sir, anyone who is acquainted with the conduct of Eastern negotiations at Constantinople must know very well that it is not easy for any one Power to establish cordial relations with the Representatives of other Powers on any subject; and when we consider that in this case it was the burning question of Egypt, I think that so much the greater credit is due to Sir H. Drummond Wolff for the cordial co-operation which he was able to obtain from all Foreign Ambassadors to the Court of the Sultan. He was able to point out, both to the Sultan and the Representatives of the Powers, that the objects of Her Majesty's Government—namely, the restoration of order in Egypt and the making of arrangements for the withdrawal of our forces in that country, were in consonance with the views of the Porte and the other Powers of Europe—whose confidence, I must say, for the past five years has been rudely shocked. Unless some arrangement had been come to for the bringing about of harmony with the Sultan and the other Powers, I very much doubt whether it would have been possible to have brought about a satisfactory state of things in Egypt. After Sir H. Drummond Wolff arrived in Constantinople a considerable amount of delay took place, and a great deal of the expense of the Mission was in consequence of that delay. Hon. Gentlemen who have watched the course of events in the East during the past five or six months will know that circumstances occurred to produce delay which were not Sir H. Drummond Wolff's fault. He had not been long in Constantinople when the revolution in Eastern Roumelia broke out, Servia and Bulgaria went to war, Greece began to arm, and Turkey prepared for war. All these circumstances prevented the Sultan giv-

ing that attention which he wished to give to Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission when Sir Henry first arrived there. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, with a good deal of patience, tact, and good humour he went on pegging away—notwithstanding the great amount of business of an absorbing character that the Sultan had to do in connection with this and other subjects, Sir H. Drummond Wolff was able at last to get this Convention signed. Whether or not the Convention will be an ultimate success depends upon Her Majesty's present Advisers; but, so far as it has gone up to the present, I think I may claim for it that it has been an absolute and entire success. Let us see what are the objects to be gained by the Mission. Sir H. Drummond Wolff has himself described them, and described them in language which I think I cannot improve upon. He says—

"Perhaps your Lordship will allow me to recapitulate the various points on which, as far as I can judge, this Instrument may prove of advantage.

"In the first place, the conclusion of an arrangement of any kind has done much to allay the irritation that has existed for some time in the minds of the Turks towards England.

"In doing this, I do not wish in any way to criticise the past, but it is beyond a doubt that the irritation has existed, and has done much to diminish the influence which Her Majesty's Government ought to exercise in the Dominions of the Sultan.

"Secondly, the appointment of English and Turkish Commissioners in Egypt for the objects proposed establishes in the most formal manner the existence of a good understanding between the two countries."

Then he goes on to say that a position of legality should be established in Egypt, a position which had been sadly broken during the last five years. I recollect that one of the charges brought against the Earl of Beaconsfield's Administration was that he had broken the law of Europe. Why, the whole of our proceedings in Egypt during the past five years have been a flagrant breach of the law of Europe, and it has been to remedy that breach that this arrangement with the Sultan has been entered into. I will not weary the Committee by going at great length into this subject; but I think, before I sit down, the Committee will expect me to say a few words with regard to the question of expense. It was never the intention of Her Majesty's late Government that Sir

H. Drummond Wolff's Mission should be equipped in total disregard of all those accessories which give effect to these Missions, and which make them, particularly in Eastern countries, much more effective than they would otherwise be without them. It is impossible to suppose that very large entertainments would not take place; and I must say that I do not think, considering everything that has been done by Sir H. Drummond Wolff in the way of entertainment and other necessary expenses, that the sum can be thought at all extravagant. Her Majesty's Government took very good care that they would appear before this House, at any rate, in a good position, for they attached an experienced public servant to the Mission, whose duty it is to prepare for transmission full accounts of every item of expenditure incurred in the usual manner. They did that in conformity with the Report of the Public Accounts Committee; and in doing so I think they took every precaution that this House could have expected them to take. I must say that those who know Sir H. Drummond Wolff will not accuse him of folly; and I am quite sure that a gentleman with his knowledge of the House of Commons would have shown an extraordinary amount of folly if he had incurred such a large amount of expenditure, which could not be justified by the exigencies of the Public Service. I have no doubt that every particle of the expenditure incurred in this Mission has been incurred in consequence of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's devotion to the Public Service. As to telegrams, the point is one to which a great deal of attention has been paid. It is necessary to mention these subjects, as Sir H. Drummond Wolff is not here to defend himself with regard to them; and I think that as allegations against him have been made I should not be doing my duty if I were not to answer them. In the first place, I should like to mention, in justice to Sir H. Drummond Wolff, that some people have been of opinion that it would be possible to put down the expense of the telegrams from Sir H. Drummond Wolff under the head of "telegrams." Now, such a course as that would not only be improper, but it would be against the rule of the Foreign Office to do so; because it is a rule there—and I think it is a very good rule too

—that all the expenses, including telegrams, of Special Missions, should be put under the head of "Foreign Missions," and not "telegrams." Therefore, we do not, under the head "telegrams," include telegraphic communications from Sir H. Drummond Wolff, but telegrams from all parts of the world, particularly from the East; because in consequence of the disturbed state of the East very long telegrams were sent to the Foreign Office from Vienna, Belgrade, Bucharest, Greece, Sofia, Montenegro, and other places, all of which are charged for under the head I mention. There are two remarks I would wish to make in reply to what has been said on this matter; and I would commend them to the equitable consideration of the Committee. When Sir H. Drummond Wolff arrived at Cairo, it will be in the recollection of the Committee that a rebellion broke out at Dongola. The consequence of that was that everyone in Egypt was thrown into a state almost of panic, because the people thought that the Mahdi's Forces were going to invade Upper Egypt; and no doubt they would have done so had it not been for the gallantry of the British and Egyptian Forces. That state of things produced great ferment in Egypt; and, as a consequence, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, though a Special Envoy sent there for another purpose, found that the bulk of his telegrams had to be devoted to the general condition of Egypt, and they were all charged for under the head of his Special Mission. There is another fact I should like to mention in justice to Sir H. Drummond Wolff. If the Committee will compare the expense of telegrams from Cairo for the quarter ending the 25th of March, 1885, and the quarter ending the 25th of June, 1885—with which Her Majesty's late Government had nothing to do—with the expense of telegrams from Cairo for the quarter ending the 25th of December, for which the late Government was responsible, they will find that the telegrams for those two previous quarters exceed by far the expense for the telegrams for the quarter ending the 25th of December, for which the late Government were responsible. These are two facts which, I think, ought to commend themselves to the consideration of the Committee. Well, Sir, I confess that

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when I saw the expenses that were being incurred in connection with this Mission I thought it very likely that some inquiry would be made in this House on the subject. I compared the expenses of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission with those of many other Missions which preceded it. I will not weary the Committee by going through a list of these; but I will mention one, because it has been alluded to already—namely, that of the Earl of Dufferin, which is the nearest parallel to that of Sir H. Drummond Wolff. I will undertake to say that there is no more careful or conscientious public servant in the world than the Earl of Dufferin; and I can say this with regard to his salary and expenses during his Mission to Cairo—that if you compare them, month by month, with Sir H. Drummond Wolff's, I have reason to doubt whether those of the Earl of Dufferin will be exceeded by those of Sir H. Drummond Wolff. I do not mean for one moment to suggest that the Earl of Dufferin spent one farthing more than he ought to have done. I am certain, indeed, that he did not; but I hope the Committee will take this into consideration when sweeping charges of profuse expenditure are made against a public servant—I hope they will see that these charges cannot be justified by comparison with the expenditure of others in the same position. In justice to Sir H. Drummond Wolff, I am bound to say that there is a very great difference between his Mission and that of the Earl of Dufferin. His Mission was, in fact, two Missions—to Constantinople and to Cairo—and he was brought into contact with two different Governments, and two different sets of officials and *Corps Diplomatiques*, thereby calling for a much larger amount of entertainment than if he had been brought into communication with one set of officials only. Then, there is another item which, for the purpose of comparison, must be borne in mind, and that is that the Earl of Dufferin was provided at Cairo with a Palace by the Khedive; whereas Sir H. Drummond Wolff, both at Constantinople and at Cairo, has had to find hotel accommodation for himself, and the expense of that is included here. The right hon. Gentleman says he has reason to believe that Sir H. Drummond Wolff's expenses during January will be less than in the months pre-

ceding. Of course, they will. All the great expenses of the Mission have now been incurred—I will not say all the great expenses; but I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman is right in saying that the expenses during the next weeks of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission to Cairo will not be as great as they have been. I have no doubt of that; but it does not follow in the least from it that the expenses of the preceding weeks and months have been too great. I say, therefore, upon the ground of precedent there is nothing to complain of with respect to the expenses of this Mission. I shall be very glad indeed to assist the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) in reducing the expenses of the Missions to Constantinople and to other places; but it is not so easy to do, and I do not at present see any way in which these expenses can be curtailed. Now, I must say that, considering this was a peaceful Mission, that its object was a beneficent one, it is rather inconsistent in hon. Gentlemen opposite to taunt the late Government with either the policy or the expenses of the Mission. Considering the way in which they, for four or five years, voted millions and millions of money without any good object, and without a murmur, I must say I think it is a little inconsistent to cavil at these expenses. If they were 10, 15, 20, or 100 times greater than they are likely to be, they would only be a drop in the ocean compared with the millions of money that had been squandered in Egypt of late. Under these circumstances, I trust the Committee will assent to this Vote, not only on the ground that it is an economical Vote, but on the ground that it is an honest attempt to bring about a peaceful solution of a question which has been for many years a cause of the deepest anxiety to every Government.

MR. DILLON: For my part, there is an item I object to much more than that for the expenses of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission, and that is the item for telegrams, which, I presume, we may take as covering the telegrams in this Book on the Affairs of Egypt—which, by the way, is not a Blue Book, but a White Book. If we may take this—as I presume we may—as a fair specimen of the value we get for this enormous outlay, I do think the Committee ought to administer a lesson to the Govern-

ment in the only way that it is possible to do it for squandering money on such a monstrous monument of folly. If this debate had not already continued for a long time, I should have attempted to occupy the time of the Committee at length. If I did so now, I am afraid I should weary the patience of hon. Members and insure myself a bad hearing. But I do think I am justified in asking the Committee to listen to me for a short time, whilst I make a protest against this system of governing foreign countries by telegram. This question, it seems to me, has been debated too much on the personal merits of Sir H. Drummond Wolff. The question whether or not Sir H. Drummond Wolff gave too many expensive dinners is not the question raised by this Vote. The question raised is infinitely wider. We hear, for the first time since this miserable Egyptian business commenced, the doctrine of evacuation preached. The two Front Benches used to agree in the doctrine of putting off indefinitely the question of evacuation; but now we hear them saying that the sooner the British troops leave Egypt the better. We have learnt to be very sceptical about such statements, and we shall be so until we are informed that steps are being taken to put an end to this enormous expense and this monstrous system of governing Egypt by telegram. This House, I think, has a right to demand that the Government shall lay on the Table a full statement on the subject of their occupation of Egypt, of the administration of the country, and of how and by whom the expenses are paid. But, lest I should be out of Order if I pressed on that subject, I will for a few moments direct attention to some of the documents in this book of telegrams, the cost of which we are now asked to vote out of the National Exchequer. First of all, I would draw attention to certain telegrams dealing with an illustrious individual called the Sheikh el Morghani. He was sent, at the suggestion of Sir Evelyn Baring, from Cairo to Suakin, in the expectation that he would use his great influence with the Mahomedan tribes to induce them to abstain from attacks on Suakin. From certain telegrams sent home by Donald A. Cameron and Colonel Herbert Chermiside, who represent the English Government at Suakin, it appears that they had

the highest expectations of the result of the influence of this Sheikh el Morghani. One telegram says—

"Morghani in Cairo is very sanguine about being able to reconcile the tribes, but asks for time to effect it. The Sheikh went down to Suakin, and has, I am informed, remained there for a couple of months."

It is stated, though I do not find it in these valuable telegrams, that the Sheikh was convinced that he could disarm the hostility of the tribes, but only on condition of the withdrawal of the British troops. I suppose these Blue Books are always edited; but after careful study of it I am not able to find out any reference to this opinion of the Sheikh el Morghani. On the contrary, Mr. Cameron, speaking of this Sheikh, who, in a previous telegram, was mentioned as a man of great influence with the Mahomedans in Egypt, but who, I am informed, subsequently declared that the Soudan could only be pacified on the withdrawal of the British troops, says—

"The Cairo Sheikh is revered by the Natives of Suakin; but his knowledge of local tribal politics is very limited."

"He does not appear to have made any progress in grasping the situation since last year."

I have received private information which makes me think I can read between the lines, and makes it clear that this statement of Mr. Cameron as to the Sheikh Morghani failing to grasp the situation was prompted by Morghani's expression of opinion that the only way to get peace in the Soudan was to withdraw the British troops. Mr. Cameron goes on to say—

"I met the other Morghani a few days ago."

And this man, it seems, from other telegrams, must have been largely bribed or paid by the Government to undertake certain negotiations with Ras Alula, the General of the Abyssinian Forces. Mr. Cameron says, speaking of the other Morghani—

"A serious, quiet man, who realizes the difficulties of the whole problem of the Eastern Soudan, the Sheikh of Daggah looks upon the Hadendowas as quite irreconcilable. Nothing but starvation here, and total defeat at the hands of the Abyssinians at Sanheit and Kasala will, he thinks, reduce them to submission."

From that date the Sheikh Morghani of Cairo disappears from the despatches, and the Sheikh of Daggah—

Mr. Dillon

"His cousin, a younger man, who has passed all his life in the Soudan, and who has had a large personal experience of the Hadendowas,"

appears as the trusted adviser of the British Forces. The Sheikh el Morghani was sent to Cairo, and the change of air seems to have injured his health, for the poor man died at the end of a month. As I have read, it is stated in this somewhat long telegram of Mr. Donald A. Cameron that nothing but starvation and the Abyssinians will reduce the Hadendowas to submission. Two English cruisers are then sent down to intercept the supply of grain and other provisions received by these unhappy Natives from the Red Sea—to carry out this policy of starvation and extermination here set forth. So far as I can gather, this policy is in force at the present moment, and the Committee will be asked to vote a further large sum of money for Abyssinia, to pay for the services of Ras Alula and his Forces, who are Christians, and therefore hateful to the Soudanese, who have been asked to come and destroy the Hadendowa Tribe. Is this diabolical system to be continued, when there is no object to be gained by it? Are these horrible assaults that have been going on against the Arabs round Suakin for so long to be continued in the face of the declaration of the Government that they desire to withdraw Her Majesty's troops from the Soudan? Is this system of starvation *serius* concession to be continued? Is every method that the ingenuity of man can devise to be resorted to for the purpose of starving out these Hadendowas, who have already suffered so much at the hands of the British? I think this opportunity should not be lost of asking the Government to give us a straightforward statement to the effect that pending the settlement of the Egyptian Question this wretched Arab Tribe shall not be pursued with a merciless fury for which no reason can be adduced. I had an opportunity recently of talking to a British officer who had had a conversation with this Sheikh Morghani, who was shipped off to Suakin by the British Government. This officer tells me that the Sheikh declares the Arabs put down their losses during the famous passage of the Egyptian troops round the wells and elsewhere at not less than 30,000 killed. These words are the words of the Sheikh Morghani

of Cairo; but I have no doubt I should be under the mark if I said that the loss on the part of the Arabs in dead alone, since the British troops first set foot on Egyptian soil, has been nearer 150,000 than 100,000 men. How long is this to go on? Throughout these debates appeals have been made to the Government to say that pending the completion of their plans and until they are in a position to declare a rational and intelligible policy of evacuation in Egypt they shall put a stop to this slaughter. Will they consider the desirability of withdrawing their soldiers from Suakin, the climate of which place has the deadliest effect upon British troops? Our own men are experiencing the greatest torture in this unhealthy place; they are being decimated by sickness, and all for no earthly reason. Well, now, I want to say a few words upon another question which is raised by these telegrams, and that is the question of the so-called attempt to relieve the garrison of Kassala. The relief of Kassala is a question of some importance, and it bears closely upon the question whether we have got value for the £12,000 spent upon these telegrams. Many of the telegrams have reference to the arrangements which were being made, and the measures which were being taken by Colonel Chermaside for the relief of Kassala. We have in the first part of the Blue Book the most confident telegrams from Colonel Chermaside. He describes at great length the measures taken for the relief of the garrison, informs Her Majesty's Government that Osman Digna is dead, and that the army of Ras Alula is advancing on Kassala, and also states the large sums paid to Ras Alula—I suppose out of the English Treasury—for the most scandalous enterprize of relieving Kassala. Then, after some time, spies began to come in, and the truth began to leak out about the relief of Kassala. We find that, instead of Kassala being in a position to be relieved on the very date in July, 1885, when all these measures were being taken and large sums of money were being paid to Ras Alula, Osman Digna entered Kassala, and he and his friends were drinking and shaking hands with the Governor; that at the very hour Ras Alula was leaving Abyssinia Osman Digna was engaged in carrying from Kassala all the muni-

tions of war that were there. While these events were transpiring the Government were receiving long telegrams from Colonel Chermiside, informing them that he had the utmost confidence that the garrison would be relieved. Am I not justified in saying that a more scandalous waste of money was never sanctioned by this Parliament? Besides, these telegrams only hold out the British Government to ridicule over the whole world; and they do something worse than that—they show that we gave our sanction to the most horrible operations. What was the result? Ras Alula marched to the relief of Kassala; but before he got there he was met by an army which came out of Kassala to fight him. There was a bloody battle, of which various accounts were telegraphed, after which battle, both sides having lost very many men, Ras Alula marched back to Abyssinia with the English money in his pocket. Then the latest news we have reads like some extraordinary story out of *The Arabian Nights*. After all the long telegrams of the various arrangements made, and all the trouble that had been gone to to relieve this desperate garrison, I will read in a few moments the last news we were given of the garrison of Kassala. But, first of all, I must direct the attention of the Committee to this one fact which is mentioned in a Report, forwarded by telegraph, of several eye-witnesses of the surrender of Kassala, related by Selim Agha. The Report was forwarded from Cairo to the Marquess of Salisbury by Mr. Egerton, and I think it is such as to make every Englishman thoroughly ashamed. These eye-witnesses say that—

“When plunder was going on in Kassala Osman Digna entered the town, before the relaters left it, and he did put a stop to misdeeds and plunder, for his word was law.”

This is the man on whose head an English General set a high price some time ago, and yet we find from the statement of eye-witnesses that—

“He put a stop to misdeeds and plunder, because his word was law.”

Now, the last news we have of Kassala is dated Cairo, December 21, 1885, and it is to this effect—

“An officer who has just arrived in Cairo with his company from Massowah brings the news that Osman Digna had ordered the assassination of the Mudir of Kassala and his ser-

vant and two other Europeans. Osman Morghani, at Suakin, confirms this intelligence about the Mudir's death. The latest news from Kassala, brought by one Farag Agha Nini, who escaped with 69 men and three women, is to the effect that Osman Digna is still at Kassala, where he had established a reign of terror.”

I have just read a telegram which shows that the moment Osman Digna entered the town he put an end to the reign of terror. Anyone who studies these documents will find considerable difficulty in reconciling them, or in conceiving what earthly object can be gained by forwarding them by telegraph instead of sending them by the penny post, which, I think, is a means of transit quite rapid enough for such documents. There is just one other point to which I wish to direct the attention of the Government. In a telegram from Lieutenant Stuart-Wortley to Sir H. Drummond Wolff, dated Wady Halfa, December 12, 1885, it is said—

“Obstacles have been found on the railway between Halfa and Gemai, placed there, undoubtedly, by the villagers. General Grenfell having issued a Proclamation warning the Sheikhs of all villages that they were responsible for the railway in their neighbourhoods, the Sheikh of Gemai was accordingly punished.”

I want to know what punishment was inflicted? There is not a single word in the telegram to indicate whether there was any evidence that the Sheikh of Gemai was cognizant of the obstruction placed on the railway. There is nothing to show that he was placed on trial, or that he got any kind of trial, and yet, under the orders of a British officer, he was punished. I think the Government ought to inform the Committee what punishment was inflicted on this Sheikh, by whose command he was punished, and whether he received any trial at all.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 98; Noes 185: Majority 87.—(Div. List, No. 12.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £69,210, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for certain Charges connected with the Orange River Territory, the Transvaal, Zululand, Bechuanaland, the Island of St. Helena, and the High Commissioner for South Africa.”

Mr. Dillon

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): This is a very large Vote, and I think it is due to the Committee that there should be some explanation of it. The Vote has reference to the affairs of Bechuanaland and Stellaland, and to the Angra Pequena Commission. The original Estimate of the cost of the administration of Bechuanaland was only £30,000; but, at the time that Estimate was formed, it was generally believed that Bechuanaland would be incorporated with the Cape Colony. The sum of £30,000, under these circumstances, was thought quite sufficient for the administration of the territory. The matter came before the responsible Advisers of Sir Hercules Robinson in July, 1885, and they offered to take over the territory upon terms which were practically prohibitory. It really came to this—that the Cape Colony declined to take over Bechuanaland, except upon the payment down by the Imperial Government of £50,000; and then they insisted that the safety of the country should be secured by means of mounted police, who should be under the control of the Cape Colony, but paid by the Imperial Government. The late Government declined those terms, and from the 1st of September last the territory of Bechuanaland had been administered by Sir Hercules Robinson, not as part of Cape Colony, but as a Crown Colony. Under these circumstances, it became necessary to provide for the security as well as for the administration of the territory; and for that purpose it was suggested by Sir Hercules Robinson that a mounted police force of about 500 men should be raised, and that the sum of £10,000 should be set apart for the civil administration of the Colony. The result was that a mounted police force of 500 men was raised, and a small civil establishment created; and the cost of these, together with certain other expenses incurred in the renewal of telegraph posts which had been set up by Sir Charles Warren, and the erection of public buildings, and the extension of the Land Commission, to which I referred the other day in answer to a Question put to me by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler), brought the sum required to £75,000. If it

is desired I can give the Committee the exact figures. For the mounted police and the civil establishment about £60,000 is required; for the renewal of the telegraph posts something like £7,000; for public buildings and gaols £6,000; for the Land Commission, which has been conducted under Mr. Justice Shepherd and two Assistant Commissioners, and which I am informed has worked exceedingly well, £2,000, making in all £75,000; but from that there is to be deducted £15,000, the saving on the original Estimate, thus reducing the total to £60,000, the sum now asked for in respect to Bechuanaland. It must be borne in mind, however, that the military operations in that territory, which have now ceased, would, if continued, have cost the country between £200,000 and £300,000 a-year. I believe it will be found that in time the expenses of the Colony, even supposing it remains a Crown Colony, and is not taken over by the Government of the Cape, will diminish, and we have reason to hope that certain assets will be found remunerative. Then, with regard to Stellaland. Stellaland, as the Committee knows, is the Southern portion of the territory of Bechuanaland; and the Boers, who established a sort of inchoate Government, therein incurred certain liabilities which our Government took over, consisting principally of salaries of members of the Bestoor, a sort of Executive Council, and "good fors," or promises to pay, which are roughly estimated at £8,000. But while it is necessary now to put down £8,000 in respect of Stellaland, I am in great hopes that the greater part of that sum will be repaid by means of assets, which we have also taken over, including, amongst other things, certain debts due from a large number of individuals. We hope that in time these assets will bring in something like £6,500, so that ultimately not more than £1,500 will have to be paid out of the Imperial Exchequer for Stellaland. So much for Bechuanaland and Stellaland. With regard to the third item, for the Angra Pequena Commission, the Committee knows how that liability has arisen. The German Government took over a very large tract of territory called Iamaraland, on the South-West Coast of Africa. We have retained a small portion of this

territory, and it became necessary to consider the claims of certain Germans and English subjects to the land thus dealt with. A Commission was appointed by the two Governments to ascertain how far the claims were valid. The expenses of the Commission have been divided between the two Governments, and we are called upon to pay the salary of the British Commissioner, and the moiety of certain other charges, amounting together to £1,210. It will be seen that all these items together make up the sum we now ask for—namely, £69,210.

MR. BADEN-POWELL: Mr. Courtney, I venture to call the attention of this Committee to the affairs of Bechuanaland, for the reason that I have very recently been in Bechuanaland, and been in most parts of it. There is one other hon. Member of the House who has also recently been in Bechuanaland, and that is my hon. Friend the Member for the Holderness Division of the East Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Bethell). If I may venture to do so, I would congratulate the Committee on the very brief and explicit statement the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) has made. But in spite of that statement I must ask for further information before I can conscientiously agree to this Vote. I desire further information, because, to my mind, this Vote, though it deals with Bechuanaland, involves the whole policy of Her Majesty's Government in South Africa. While I do not on this occasion call for a declaration of their policy in South Africa, I think it is right the Government should give us some distinct idea of the general course they intend to pursue. The question is one that is agitating a great many interests, not only in this country, but in South Africa. I have myself had letters from Natal and Cape Town asking what is to come of the change of Government in England? The merchants there are greatly interested in the markets in Bechuanaland; and I believe that the traders, no less than the Heads of the Government in the Transvaal, are equally interested in the same great question. I wish for further information on two specific points. One is in relation to the sum of £60,000. When the administration of Bechuanaland was placed on its present footing,

Mr. Osborne Morgan

I believe the proposal of Sir Hercules Robinson was that in the first year the Imperial Revenue should contribute £130,000; in the second year, £52,000; and in the third year, £25,000; so that, in passing this Vote, the Committee must remember that the Vote will be repeated next year and the year after, though to a smaller amount. Is this £60,000 to be considered as part of that scheme which Sir Hercules Robinson proposed, and which, I believe, Her Majesty's Government adopted in principle, if not in all its details? Secondly, I desire to know whether Her Majesty's Government have determined that this advance of money to pay the extra expenses in Bechuanaland is to come under any system whatever of repayment? In accordance with the advice or suggestion of Sir Charles Warren, who, I believe, had in view the repayment of these extra expenses from the resources of Bechuanaland when the country had been fully developed by the Imperial Administration. And, thirdly, I am desirous of ascertaining what are the assets of the late Government in Stellaland on which Her Majesty's Government rely to repay the advance of £8,000. In the next place, I hope the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Under Secretary will be able to inform the Committee that Her Majesty's Government have formulated some definite policy. It will be within the recollection of all hon. Members of the Committee that upwards of £20,000,000 of English money has been buried in South Africa since we took over the country. Her Majesty's Government are entirely responsible for the Expedition to Bechuanaland, for the declaration of the Protectorate over a great extent of the African interior, and also for the administration of that portion of Bechuanaland which is now somewhat in the position of a provisional Crown Colony. The cost of the Bechuanaland annexation will very closely approach £1,000,000 sterling, and will have to be paid out of the pockets of the English taxpayer, who, as I have already said, has already sunk £20,000,000 sterling in South Africa. I do not think this Committee is justified in allowing any more money to be spent in the country without being assured that those who are responsible for the appropriation of the money will declare they do not intend to sink this fresh

money without obtaining some good, true, and adequate return. Referring to the Land Commission in Stellaland, the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Osborne Morgan) said he understood that the Commission was working very satisfactorily. I am very glad to hear this, because, through the newspapers and other sources, most sinister rumours have reached England about this Land Commission. We have heard that members of the Executive Council in Stellaland were imprisoned for contempt of the Land Commission, and we have also heard that the Secretary to the Land Commission, Lieutenant Hayes of the Royal Engineers, a most experienced, clear-headed, and independent man with whom I have worked, has resigned his office because he cannot approve of the dealings of the Commission. I hope both these rumours are not true, for otherwise the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman that the Land Commission is working very satisfactorily will be directly contradicted by facts. Now, I hope the Committee will remember that in dealing with Bechuanaland they are dealing with a central district in South Africa, in which is involved the trade, prosperity, and the peace, not only of the Transvaal, but of Natal and of the Cape Colony; that English merchants are looking for new markets not only in Bechuanaland itself, where it is estimated that a market in British manufactured goods to the value of £1,000,000 sterling may exist; and that Bechuanaland is a high tableland running up the centre of Africa, forming a healthy trade route to the interior, and as such is a rival to the German and Portuguese routes, or even to that great enterprise Europe is now supporting, the formation of a State up the Congo River. Bechuanaland may also become—and I hope it may—the scene of some of those schemes of emigration to which so many in this city and in this country are looking to relieve the redundancy of the population. I therefore maintain that this question is of wider importance than it appears at first sight from the smallness of the sum involved. Before I sit down I may ask the Committee to bear with me while I point out that Bechuanaland was the scene of the great missionary efforts of that great missionary—Dr. Livingstone, and that it is inhabited by Native races

who, for a long time, have been under the care of English humanity. I trust that in all our dealings with Bechuanaland we shall remember that we have a duty to perform to these Natives. Now, Sir, rumours have come to England that in several ways the interests of the Natives are not being cared for as they ought to be; I allude especially to the rumour that the garden lands belonging to the loyal tribe of Montsion have been appropriated. I hope the rumour is not true. I trust, also, that it is not true that a canteen for the sale of liquor has been established. One of the most distinguishing features of the Chiefs in Bechuanaland is their great desire that the sale of liquor shall be prohibited in their dominions. We have practically made ourselves responsible for these great Native areas, and I hope it is not true that we have allowed the liquor traffic to be established upon them. I have endeavoured to show, from the point of view of our fellow-countrymen in South Africa, from the point of view of merchants in England, and in the interest of our duty to the Natives and to civilization, that we should be very careful what we do in Bechuanaland; that it is the duty of this House to watch carefully all expenditure, not, indeed, to curtail its amount, but to see it is applied in the interests of justice and progress.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN: I have listened with considerable interest to the able and interesting speech of the hon. Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool (Mr. Baden-Powell), who is probably better acquainted with the Bechuanaland Question than any other person in England, and I will endeavour to reply to him. I do not think that a Vote of this kind affords a convenient opportunity for the discussion of the whole policy of the Government in regard to Bechuanaland; but I will endeavour to answer the questions which have been put as well as I can. With regard to the liquor traffic, I explained, in an answer which I gave to the hon. Member for the City of London, Sir Robert Fowler, the other day, that under the regulations for the government of Bechuanaland the sale of spirits and wines to Natives is strictly prohibited, and I believe that injunction is being acted upon. In regard to the land of the Natives, I mentioned also, on another occasion, that the instructions which were

given by Sir Hercules Robinson to Mr. Shippard, the Chief of the Land Commission, were specially directed to make provision for guarding the land of the Natives. With reference to this sum of £60,000 that we now ask for in regard to Bechuanaland, the hon. Member asked whether it was part of the scheme proposed by Sir Hercules Robinson, and I would refer him to page 44 of the Blue Book, containing "Further Correspondence," published in August last. In a full and exhaustive despatch which will be found there, Sir Hercules Robinson stated exactly what the probable cost of the occupation of the country would be. Of course, it is a very difficult matter, and necessarily a speculative one, to ascertain the assets of a country like this. But Sir Hercules Robinson anticipates that by the end of the third or the fourth year the Expenditure will be greatly reduced and the Revenue increased; and we are in hopes that by that time we may get such an income as will render this Vote unnecessary. We hope, also, that some part of the advance to Stellaland will be recovered. The hon. Member put one or two questions with regard to the imprisonment of members of the Native tribes. Well, I believe the facts are these—that there had been some disturbances, and Mr. Shippard has acted, as far as I can learn, with the greatest possible justice and firmness; and I do not apprehend that the disturbances will culminate in anything serious. It appears to me that it is rather too much to call for a statement of the whole policy of the Government in this matter, seeing they have been in Office only a fortnight, and have only just had time to look around them. But I can say this generally—that we shall endeavour to maintain that continuity of policy between ourselves and our Predecessors which is so necessary in Colonial matters. In a word, we have got this country, and we must make the best of it, and I think that we are making the best of it. No doubt, the sum asked for is a large one; but, looking at the prospective advantages and the difficulties we were in, I hope it will not be regarded as excessive. Meantime, the Government will endeavour, as far as they can, to reduce the expenditure, and, at the same time, to conduct the government of the country in such a

way as to protect the Natives, and also, as far as we can, to promote the general prosperity of the whole population.

SIR JOHN GORST: I quite agree with the right hon. and learned Gentleman that this is a very inconvenient occasion for the discussion of the affairs of South Africa; but, unfortunately, it is very likely that it will be the only occasion this Session. For several years past this subject has been discussed on the Supplementary Estimates, because they afford the opportunity for at least a conversation; but the main Vote for South Africa, on which this discussion ought to have been raised, is usually taken at the end of July or the beginning of August, when all the Members have gone out of town. Therefore, I think the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Baden-Powell) was quite justified in taking advantage of this occasion to state his views upon the subject. The discussion is made more inconvenient than it need have been, because the Committee are not in possession of recent Papers which were laid on the Table by the late Government, and which might have been distributed if a little expedition had been used in the printing office. The right hon. and learned Gentleman appears to have perused certain regulations for the government of this new Crown Colony, and I think that they might have been laid before the Committee. In regard to the sale of intoxicating liquors, I do hope that the Government will be very careful. I am not very much re-assured by the description of the regulations which the right hon. and learned Member has just given. I understand that the regulations admit of the free importation of intoxicating liquors, and only prohibit the sale of them to the Natives—they are only to be sold to White people. Everybody knows, however, how that regulation can be evaded. If you once let the liquors in, it is impossible to enforce a law to keep them away from the Natives, if the sale of them to the White man is permitted. In former days there was a law of that kind in New Zealand; and how was it evaded? When a Native wanted to get drunk he sent a low White man, who bought the liquor for him, and then got drunk upon it. It was not sold by the publicans to the Native, but reached him through the White man; and so the law was evaded.

Mr. Osborne Morgan

It would be useless to press the Government for a statement of policy; for here we are in the middle of an important debate, and, as usual, there is no Cabinet Minister present. I have noticed the same thing before, during the last Government but one. Whenever important questions came on during the dinner hour no Cabinet Minister was present to give information and guidance to the House. I should like to make one observation with regard to their policy, and that is that this cannot be a matter which is quite new to them. This formation of a Crown Colony was the policy of the former Liberal Government, and was begun in the early part of 1885, and was carried to a successful issue before the last Government came into Office, who only carried out the policy of their Predecessors. The present Government maintain the continuity of South African policy; and therefore it is not so unreasonable to ask for a declaration of their intentions. There is one fact, however, which is without doubt, and to which my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool (Mr. Baden-Powell) bears testimony, although it does not require even a knowledge of the internal affairs of Bechuanaland to appreciate it; and that is that nothing can be more important to the country than that there should be confidence in the fixity of the policy of the Government. If the Government is going to get tired of their experiment in six months' time, and abandon the country again to anarchy, people could not be expected to settle there. Nothing can portend more to the satisfactory settlement of all the difficulties of the place than a declaration that the Government mean to stay there. If such a policy is believed in by the people of the Cape Colony, by the inhabitants of Bechuanaland, and by the Boers of the Transvaal, the confidence which it will give will tend more than anything else to solve our difficulties. Hitherto the great difficulty has been that no one believed that we had any fixity of purpose—a policy has been begun one year and discontinued the next; but if the Government will only make up their minds to one continuous policy our difficulties in South Africa will rapidly disappear.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) has been only a fortnight in Office; but he repre-

sents the Government which sent the Expedition to Bechuanaland, and it is much to be regretted that he is not now in a position to give any indication of a policy. It may be right or wrong to establish a British Dominion in South Africa; but we should have some fixed policy, and not go on drifting as we have done from day to day, with nothing but a policy of the expediency of the moment. For myself, I have always inclined to maintain our dominion in South Africa; for I heartily agree in—and I have often expressed the same view—the opinion I was delighted to hear from the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), that in time of difficulties and trouble our true route to India is not by Egypt, but by way of the Cape of Good Hope. Therefore, I should have been very glad if the Government could have seen their way to say what are their intentions in South Africa. I want to learn why we have established this particular Dominion in South Africa, and to know what we really intend there? Is it for ourselves, or is it for the Natives, or is it to make it over to the Cape Colony? It has already cost us £1,000,000 or £1,200,000, and I naturally want to know what we are to get for our money? One thing I do protest against, and that is the practice which has been too often followed of allowing the Cape Colony to take what suits them, and cast upon us territory that is unprofitable, disagreeable, or difficult to be managed. We know that a main justification for this annexation is the so-called trade route to the interior of Africa. I have been pretty incredulous about that for some time; but this is certain—that if there is anything in it at all, it is for the benefit of the Cape Colony. As I understand, we are in this position, we are to pay the expense—to pay the piper—while the Cape Colony is to levy the Customs on this trade for their own benefit. While I have always rather favoured a British Crown Colony in Native territory in South Africa, I never could understand why we should neglect Zululand, and try to get rid of the great Native territory in Natal which, with the Transkei, would have made a great and beneficial Crown Colony within reach of the sea, and why we should go hunting in the interior of

Africa for this Dominion of Bechuanaland, where we are cut off from the sea by the Cape Colony, and are at their mercy both financially and politically. If there are reasons for taking Bechuanaland, let us, at least, have a settled plan. Let us look the matter in the face, and realize our responsibilities, not only for this great territory, not even for the existing Protectorate, but also for our relations with the great territories beyond, which are inextricably connected with Bechuanaland. Then, if we are to take this territory, we must make up our minds really to protect the Natives, and not, as has so often been the case, to take territory on the pretext of protecting the Natives, and then make them over to anyone who will take it. In that connection I would especially advert to the liquor traffic. I quite agree that it is a farce to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors to the Natives, if we still recognize the inalienable right of the White man and Christian to get drunk. If we would really protect the Native, we must screw up our courage for once to the sticking point of the prohibition which the Natives themselves desire. It is a miserable cowardice of successive Governments not to do so. In conclusion, I must express the belief that wherever we establish a great British Dominion in a territory thickly populated by Natives in South Africa we must do so on what I may call Indian principles—giving complete protection to the Natives, and only justice—not dominion—to the Whites.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER: I am sure that I shall express the sentiments of every Member on each side of the House who was a Member of the last Parliament, when I say that I deeply regret the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) on such an occasion as this. Every hon. Member who has been in the habit of taking part in debates upon South African matters in this House knows the eloquent address and knowledge which my right hon. Friend has contributed to these debates. My hon. and learned Friend the late Solicitor General (Sir John Gorst) alluded to the fact that the Front Bench opposite is not occupied by any Cabinet Minister; but I may say that when my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford was

Sir George Campbell

in this House, and it was known that he intended to speak upon South African matters, both Front Benches used to be well filled by those prepared to take part in the debate. For my own part, I think that with every word which has fallen from the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), as far as I have been able to gather, I am able to concur. I quite concur with him as to the great importance of our South African Colonies to this Empire. We must all see the importance and necessity of doing all in our power to bind together by every tie the different parts of Her Majesty's Dominions. The hon. Member has alluded to the question of the liquor traffic in Bechuanaland; and that is a question which applies also to other parts of our South African Possessions, and particularly to the district in regard to which we have had Papers laid upon the Table. I think my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool (Mr. Baden-Powell) was right in calling attention to this matter; and he certainly speaks with an experience which is unequalled by that of any other Member in this House. We must all feel that when drink is a curse to Europeans it must be a still greater curse to these Natives. I do hope that as regards the Cape Colonies Her Majesty's Government will use their influence with the Cape Legislature to put a stop to drunkenness, and that they will put their foot down in the matter in regard to all our Crown Colonies. There is no doubt that an impression became prevalent among the Natives in many parts that everything was not done to promote their well-being. I wish to call attention to the resignation of Lieutenant Hayes. Of course, my information is not official information; but it is this—that Lieutenant Hayes resigned his appointment because he considered that the Natives were unjustly treated, and because he would not see their garden plots taken away from them. That is the information that has come to me; but I hope that when the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Osborne Morgan) receives his official news he will be able to say that what I have stated is not correct. I think that Mr. Shippard is a most admirable public servant; but if my information is correct, it is a matter which deserves the very careful inquiry

of Earl Granville. We must feel that it is important that those who go to this country must go there with a full desire to do justice to all classes of the population; and I deeply deplore that a gentleman who is anxious to do justice to the Natives, whether for the reasons I have mentioned or for any other reason, has thought it his duty to resign his position in the country. I will not detain the Committee; but I shall be glad to receive some satisfactory information on these points.

MR. MARTIN: Sir, I do not intend to detain the Committee many minutes, because much that I felt disposed to say has been already said by hon. Members in the course of the discussion, especially with regard to continuity in our South African policy. I believe that from the time of the commencement of the Zulu War—which I believe to have been one of the most unjustifiable wars this country ever undertook—the policy we have pursued with regard to South Africa has been injurious to the Natives of that country. In this respect I believe that both Parties have been to blame, and that had a different policy been followed much of the expense which has been incurred might have been avoided. I think, therefore, with regard to the future, that two or three points should be kept in view. In the first place, I hope that Bechuanaland will remain for a long time to come under the direct authority of the Crown, as I am of opinion that any change would be certain to unsettle the minds of the Natives, and make them distrustful of the intentions of their White neighbours. And, Sir, I would point out that this course is rendered necessary on the ground of good faith, because the cession of their country by the Natives was made, not to the Cape Colony, but to the Queen. I say it is impossible that the Natives of Bechuanaland, or their friends in this country, can have faith in the Administration of the Cape Colony, which has lately forced a considerable number of industrious Native cultivators out of the Grey Glen district, in which they had for years been peacefully settled, and also licensed the sale of liquors, in spite of earnest remonstrances to the contrary. I say that we cannot trust the Boers, after their treatment of Massawa and the inhumanity they have shown in the treat-

ment of the Natives. I wish also to add a few words with regard to the trade route which has been alluded to. Doubtless, it would have been more satisfactory had this been entirely under our control, instead of under the control of the Cape Government; but we must bear in mind that the Cape is a British Colony; that we send large quantities of British goods there; and that we derive great advantage from that route. I fear that many persons in this country have but a small idea of the extent and value of our trade with the Cape and South Africa. I once heard that venerable missionary, Dr. Moffat, state, at a public meeting, that when he first went to Bechuanaland there was not £10 worth of British goods sold in the Colony; but that before he left hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth were sold. I regret to say that much of the civilizing and Christianizing good that was accomplished in the country has been injured or destroyed by the vacillating policy which we have pursued; and I sincerely hope that we shall now carry out a consistent policy with regard to it. I am glad to hear what has been said on the subject of restricting the sale of intoxicating liquors, although I agree with the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) that more should be done in that direction. I have heard, on good authority, of the injurious effects of drinking on many of the Native Chiefs, and that it rendered them quite unfit to discharge their duties. I also share in the regret which has been expressed that we have not established a Protectorate over Zululand. We have waged a most unjust and iniquitous war with the Zulus; we have disarmed them, broken up their country, and left them helpless. I will not, however, dwell longer on that question, as it would be out of Order to do so; but I again express a hope that we shall adopt and adhere to a decided policy with regard to South Africa.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Sir, every speaker in the discussion upon the Vote has congratulated the Government upon this land-grabbing in South Africa. Now, I am sorry to disturb this happy family; but I hold so strong a view upon this system we pursue in South Africa that I shall move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £8,000. We began this evening with a discussion about the con-

tinuity of our policy. Well, Sir, what has been our policy and the continuity of our policy in South Africa? Why, everyone knows that, under one pretext or another, the Ministers of the day have always come into this House asking us to pay for some absurd war or for some ridiculous annexation. At one moment we are fighting for a country; at another moment we are fighting against it. At one moment we annex a country; and at another, feeling that we ought to be ashamed of ourselves for fighting, give back the country altogether. In all probability, when we have spent large sums of money on Bechuanaland and Stellaland, we shall give them back, too. But what have been alleged as the reasons that this annexation should be made? We are told about the advantages of trade. The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. M'Arthur) said that a respectable missionary had stated that at the time when he first went out to the country there was not £10 worth of British goods sent there, but that now there are hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth imported. I asked the hon. Member how much, but he did not say how much; and my own belief is that the maximum value of British goods sent to Bechuanaland and Stellaland is no more than £2,000. I pity the unfortunate Natives, if out of such a trade as that the merchants are to make this £69,210 which we are now called upon to pay. Why, Sir, all these transactions in South Africa are a clear and absolute loss to us. We have already lost £1,000,000 in sending troops there; and now we are actually called on to pay £68,000 for administration besides; and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies says that he sincerely hopes that it will not be so much next year, although our experience makes us believe that it will probably be a great deal more. But, Sir, other reasons have been assigned for this annexation. The hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler), I think, said that we had the greatest interest in the country, as being on the route to India. Why, Sir, how far is Bechuanaland from Cape Town? About 800 miles. We might as well talk of retaining Gibraltar by taking a town in the middle of France. Then it is said that by annexing it we are opening up the route into the in-

terior of the country. Where is the route to go when it is opened? Into the bush, I suppose. And who will go by that route? I will tell the Committee. First, the missionary will go—by all means let him go—but who will follow? Why, an English Army will go by that route to protect the missionary; and this, Sir, is what you always have with these missionaries, meddling and muddling wherever they can, instead of preaching the mission of peace. We are told that one of the reasons why we should go there is because we ought to prevent these people from getting drunk. As I understand from this debate, there was very little drinking among the Natives before we went there; but since that time it appears that the Chiefs have got so drunk that they cannot attend to their affairs, and, no doubt, the rest of the people profited by their example. We are told that we ought to make an effort to surround the country with a cordon of troops to keep out liquor. Do hon. Gentlemen know that there is a certain amount of liquor sold in this country? Are hon. Gentlemen aware that in this Metropolis almost every tenth house is a public-house? If we are to look after people who get drunk, I do not see the necessity of going to the middle of Africa for the purpose, until, at any rate, we have endeavoured to put a stop to drunkenness here. How is the Revenue of this country largely raised but by the Government encouraging drinking and taxing drink? Sir, I think of all absurdities the philanthropic argument which has been raised by Gentlemen who have a little trade with the Cape is the most ridiculous of any that can be urged in favour of this annexation. We took the Transvaal, and we gave it back to the Boers. Well, this Bechuanaland is a Province of the Transvaal. ["No, no!"] I say it is. This is denied, I know; but it is regarded in South Africa as a Province of the Transvaal. ["No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen say "No." Well, it shall not be a Province of the Transvaal. After we had given back the Transvaal, a number of European squatters, a detachment of the Cape Mounted Riflemen, and a number of deserters, went there and begun quarrelling and fighting; immediately we must interfere, and we went there. Why, I ask, did

M^r. Labouchere

we go there? Was it for the squatters; was it to prevent the Natives getting drunk; was it for the route into the interior, or for the purpose of maintaining our sea route to India? Let us have one good valid reason, instead of all these hopes and rejoicings that come from hon. Gentlemen, and which amount to nothing. For my own part, I am sorry that I ever voted one single shilling to be spent in South Africa. We have been told by the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) that we should draw closer the bonds which unite us with our Colonies. But how? By establishing a new Colony in opposition to the Colony established at the Cape? Does anyone imagine that by such a course we shall draw the Cape Colony nearer to us? If the Cape Colony wants to annex Bechuanaland, let them do so by all means; but why we are called upon year after year to pay for this absurd, idle, and I must say wicked annexation, I cannot understand.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,210, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for certain Charges connected with the Orange River Territory, the Transvaal, Zululand, Bechuanaland, the Island of St Helena, and the High Commissioner for South Africa."—*Mr. Le. Chas.*

Mr. GILES: Sir, the view of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who assesses the value of our trade with the Colony at something like £2,000, savours to me very much of the doctrine, "Perish India, perish our Colonies." Being indirectly connected with South Africa, I am in a position to state that the trade done with the Colony is of immense value to us. When hon. Members talk of the route to India being through Bechuanaland, that, of course, is beside the question; but the trade route into the interior is through Bechuanaland, and experience has shown that the farther we get into the interior of South Africa the better is the country; and if we give up that route, we shall, in my opinion, sacrifice one of the greatest advantages of the country. Hon. Gentlemen will remember that not long ago there came from South Africa a large diamond, a diamond so rich and rare that it required a syndicate to purchase

it; and I have the greatest hope, from my correspondence with the country of the successful development of gold fields. Are we going to throw away these chances for the purpose of saving £68,000? With regard to the liquor trade, I am able to say that this is a most iniquitous traffic, so far as the Natives are concerned, and the sooner it is stopped the better. It is to the interest of this country that we should have the command of this route into the interior as a means of improving our trade relations with Central Africa.

Mr. RATHBONE: Sir, I should like to know how much the taxpayers of the country will profit by the large diamond which the hon. Member described as the fruit of this charge? I must say that the only time when I feel ashamed of the class to which I belong is when I hear these aggressions justified on the ground that they bring money into the pockets of traders. We have had one fallacy shown up to-day; we have heard that, after all this talk of going to Egypt in order to maintain the route to India, we have committed an immense blunder and an immense crime. And yet, Sir, it is actually proposed that we should take possession of Bechuanaland in order to obtain a route *via* the Cape to India. I do not wish to go into that subject; but just allow me to point out the absurdity of going into these annexations in order to improve the trade of the country. My hon. Friend the Member for Leicester (Mr. M'Arthur) said just now that we had sent hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of goods to this place; but, Sir, we also heard the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Baden-Powell) state that it had cost £20,000,000 to the country to send that trade there. If, then, we look at the question from the point of view of trade, which I think never justifies war, we shall see that there has been a great balance against this country. But I look at this question in a far more serious light. The Secretary of State for the Colonies, when speaking on this question last year, gave us a strong warning against this constant process of annexation. I do not think he was alluding to this particular case, but to the wholesale way in which we annexed these places in South Africa; and he called attention to the fact that these rejoicings over annexations were

always followed by a cold fit and discredit. And it is very likely they will be so now. It is not true that this part of our Possessions is about the most threatening and dangerous part of all our Dominions? It is a different state of things in South Africa to that which you have in any other Colonies. In our other Colonies you have a race of Natives who disappear before the advancement of civilization. It is to be regretted that it is so; but that fact has removed out of your way many dangers and expenses which those Colonies would otherwise have cost you. In India you have a population very different. India for centuries has been conquered and dominated by superior races. But what have you in South Africa? You have there to deal with two sorts of populations, one Native and the other White. Both these populations are vigorous and increasing in numbers. You have in the Dutch population a race as tenacious, and almost as pugnacious, as ourselves; they are more numerous, and your difficulties with them are constantly liable to increase rather than diminish. Then, Sir, you have in close connection with this population, not sickly Hottentots, but a race who have themselves been conquerors, and are people of a very vigorous character indeed; so that under our rule, instead of dying out, they are increasing more rapidly than we are, and than when they were allowed to fight it out among themselves. Therefore, you have constantly increasing difficulties, and you will find that as you go farther on your difficulties will not decrease; on the contrary, you will find that as you advance more and more into South Africa, the tax on the resources and on the blood of this country in your wars will constantly tend to increase. For these reasons, I cannot speak in the tone of joyfulness which has been so much used this evening. I believe, Sir, that this system constantly carried out of making further and further annexations will involve, as it has already done, great burdens on the taxpayers of the country—and, Sir, burdens which a Democracy will not endure; and I say, therefore, that, as a consequence of pursuing this policy, you are preparing for yourself a disgraceful surrender of what you have acquired in times past.

SIR FREDERICK STANLEY: Sir, I think the hon. Gentleman who has

just spoken has forgotten that, with regard to Bechuanaland, it was not the desire of annexation, but the intolerable condition of affairs which had grown up there in contravention of the agreement between ourselves and another Power—a state of filibustering so disgraceful in itself to all the pledges we had given, and so prejudicial to the future of our Colonies in South Africa—that public feeling, not confined in its expression to our side of the House, dictated the course which the former Liberal Government took of sending the Expedition under Sir Charles Warren to South Africa. I am not going to dispute further with or follow the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) into those speculative questions which he has put forward, because I prefer to address myself to the Vote actually before us. The question now is a Vote for the administration of Bechuanaland. Sir Charles Warren, as is well known, acquired the country without difficulty and without bloodshed. The question is, therefore, are you going to allow the country to relapse into the same state as it was in before? Why, Sir, the result of that will be that you will have to send out another Military Expedition to take the place of that which is withdrawn. We thought it not right to allow the country, which had been placed in a condition of tranquillity, to relapse into a state of disorder; and the only way in which that could be insured was by instituting an efficient police force to take the place, and discharge the military force which you withdrew. I must say that I think the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Baden-Powell), to whose speech we listened this evening with pleasure, will be satisfied with the general result of the discussion which he has raised, for this has clearly come out—that Her Majesty's Government accept to the fullest extent the view which we took last year. They accept, as it were, the continuity of principle on which the territories in question were to be governed; they accept this to the fullest extent; and I gather, from what the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has told us, that they have also endorsed the measures by which we sought to carry out the object in view. An hon. Gentleman behind me (Mr. Baden-Powell) has asked a question which I am, perhaps, better able to answer

Mr. Rathbone

than the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Osborne Morgan)—namely, as to whether, by the acceptance of the figures now given in the Estimate of this year, the Government would commit the country and the House to expenditure for other purposes in future years? Without going into the actual figures used by Sir Hercules Robinson, I think it certain that a wise and careful administration will result in the possibility of diminishing the expenditure under this Vote in connection with the police, and that it will also result in bringing in a contribution from the Colony—something in the shape of a capitation tax—which will very materially, or should very materially, diminish the amount of the Vote which the House would otherwise be asked for in future years. One of two things the Committee must do. Either we must be prepared to see the government carried on efficiently, under which circumstances a less amount cannot be charged; or, on the other hand, we must be prepared to see things drift on, with the inevitable result that in a few years' time another Military Expedition will have to be sent out to occupy the ground we now hold. I am not in any sense of the word an advocate for annexation; but when we have left to us the alternative of allowing a country to fall into a state of disorder, as Bechuanaland was sure to have done if we had withdrawn and had not sent out a Military Expedition, or doing what we have done, I think we have been right in accepting the responsibilities that circumstances have thrown upon us. I think we are justified in endeavouring to establish as efficient a Government as we can, never leaving out of sight the responsibilities we have incurred among the Natives. I think it will be found, when the Papers are presented, that from the earliest time the Home Government have pressed upon Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner, the importance of securing to the Natives, as far as possible, ample garden grounds and means of subsistence. I believe that the very case that was cited, where the garden grounds were, in the first instance, intended to be occupied otherwise, that the High Commissioner—so far as my memory serves me—was instructed to make other arrangements, and to endeavour, as far as possible, to carry out in its utmost

spirit the assurance that he had given that the Natives should have these grounds. Before this House it is not necessary to enter into a long discussion of African policy. I would only say what I ventured from the other side of the House to urge upon hon. Members last year; and that is that in these matters there should be that continuity which has been advocated both on the one side of the House and the other. I am sure that a great deal of the money which has been spent in South Africa, and much of the precious blood which has been shed there, would have been saved if from the first this country had pursued a definite and continuous policy in this part of the world. The assumption, which I think is granted on all sides, that our maintenance of a route by the Cape is essential to the prosperity of the Empire, in itself entails, by a chain of reasoning not very difficult to follow, the necessity of maintaining our rights and our duties in the South African Colonies taken as a whole. We can never lay down—I do not think it possible to lay down—any detailed or hard-and-fast line in this matter; but I think the House can avoid errors in the future in this respect. It can avoid saying that we intend to assume the government of a country, or of a particular district, and the next moment being prepared to hand that country or district over it matters not to whom. In that respect it seems to me the experience of many bitter lessons has brought home to this country the necessity of abstaining from vacillation, and the necessity for keeping up continuity in such matters; and I think that my hon. Friend the Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool (Mr. Baden-Powell), though he made other remarks that the Committee listened to with great pleasure, if he had done no more than draw out from the Government the statement we have heard of their views as to the policy which should be pursued in South Africa in the future, would have had reason to congratulate himself on the effect of his first speech in this House. I can only say that I can entirely support the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Osborne Morgan) that this Vote is in entire conformity with the interests of this country in this matter, and that the details have been looked

into with every desire to promote proper economy. I trust the Committee will now pass the Vote.

DR. CLARK: I am sorry to have to take up the time of the Committee further on this subject; but there is one standpoint from which this subject has not yet been viewed. There is one fact which will affect hon. Members on this side of the House, and I should like to bring it before the Committee. It is that all hon. Gentlemen ask for they could have got without spending a single penny of Imperial funds. My hon. Friend the Prime Minister of Cape Colony and his Government offered to take over Bechuanaland, and to put down all the anarchy—in fact, to annex the territory to Cape Colony—and to do it at the expense of that Colony. But, for some reason or other, Her Majesty's Government refused to accept this very good offer, and the result has been that we have already spent £1,000,000 in our operations in order to give these filibusters a start; and now we are asked to spend £69,000 more to aid this new Crown Colony which we did not want, which can be of no earthly use to us, and which by-and-bye will inevitably be annexed to the Cape. I protest against spending these enormous sums upon a district in which there are not 5,000 White men. We are spending £100,000 upon the place this year, which literally means giving these people £20 a-head. We are assisting men whose farms, two years ago, were not worth £1,000 apiece, though now, in consequence of what we have done, they will be worth at least £2,000 or £3,000. Why should we not place a tax at once upon the owners of these valuable farms; why not impose one also upon the Natives? These people are well off; they can find good work in the diamond fields and elsewhere, and have good markets for their produce. Why should we not make them pay? If the Colony requires money, I should not object to giving them a loan—even to these filibusters, deserters from Her Majesty's Forces, murderers and ruffians, as they have been designated; but, certainly, seeing that we have given them £1,000,000 already, I do not think it wise to go on throwing money away in the reckless manner now proposed, in order to maintain a Colony which, as I say, in the long run, will have to be

handed over to the Cape. In the last Blue Book it is clearly laid down that we have absolutely been asking the Cape to take over this territory, and stating that we do not intend to keep it as a Crown Colony any more than we intended to keep Griqualand. We might have kept Griqualand, because it is a valuable possession, on account of its diamond fields; but there are no diamonds in Bechuanaland. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) is said to be wrong in his history; but I maintain that he is perfectly accurate. The district the hon. Member referred to was as much a district of the Transvaal as Kent is a portion of England. No doubt, when we contemplated taking over Griqualand, we might have taken over Bechuanaland at the same time; but we evidently did not think it worth annexing. Again, when we took over the Transvaal, in 1877, we took over Bechuanaland as a portion of it—our Administrator took it over as a portion of the Transvaal, and appointed officials and magistrates to that section of the Transvaal. When we gave the Transvaal back to the Boers, Bechuanaland was cut away from the Transvaal, and a period of anarchy ensued; these two Republics were formed after a long intertribal war; and it was agreed to give the Chiefs and their White followers all the land each had possession of in the territory and to stand by certain Treaties that were made. ["No, no!"] An hon. Member says "No, no!" The only question in dispute, so far as I can see, between the Cape Ministry and Her Majesty's Government was about Montsioa's farm. Perhaps hon. Gentlemen are not aware that Montsioa was sent there by the Boers. Before the Boers acquired the territory Montsioa was in the Free State, and he was taken to this new acquisition. The only question was whether a certain portion of land, not worth £5,000, should be given back to Montsioa, or whether that part should remain, as by Treaty, in the possession of the rival Chief, his opponent, and that Chief's White followers. Of all these Native Chiefs, Montsioa is the one that has least claim upon us. He is the most barbarous and the most cruel of all these people. I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government

Sir Frederick Stanley

Board (Mr. Chamberlain) is not present, because two years ago he gave the House an account of this old ruffian. He described to the House how Montsion had made a night attack upon a village belonging to a Chief, his own equal; how he had burned the village, and skinned the men and women, and cut out their hearts. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, the right hon. Gentleman told the story, and it was this savage who did these things that we have spent £1,000,000 to protect, and for whose sake we now wish to spend £100,000 in order to protect him, and to prevent land which is scarcely worth anything from being taken from him. Messrs. Upington and Sprigg offered to take over Stellaland; but we refused the offer, and are content to pay money in connection with Stellaland for the advantage of the bandits who are there—to pay the expenses of all the bloody raids of which we have heard so much. It is hardly likely that we shall keep Bechuanaland a moment longer than we can help it. In fact, in course of time the population will want to be annexed to the Cape, as that of Griqualand has already done. I object, on the part of the ratepayers of this country, to handing over to these comparatively rich men in South Africa any more of the public funds. We have already given them £20,000,000, and the return they have made us has been to put heavy taxes upon our goods to keep them out as the other Colonies have done. No country in the world has ever behaved so generously to its Colonies as we have done, and I will undertake to say that no Colonies under the sun have ever behaved so badly to the Mother Country as ours have behaved to us. Give them this money as a loan if you like; but to give £-0 a-head as a free gift to all the bandits in Bechuanaland is a proposition to which I emphatically object.

MR. WODEHOUSE: I should not have risen to take part in this debate had it not been for the observations of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. The hon. Member, who apparently entertains a great dislike for bandits and ruffians, holds the position—unless I am much mistaken—of Consul General to the Transvaal Republic. He may be regarded, therefore, as holding a brief for that Republic. Being in a certain sense its

professional advocate here, it is only natural and proper that he should seize every opportunity of painting the adversaries of the Transvaal, such as Montsion, in the blackest colours, and the Transvaal Boers in the rosiest and most attractive colours. I hope the Committee will always receive the representations he makes on behalf of the Transvaal Republic as its Consul General with the greatest possible respect; with respect, however, tempered by a very large admixture of caution and circumspection. The hon. Member told us that if we had accepted the proposals of the Cape Government there would have been no occasion for all this vast expenditure, and no need of Sir Charles Warren's Expedition. Well, with regard to that Expedition, the Transvaal Government certainly did its utmost to stop it; happily without success, because, in my opinion, that Expedition was the brightest and best feature of the whole South African policy of the last Liberal Government. Until that Expedition took place the shadow of that ill-omened mountain—Majuba Hill—rested upon every symbol of British Sovereignty in South Africa. But now, without the shedding of a single drop of blood, that shadow has been removed. The hon. Member found fault with the rejection by the Imperial Government of the offer of Messrs. Upington and Sprigg, the Cape Ministers, to pacify Stellaland and take it over; but why was the offer rejected? On this point I appeal to the testimony of Sir Hercules Robinson, who has been ready to act in accord with Messrs. Upington and Sprigg, and who has been in sharp antagonism with Sir Charles Warren. Nevertheless, in the judgment of Sir Hercules Robinson, the terms offered by the Cape Ministers with reference to the future position of the Native Chiefs were such as this country could not accept without discredit. Then the hon. Member says that he hopes that this new Crown Colony will be transferred to the Cape Colony. For my own part, I hope nothing of the sort will be done. We are all only too familiar with vacillations and reversals of Imperial policy in South Africa; but if there be any reversal of policy now in this matter of the Bechuanaland Protectorate—any attempt to hand it over to the Cape Colony—British authority and influence in South Africa will be shaken

to its very centre. I must apologize to the Committee for detaining it by these few observations which have been drawn from me by the intervention of the hon. Member (Dr. Clark). I heard with the greatest satisfaction that Her Majesty's present Government intend to pay regard to continuity of policy. If I may be allowed to say so, I hope the Government will carefully forebear from raising at the present moment the question of the transfer of this Crown Colony and Protectorate to the Cape Colony. Declarations made by Her Majesty's Ministers, either in Parliament or in despatches—declarations of their ultimate intention or present desire to effect this transfer will travel far and wide through South Africa, perplexing and disquieting all the Natives. Rendered uneasy and uncertain of their future by such declarations, the Native Chiefs will become suspicious and hard to manage, and all the difficulties of administering this Protectorate will be aggravated ten-fold. A peaceful, settled, and prosperous territory the Colonial Government may some day take over; but a restless, disturbed, and, therefore, impoverished Protectorate, no Colonial Government will ever consent to take over, except on terms which are certain to be inadmissible by the Imperial Government—such terms, for example, as were offered by the Cape Ministry to the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, and properly rejected by him. I hope the Committee will pass this Vote by a large and decisive majority.

Mr. BETHELL: I should be sorry to sit in my place and hear the character of a man whom I know to be brave, and whom I believe to be honest, aspersed as a coward and cruel tyrant, without saying a word in his defence. The hon. Member for Dumfries (Dr. Clark) denounced in this way one whom I know personally myself from having had considerable communication with him. Though it may be said that the hon. Gentleman took a partial view of the question owing to the fact of his representing the Transvaal in the capacity of Consul General, it may be said that I take a partial view of my side of the question from the relationship that events have established between the man of whom he spoke and myself. But there is this difference between us. I have been to the Cape, and have made

it my business to inquire as closely as possible into the character of this Chief, Montsioa. I did that; and I can absolutely say that of all the Chiefs in South Africa this man, Montsioa, bears unquestionably the highest and purest character. I venture to say that this is a great deal to be said for a man in his position. I cannot think that the hon. Member is correct in the account he gave of the history of the annexation of Bechuanaland to the Transvaal. I cannot admit that Bechuanaland was a Province of the Transvaal in the sense in which a Province is understood. Bechuanaland was a Province of the Transvaal only in the sense that any other part of Africa was a Province, where no boundaries had been placed to the Transvaal. No boundary had been placed round the territory; but as soon as we formulated a policy with regard to that part of South Africa we had to place a limit to the Transvaal, and in describing that limit we put Bechuanaland outside of it altogether. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) said that there had never been a clear and distinct policy in South Africa. I am very much of the hon. Member's opinion, that we have not regularly pursued a clear and distinct policy there; but I do maintain that for years and years, almost ever since circumstances brought us into South Africa, there have been two distinct and clear lines of policy open, which we were compelled, whether we liked it or not, to pursue. It is perfectly true that from time to time the lines of these particular policies have been placed on one side. The Government from time to time, I am sorry to say, have neglected to carry out their self-undertaken duties. Sir, these two lines were policies which, I venture to think, on the whole, are essentially in accord with the political sentiments of Gentlemen who sit on the other side of the House. One of these is the protection of Natives from attack; and I would venture to point out to the Committee that this was exactly the same principle, only in a much more accentuated form, which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister laid down with regard to the protection of nationalities struggling for freedom in Europe. It is but a few years since the Prime Minister stirred up what I may call the humanitarian enthusiasm of England for

Mr. Wodehouse

a race to whom we are bound by no particular tie. Now, it is the very same thing in relation to these tribes in South Africa, except that we had given certain distinct undertakings in regard to them. We had entered into agreements which we were compelled to carry out. We were compelled to carry out our undertakings from the fact of the impossibility of assimilating the two European races in Africa—namely, the Dutch and the English. It was impossible for us, as the ruling Power in Africa, to admit the practical slavery which existed under the Dutch. We were compelled to put that down; and that is the reason why, whatever policy was pursued from time to time, we were bound to draw a distinct line requiring us to protect the Natives from the unjust assaults of what I may call the overflow rascality of the Transvaal. There is no doubt that for a certain number of years this policy was neglected; but the Bechuanaland Expedition was simply a vindication of our original line of policy. This sum of money now being discussed is simply the natural result and necessary sequel of the Bechuanaland Expedition. It is impossible to dissociate the one from the other; and I venture to think that if hon. Gentlemen will consider with some care the rather unusual and extraordinary position of Bechuanaland at the time we took it over they will be disposed to accept this Vote. The Vote, it is true, is a large one; but we must consider it in relation to the characteristics of the country we undertook to govern. Generally when we speak of a Protectorate we mean a case in which we undertake to look after the Native Tribes in a country where there is no internal administration; but here in Bechuanaland, not only were there Native Tribes, but also a so-called Republican Government—a Republican Government, I beg the Committee to remember—which came into existence simply through our own neglect. We were compelled to accept that Government, and take over its responsibilities; and it is now impossible for us to leave this country without seeing a proper and firm Government established there. Very much has been said to-night about trade advantages and so forth; and I am very much inclined to think that that is, after all, a very distinct second line of policy which keeps us in that

part of Africa. The Prime Minister, speaking the other night with regard to Burmah, said that no person of any weight or intellect would ever for a moment advance the doctrine of making war for the sake of commerce; and I am only sorry he did not advance that principle beyond those who have weight and intellect, because I do not think anyone would support that doctrine. Nevertheless, I do think it is right that our countrymen who go as pioneers of civilization, and open up new routes and explore new countries, should have their rights respected and protected by the strength of the Empire. When we hear hon. Members say, as sometimes we do from the Benchers opposite, that we ought not in any instance to support these semi-commercial wars, I am surprised, and very much surprised, because these are Gentlemen who arrogate to themselves the position of defenders of the working classes. I am bound to say that I think in one sense they are—in this sense—that they are like those who put their money in a box and bury it in the ground instead of putting it out at interest. I think there can be no doubt that this money we are asked to vote is a tax that, in all human probability, will be returned very many times by increased trade with the enormous centre of Africa. Perhaps I may say a few words with regard to the liquor traffic, about which so much has been said to-night. It so happens it is rather an honourable feature in the character of Montsion, and of some other Chiefs, that on no conditions will they allow the liquor traffic to come into their country. That I think is a very satisfactory state of things. My hon. Friend the Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool (Mr. Baden-Powell), expressed his fear that the garden plots about Mapehing were being appropriated, and that the Government were not taking sufficient precautions to guard against this being done. In the advice I have got recently from a correspondent out in Bechuanaland there is not a single word that in any way confirmed that report, and I cannot conceive how it is possible the report can be true, because one of the very objects of the recent Expenditure was the restoration of the garden grounds. I apologise to the Committee for having detained them so long; my excuse is that, having recently

been in South Africa, I take a keen interest in the affairs of the country.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 85; Noes 229: Majority 144.—(Div. List. No. 13.)

Original Question again proposed.

COLONEL NOLAN: Mr. Courtney, I wish to raise a point of Order in connection with the division just taken. I should like to have your ruling as to the closing of the door when a division is called. On the occasion of the last division the door was shut, or rather the officer endeavoured to shut the door, when hon. Members were pressing in. I succeeded in struggling through—it was a short struggle, but a rather fierce one. I should like to know what is the Rule in the matter. My impression of the old Rule is that the door should not be shut while there is a Member in sight.

MR. DILLWYN: As far as my recollection goes—and it goes a long way back—the Rule is that as long as anybody is in sight the door shall not be closed. I was engaged in writing a letter when the division bell rang a few minutes ago; and I, like the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan), experienced some difficulty in getting in the House.

THE CHAIRMAN: I apprehend it is the duty of hon. Members to attend the Committee; but when a division is called a few minutes are allowed to enable hon. Members to take their places. The door is not usually shut while hon. Members are coming in; but a limit must be put to the time the Committee is waiting, otherwise the general body of Members will be put to great inconvenience.

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-6).

(3.) £100, Warlike Stores and Works.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The amount expended in the year 1883-4 in this Vote was £1,429,000. The Estimate for 1884-5 was £1,619,000, less £356,500 appropriation in aid, leaving a total of £1,262,500. Now, Sir, in that year a Supplementary Estimate was brought in just as a Supplementary Estimate is brought in now. The

amount was £370,000; but the Estimate was very different from the present Estimate in point of form. Hon. Members may possibly remember that in the ordinary Estimate for the Works and Stores Vote there is a very large and detailed statement showing the specific appropriations of money, and that it has been customary, when large Supplementary Votes are asked for in connection with such services as these, to furnish to the House some detailed information corresponding with the detailed statement which is set forth in the ordinary Estimate. In the year 1884-5, when an Estimate like this was presented to the Committee, the sum was set forth in detail under as many as 13 different headings. In the present case there is absolutely nothing of the kind. We have lumped together under Vote 12 sums amounting to £190,000, and under Vote 13 sums amounting to £74,158, a total of £264,158. There is deducted more than £250,000, which is put down as appropriations in aid from Vote 12. I defy anybody to make out from this Paper what are the services in connection with which this very large expenditure of money is to take place. In the Estimates for last year we had the total sum of £258,600 put down for stores; but from that there was deducted the sum of £559,182 on account of what are called appropriations in aid. That smaller sum was principally made up in this way—Value of stores on repayment, £433,000; proceeds of sale of old stores and material, £115,000. As I say, in this Supplementary Estimate we have absolutely nothing to show in what particular Department of the public expenditure it is necessary to come to Parliament for further money. As a matter of fact, when the War Office wants a sum of over £250,000, they are able so to juggle their figures that they appear to come to the House for the sum of £100, while in reality they want £264,000 over and above that for which it is not necessary they should submit any distinct Vote at all. The reason of this is that as the Army Estimates are now presented and prepared there is given to this large spending Department, the War Office, power to raise funds on its own account by getting rid of public stores. The stores which they got rid of, or intended to get rid of, during the financial year we set down

Mr. Bethell

at £115,000. Now, the getting rid of old stores to the tune of £115,000 in one year is a very considerable transfer of property, probably to the loss of the public. But instead of limiting themselves to that very liberal allowance, the War Office, for reasons which it does not set forth in this Supplementary Estimate, take a further sum of £264,000. I think the Committee will agree with me that it is necessary the Government should, in the first instance, give some explanation of the reason why they have thought fit to draw up this particular Supplementary Estimate in the very obscure form in which it is brought up, without the least indication of the particular direction in which this extra money is to be spent in connection with stores; and, in the second place, that they should explain to the Committee how it is that they are able to raise so very large a sum as upwards of £250,000 to appropriate in aid of this Vote, especially when they have already taken a third of a million, as shown in the original Estimate. They have got now £359,000 to appropriate; and if to that you add £264,000, you get the enormous sum of £623,000 on this one Army Vote, which the Government are able to procure apparently by getting rid of stores. It is the old battle that was fought over and over again, not only in this Committee, but in the Public Accounts Committee, and by many of the best financiers connected with the House, when they insisted that there should be something like a check placed on the War Office in respect to its stores. Now, Sir, I know that under this Vote it may be said that the Navy has drawn a great deal more stores, more armaments, from the Military Service than is usual; but whether the Navy has drawn much or little, what I contend for is that the Estimate submitted to the Committee ought to show how much the Navy does so draw. And on this point I beg to remind the Committee that the Comptroller and Auditor General, in his Report on this very Vote last year, pointed out that the Appropriation Account did not afford information relative to the stores supplied to the Navy in that financial year which was desired by the Public Accounts Committee in 1880, and referred to again in the 56th paragraph of the Report of that Committee in 1884. Then, Sir, the Public Accounts Committee

themselves reported in reference to this Vote—

“They are strongly impressed with the advantage of an audit independent of and outside of the Department, however careful and exact the Departmental audit may be. They consider that, in the public interest, more evidence should be afforded that the quantities and value of the Army and Navy stores are amply maintained from year to year, and that for this purpose a complete stock-taking should be undertaken.”

Now, no such thing as a proper stock-taking has been undertaken by the War Office, and the consequence is that they are able to get rid of Army stores to a very large extent, as may be seen by reference to these appropriations in aid of the Store Vote year after year. Before the Committee accedes to the present demand, I ask the Government to explain, first of all, what are the extra expenses in connection with the Stores Vote—Vote 12—which we now have before us, and what are the sources from whence they have drawn this extra sum of £264,000, described as an appropriation in aid.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): The hon. Gentleman has anticipated by his rising the explanation of this Vote which I had intended to make. I can easily understand that, without explanation, the Vote may be somewhat misleading. There is nothing in it, however, connected with the sale of old stores, or with the Navy. The fact is this, that a larger amount of repayment services than were calculated upon have arisen in the course of the year. Demands have been made by India and the Colonies for supplies of stores to an extent greater than was anticipated last spring. The Committee will easily see it is difficult to anticipate exactly how large such demands may be. In this year they have greatly exceeded both the repayments from the Colonies, and also the demands made by them, for the manufacture of stores has exceeded the calculations formed. The result has been that the Manufacturing Department has been put to the expense of £190,000, shown in the first column, for the production of stores demanded on repayment by India and the Colonies. On the other hand, we have received larger appropriations in aid of that expenditure. The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken knows very well that we

are allowed to take to the credit of a Vote any receipts which we expect to receive during the year. It is really only in order to bring the matter within the knowledge of the House of Commons that we have brought this Vote forward; and the only way in which we can do so is by asking for this small Vote of £100. The nature of these services is explained on the other side of the page in the Estimates. The hon. Member complains that the Vote does not explain itself; but I would call his attention to the note at the end, which thoroughly explains the matter. I need hardly say that the present Government is not responsible for the Vote; but I believe it to be perfectly regular.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, that he was one of the earliest proposers of crediting Votes of money to be expended with the receipts derived from the respective Votes. He might be justified in saying that he had been in communication with the Treasury, and he had received a distinct assurance that the greatest caution would be exercised in preventing abuses in the manner of using these receipts; but, in this case now before the Committee, the very abuse which he feared was perpetrated. Here they had two Votes lumped up, and the receipts from one made to apply to both. It was obvious, however, that instead of £100 being asked for in this Vote, the real amount demanded was £74,000, and the whole sum needed to meet the expenditure on Vote 13 and the sum for Vote 12. He wished to protest against this mode of voting the Supplies of the country, and he earnestly hoped the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor) would press his objection to a division.

SIR WALTER B. BARTELOT: I think my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) has given us a fair indication of the nature of the Vote before us. I quite understand that £195,000 was estimated for stores that might have been required for India and the Colonies, and that £264,000 is in excess of what my right hon. Friend the late Secretary of State for War (Mr. W. H. Smith) expected to receive. I am, therefore, quite satisfied with the explanation; but the question which I wish particularly to raise to-night is a question which more intimately affects the late

Secretary of State, or his Predecessor (the Marquess of Hartington), and relates to the purchase of the Small Arms Factory at Sparkbrook, near Birmingham, which I believe the late Secretary of State made, and I believe he made an exceptionally good bargain for the country; for I understand the original cost of the factory was £175,519, and the right hon. Gentleman purchased it for £50,000. But, having bought these premises, I should like to know what use is the Government going to make of them? We want to know whether they are going to make a central arsenal of them? I believe that Sparkbrook is within about two miles of Birmingham, and is situated upon a canal, so that it would be a very good place for a central arsenal. I believe that all our small arms could be made there, if they will remove the Enfield Factory to Sparkbrook. I think that about 20 to 30 per cent might be saved in the manufacture of small arms if the Enfield Factory were removed to Sparkbrook. I have always been one of those who have contended that there ought to be a central arsenal as well as a central place for the manufacture of small arms; and I think this is a convenient opportunity for establishing one. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will tell us what is to be done in the matter. I believe my right hon. Friend made a good bargain, however, under any circumstances; for if the factory came to be re-sold, it would fetch a great deal more than has been paid for it. I am also told that there is another good site in the same neighbourhood—Holford—which originally cost £130,000, but which could be purchased at the present time for £30,000; that it is situated by the side of a river, and that it would be a magnificent place for storing powder or other materials, and has a range of 1,600 yards. It may be well for the present Government to consider whether they could not with advantage secure this other site. I merely call attention to this matter, however, because I should like to know, when we have purchased these places, what are they going to be applied to?

MR. W. H. SMITH: In answer to the appeal which has been made to me by my hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Bartelot), I have to say that the credit for the purchase at Sparkbrook was not due to me or to the Government

Mr. Campbell-Bannerman

of which I was a Member. The Sparkbrook Factory was purchased by the noble Marquess, my Predecessor in Office (the Marquess of Hartington), and all the matters included in this Vote were authorized by him. I understood from my noble Friend that it was a wise expenditure, that it was properly incurred, and that it would be a very good expenditure for the Public Service; but I am not entitled to any credit in the matter whatever. With regard to the other property which the hon. and gallant Gentleman has mentioned, I was advised that it was not necessary in the public interest that it should be acquired, and, therefore, when it was suggested to me, I declined to entertain the question. It will be seen that of this sum of £74,000 a very small sum indeed was authorized by the late Government, and that was necessary, as the Committee would see at once, owing to the exigencies of the Public Service. I should like to say, in reference to what fell from the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire, (Sir George Balfour), that the system under which this Vote was now asked for was bad; it was necessary that the House should be brought to know thoroughly the expenditure which had taken place. It may seem absurd to ask for a Vote of £100 on account of an expenditure which amounts, perhaps, to £250,000; but the object of it is to show the House what the Government have been obliged to spend inevitably when the House was not sitting, and when they had to act upon their own responsibility. I think my hon. and gallant Friend Sir George Balfour was exceedingly anxious to be informed that under this system the House is put in full possession of all that the Government is doing. Well, all I can say is this, that every farthing that the Committee is asked to spend in this Vote has been unavoidably laid out, and I am perfectly willing and ready to justify every *id.* that I am responsible for.

Mr. BRAND: In reference to what has fallen from the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Sussex Sir Walter B. Barttelot, I should like to explain how the purchase of the Sparkbrook Factory came about. The Government had some premises in Bagot Street, Birmingham, which were used for the repair of arms belonging to all the Services. Those premises were a

great deal too circumscribed for the work, and as there was a favourable opportunity of disposing of them they were sold, and the Sparkbrook Factory being for sale, the matter was laid before the late Secretary of State for War, and he approved of its purchase. I believe that the purchase was a good one for the country; but it was made on no understanding that it was to be turned into a central arsenal. It was not made for the purpose of extending the number of the Government Factories, but merely for carrying out the work of repairing arms which had been done at the Bagot Street premises.

Mr. WIGGIN: I think it is a very excellent idea, indeed, that the Government should improve their works by sending these small arms for repair to Birmingham. They have a great number of skilled artisans there; and, as far as I know, there is no place where they can supply better arms, or supply them more expeditiously, than in Birmingham. I think it would be a very good thing if the Government can get the small arms made at Birmingham; and I hope they will be able to adopt the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) in regard to extending their factories in Birmingham.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) would see that in this case of supplemental expenditure several Votes were lumped together—Votes 12 and 13—as if both needed to be increased, whereas only one of the Votes—No. 13—needed the grant, while it was clear that the appropriation of receipts solely belonged to Vote 12, and should not be applied to Vote 13. Unless they adhered to the principle that the money should be appropriated to those Votes for which they were asked, they would get into great confusion, and they would be establishing a very bad precedent.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I do not wish to prolong the discussion; but I am sure that my hon. and gallant Friend will see that it was necessary that the Committee should be made acquainted with the demands made upon the Exchequer which have not been sanctioned by Parliament, but which have been sanctioned by the Treasury. My hon. and gallant Friend will see that when it becomes a

question of account, the Auditor General will make the matter perfectly clear, so that the amounts dealt with will be shown in each case.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday*.

LAND REGISTRY BILL [*Lords*].—[*Bill 91.*]

(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

MR. INCE: Having given Notice of certain Amendments to this Bill, I now desire to state that I have come to the conclusion, not altogether willingly, that it will be better to leave this whole matter in the hands of Her Majesty's Government. I may, therefore, say that, acting with the full concurrence of my hon. and learned Friends the Members for the Brixton Division of Lambeth (*Mr. Baggally*) and the Harrow Division of Middlesex (*Mr. Ambrose*), it is not our intention to oppose the Motion for going into Committee on this Bill, nor to move any Amendments to it in Committee.

MR. T. H. BOLTON: I hope the Government will take very seriously into their consideration the advisability of abolishing this Office entirely. The Land Registry Office has proved an entire failure, and a source of considerable expense to the country. During the year 1884-5 the expenses of the Office were £6,206, while the fees received only amounted to £852, there being thus a loss to the country of over £5,000. In the same way, during 1885-6 the loss to the country amounted to £5,325. With regard to the Office itself, there is scarcely any business done in it, and the Profession generally regard it as a useless incumbrance in connection with the law. To show that this opinion is justified by the facts, I will just mention a couple of cases referred to by the Incorporated Law Society. A purchase of land was made to the extent of £2,900, and the cost of completing the purchase was £56 6s. 9d. An application was then

made to place the property in the Land Registry Office, and the cost was £124 12s. 7d. In another case, where an indefeasible title had been obtained under the Act, a small portion of the property was afterwards sold, and instead of the sale costing a moderate sum, say £10, after a delay of four months it cost £25. The truth is, that this Office is very expensive and useless; and I venture to suggest to Her Majesty's Government the propriety of considering the policy of winding up its affairs and carting off the papers to the Public Record Office. I believe it is a desirable thing that this should be done; and while I cordially support the Bill which has been brought in, because it is intended to prevent an unnecessary and useless appointment, I hope the Government will go still further and deal with the Land Registry Office in the way I have indicated.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (*Mr. H. H. Fowler*): The point which has just been raised by my hon. Friend the Member for St. Pancras (*Mr. T. H. Bolton*) is, no doubt, of very great importance; but it is not one which can be discussed on the present Motion. If my hon. Friend will raise that question on the Estimates for the Land Registry Office he will be perfectly in Order, and the Government will then be in a position to state their views on the subject. The object of the Bill before the House is to abolish a sinecure of £2,500, and I hope that the House will pass it with the least possible delay, because, in my opinion, it is greatly in the public interest that it should become law.

MR. RYLANDS: Sir, having taken much interest in the question of the Land Registry for some time past, I am very glad indeed that the occurrence of a vacancy should have afforded me the opportunity, which was at once taken, of urging upon the Treasury the necessity of not filling up the Office. I am glad my hon. and learned Friend (*Mr. Ince*) has acted on the sense of the public interest which he expressed, in not going further in his opposition to this Bill. I do not know whether that is a sort of inducement to the Government to look favourably on the question of salary; but all I can say is, that if the Secretary to the Treasury gives any more salary to the Registrar for the duty he has to perform, my hon. Friend

Mr. W. H. Smith

will fall very much in my estimation, and I hope he will not do so.

Motion agreed to.

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment.

Bill read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

HYDE PARK CORNER (NEW STREETS)

BILL.—[BILL 103.]

(*Mr. Leeson Gower, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Bradhurst.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (*Mr. LEVISON GOWER*): Sir, it is usual for a Member addressing the House for the first time to throw himself upon its indulgence, which I am sure will not be more readily extended than in the case of his bringing in a Bill which has met with considerable opposition, and which is brought in under the auspices of a Department with which he has had the honour to be connected but a short time. I do not propose to give the House a lengthy description of the reasons for bringing in this Bill; but I may say that the necessity for it is brought about by the improvements which were made at Hyde Park Corner—considerable improvements for the general convenience of the public—in 1882. Now, it is usual with regard to new streets that they should be maintained by the parish in which they are situated; but in this case certain difficulties have arisen, and we sometimes find in similar instances that although everybody is very anxious that the sum of money required should be found, everyone is not equally anxious to find it. The reason of these difficulties is clear. When this improvement was thought necessary it was carried out by cutting off a corner of Hyde Park, the whole of which was in the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, the streets of Piccadilly and Grosvenor Place by which it was bounded being in the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square. So that when the question of responsibility for these costs came to be treated of, the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields were of opinion that they ought not to be called upon to bear the expense. In the first place, they said that the inhabitants of the parish were

not benefited by this improvement; that the streets on which these new streets opened were not in their parish, and that the Green Park was an isolated tongue of land belonging to their parish; and only brought them in a rental of under £5,000 a-year. They also pointed out that a great portion of the traffic which previously went along Piccadilly and down Grosvenor Place was diverted to these streets, and that, therefore, the cost of maintaining the former was very much diminished for the parish of St. George's, and that as they had no houses abutting on these streets they could not recoup themselves for the extra expense by an increased tax on the houses in the district. They also went on to point out that these new streets were clearly to the profit of the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square, because they rendered the property more valuable in Grosvenor Place and also in Piccadilly, and they cited as a precedent why the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square, should bear the cost, the case of widening Piccadilly, the paving and levelling of which was paid for by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, the subsequent maintenance only being thrown upon the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square. Now, in contradiction to this, the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square, maintained that it was an anomalous thing that one parish should have to support the roads situated in another parish; they also said that they should have been consulted in the matter, and expressed their disapproval of having to pay money to the extent of £1,500 or £1,600 a-year for the maintenance, lighting, repairing, and cleansing of these streets. But, Sir, it seems to me that the authorities of St. George's, Hanover Square, forgot that by the fact of these new streets being made the wear and tear down the hill opposite St. George's Hospital and down Piccadilly was very sensibly diminished, and the total cost of maintenance in consequence. Still, as they said, they were in complete ignorance as to the arrangement, and so they desired that the expense of this improvement should be thrown upon the Metropolitan Board of Works or upon Her Majesty's Commissioners of Works. The Metropolitan Board of Works objected to pay because they said there was only one precedent, and that did not apply—the precedent

of the Metropolitan Board of Works having undertaken to maintain the line of road on the Thames Embankment. The Board say that they are not road authorities, and that they require to have statutory powers for the maintenance of roads, without which they cannot act. The Metropolitan Board of Works undertook the maintenance of the road on the Thames Embankment, because it went through such a number of parishes and concerned so many authorities, that it was absolutely necessary that the maintenance should rest upon them. Lastly, the Office of Works decline to be responsible for the maintenance of the roads in question. They say that they cannot hold the country responsible for voting every year the large sum of £1,500 or £1,600 for the maintenance of Metropolitan roads; and, therefore, the best course, in their opinion, was to lay the matter before the Metropolitan Board of Works as being a great Municipal Authority. The opinion of the Metropolitan Board of Works was accordingly sought, and the following opinion was given on the 20th of June, 1883. They said that the best course would be that statutory powers should be obtained to enable the Board to determine by what parish or parishes the roads should hereafter be maintained; and in accordance with that opinion a Bill was brought in during the following year—1884—but for one reason or another it never succeeded in getting into Committee, and it is now in the same position as it was in the Session before last. Now, certain objections were urged to the proposals contained in this Bill. It is said that it is entirely unfair that two great Boards, the Metropolitan Board of Works and the Board of Works Commissioners, should not maintain the roads, and that, as the Metropolitan Board of Works is an interested party in this question, they should not be made arbitrators or apportioners of the amount to be raised from the parishes in settlement of this question. But I shall try to show that the Metropolitan Board of Works is not liable, in the interest of Her Majesty's Government, at any rate not legally liable, for the maintenance of roads in the Metropolis; and we have an instance of the Metropolitan Board of Works undertaking such an operation as I have described, or rather of having powers to

undertake such an operation, by a previous Act—that is to say, by the Metropolitan Local Management Act, 1862, powers are given to the Metropolitan Board of Works to apportion the contributions of different parishes to the maintenance of a work, street or otherwise, that goes beyond the boundaries of a parish and exists in more than one parish. But, no doubt, there is this difficulty in the present case, which is that the whole of these new works are in the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields at the present time, so that the Metropolitan Board is unable to act except by the sanction of Parliament. Now, Sir, as briefly as I can, I have explained the nature of the objections that have been raised to the Bill; and I venture to remind hon. Gentlemen who may think that it is not a good Bill, or that it may require amendment on consideration in Committee, to remember that there will be ample opportunity for discussion, inasmuch as, being partly a public and partly a private measure, it will have to go before a Hybrid Committee—that is to say, a Committee formed partly of Members of this House and partly by Members chosen by the Committee of Selection; and I believe, if the Bill is allowed to pass the second reading, that all the interests involved in this question will be amply represented; that hon. Members will have opportunities of making their wishes known, and that there will be also an opportunity of amending the Bill by the incorporation of any other scheme which may seem more equitable and just. But I wish especially to bring before the House the fact that it is everybody's interest that this subject should be thoroughly investigated before a Committee, and that this Bill is brought into the House as a protest against the cost of maintenance, which amounts to between £1,500 and £1,600, being levied as a permanent annual charge upon the Treasury—that is to say, upon the general taxpayers of the country. And I ask hon. Members who, during this Session, have shown a laudable zeal for economy, to bear in mind that we think that it is neither just nor right that the whole country should be taxed for the maintenance of Metropolitan roads, and that, too, in the wealthiest part of the wealthiest city in the world; and, therefore, I would ask hon. Mem-

Mr. Leeson Gower

bers to give their support to the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Leveson Gower.*)

LORD ALGERNON PERCY: Sir, I rise to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months, because I believe that it is bad in principle, and that its passage would create an evil precedent as regards the creation of improvements and the maintenance of roads in the Metropolis. As the hon. Gentleman opposite has said, the circumstances are somewhat peculiar. The land originally was part of the Green Park. The improvements were made without any consultation taking place between the Government and the Vestries, either of St. Martin-in-the-Fields or of St. George's, Hanover Square, who are interested in the matter. In Clause 1 it will be noted that the Bill provides that the Metropolitan Board of Works shall direct that the streets shall be wholly or partially under the management of all or any of the following Bodies:—that is to say, the Metropolitan Board of Works, the Vestry of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and the Vestry of St. George's, Hanover Square, and that the roads shall be maintained by those Bodies. But there is another objection—namely, that the parishes are to be charged with the expense incurred in the maintenance of these works up to the time of this Order—that is to say, that they are to be charged for all this without having been consulted in any single respect with regard to the improvements in question. Now, Sir, we have heard a good deal about the desirability of local self-government in the Metropolis, and I hope in this division we who are opposed to the Bill will have the support of the hon. Member for Shore-ditch Mr. James Stuart, who was so eloquent on this subject on Friday last, because the Vestries at present are the representatives of the ratepayers, and in the present case they were in no way consulted. This Bill, therefore, strikes at the very root of local self-government. The Government, in a high-handed way, decides that certain improvements are necessary; they make them, and then, without having consulted the Vestries, turn round and throw upon the ratepayers the expense of maintaining the

improvements. Therefore, Sir, the very strong objection which the ratepayers take is that they were never consulted on the matter in any way whatever. The case of widening Piccadilly is not at all a parallel case with the present, because then the consent of the Vestries was asked, whereas in this instance it was not. Now, with regard to the benefit which it is said these streets were to the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square. The hon. Gentleman representing the Treasury only said that house property was increasing in value. I do not know whether he informed the House that this is absolutely the case; I rather think that the parish is very indirectly benefited, if at all, by these improvements; while as to the charge of maintaining the roads, the difference is, that instead of having to maintain one road they would have to maintain four or five. With regard to the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, it will derive no benefit whatever from the alterations. Well, Sir, with regard to the question of referring this matter to the Metropolitan Board of Works, it seems to me that that Board is not at all a proper Body to refer it to; and I say that if it is to be decided what portion of the Metropolis is to bear the charge, it should be decided by the Government of the day, and not by the Metropolitan Board of Works. I do not wish to detain the House at any great length in explaining the objections to this measure. The fact is, that when these improvements were made the Government of the day made a very gross mistake—they forgot to consult the Vestries. Had they done that they would not have been in the position in which they are now placed, and they would not have been obliged to draw up a measure like this in order to whitewash themselves. At a time when we are talking so much about local self-government, both in and out of the Metropolis, it is, I think, desirable that we should adhere to some of the first principles of local government, and not throw upon the ratepayers of the Metropolis, or any part of it, the expense of maintaining works as to the desirability of which they were not consulted. As to the remark of the hon. Gentleman Mr. Leveson Gower that the district is one of the richest portions of the Metropolis, it would appear that the hon. Gentlemen thinks that rates

are only paid by the rich. But I venture to remind him that that is not so; and the charges that would fall upon the parishes for the maintenance of these works would have to be defrayed by the poorer classes also; and in the parishes of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and St. George's, Hanover Square, there are a great many poor ratepayers who object to have these rates forced upon them against their will.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months." — (*Lord Algernon Percy.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. PLUNKET: Sir, I am sorry to say that I cannot support the opposition of my noble Friend who objects to this Bill. It was moved originally, not by the late Conservative Government, but by its Predecessor, the former Liberal Government; but when the Marquess of Salisbury's Government came into Office I had the honour for a short time of presiding over the Office of Works. Now, my noble Friend who objects to this Bill does so on three grounds. I shall not trouble the House with any general statement of the purposes of the Bill, because I do not think they need to be, or could be, given more clearly or fully than they have been in the statement which the House has had from the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill. But the objections to the Bill, as I understand them, are really threefold. In the first place, it is objected that there was no consultation with the Vestries before these arrangements were made; in the second place, that the parishes are to be charged, not only with the maintenance of the roads in the future, but also with the expense already incurred; and, thirdly, that if any reference is to be made at all, the Metropolitan Board is not the authority to whom this matter should be intrusted, for the purpose of saying how the cost is to be defrayed. Well, Sir, as to the first of these objections, I admit that there was a slip in the proceedings when it was first determined to make these improvements at Hyde Park Corner. It would have been more regular, and have saved all this trouble, if the Vestries of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and St. George's, Hanover

Square, had been consulted. As soon as I went into Office, I put myself in communication with the Representatives of those Vestries in this House; and although there was considerable willingness to assist the Government in this matter, I found afterwards that unless a Bill was brought in the question would never be settled, and that the taxpayers would go on to the end of time paying for these roads. The second objection of my noble Friend is, that it is not fair to make these parishes pay for the expense already incurred. Well, I say, and I wish to be frank, that I think that a very fair matter for discussion by the Select Committee to whom this Bill is to be referred. It is not at all the most material part of it. Though I do not now positively say that these expenses should not be borne by these parishes, as proposed by the Bill, yet I think that is a very fair matter of argument. The third question raised by my noble Friend is, that the Government ought to have undertaken this measure itself, and should not have intrusted it to the Metropolitan Board of Works. Well, if the Government were going to pay the expenses in the future, there might be some ground for that view; but, even so, I do not think the Office of Works is the proper authority for managing these roads. They ought to be managed, as all roads are managed in other parts of the country, by the Vestries and Local Authorities of places through which the roads run. I would submit to the House, that if this Bill is read a second time and referred to a Select Committee, there will be ample opportunity given to thrash out the whole question. By that means the original mistake would be remedied. The parishes would have full opportunity of stating their claims and rights, and when the Bill has been considered by a Select Committee, I have no doubt that the main object of the measure—namely, that the maintenance of the roads should rest with the parishes through which they run, will be adopted by the House.

MR. BRUNNER: I desire to ask what is the principle of this Bill? In assenting to the second reading, I understand you assent to the principle. I should like to know whether the putting of this power into the hands of the Metropolitan Board of Works is the principle of the measure, or whether it

Lord Algernon Percy

is that these parishes and the Metropolitan Board between them should bear the expenses? If it is intended that the management of these roads should be put into the hands of the Metropolitan Board of Works, I shall be obliged to follow the noble Lord (Lord Algernon Percy), because I look upon it as a religious duty to vote against putting further powers into the hands of that Body.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): The hon. Gentleman asks what the principle of the Bill is, and I reply to him that it is that the Consolidated Fund should cease to pay charges that properly belong to the ratepayers of London; the principle of the measure is to throw upon the wealthiest city in the world the same burden that falls on Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other large Provincial towns—the duty of repairing its own streets out of its own rates. I agree with the noble Lord (Lord Algernon Percy) that this is a question of principle and precedent. I think the principle of throwing this burden on the Consolidated Fund is bad, and I think that the precedent which has been set in this case is also bad. I do not wish to detain the House by going into details which have been so fully dealt with by my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Plunket). This is emphatically a case for the consideration of a Select Committee. The noble Lord referred to the Repayment Clause. That is a clause to enable the Treasury to obtain repayment in regard to the maintenance of the roads since the roads were completed. This is a question we should be quite prepared to accept the decision of the Committee upon when all the facts have been heard. It is a question between two parishes—St. George's, Hanover Square, and St. Martin-in-the-Fields—and, in the absence of a general Local Authority in London, there is no proper authority which can be intrusted with the management of this matter except the Metropolitan Board of Works. I protest, as I have protested on other occasions before I occupied my present Office, against London being placed in a more advantageous position than large Provincial towns in having its improvements carried out at the expense of the taxpayers of the whole country.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not want to see the improvements of London carried out at the expense of the whole country; but I must say there is another side to this question. Here is a great improvement which the Executive Government have undertaken to carry out without having previously arranged with the Local Authorities the way in which the expenses should be borne. According to the proposal now made, having undertaken these improvements, the Government now desire to throw part of the costs of maintaining them upon a certain parish because a small portion of the improvement happens to be within that parish. The large portion of the costs which will be thrown upon this parish the parish will have no power whatever of recovering from the owners of adjacent property. Under the circumstances of the case, however, I think my hon. Friends will be well-advised if they do not oppose the second reading, but reserve their case for the consideration of the Select Committee. There can be no doubt there has been a great deal of blundering in this matter. If the authorities had acted wisely, they would have seen their way clear before undertaking this duty.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

GLEBE LOANS (IRELAND) ACTS CONTINUANCE BILL.

(*Mr. John Morley, Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

[BILL 107.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I will not detain the House more than three or four minutes in explaining to it the object of this Bill. In 1870 an Act was passed subsequent to the Irish Church Act called the Glebe Loans (Ireland) Act, 1870. The object of it was to enable the Board of Works, acting on the part of the Treasury, to make loans for the following four purposes:—First of all, for the erection or improvement of dwelling-houses or offices of a glebe; secondly, to purchase glebe land not exceeding 10 acres; thirdly, to purchase dwelling-houses; and, fourthly, to pay

off debt incurred in this way. The loans are repayable by half-yearly instalments extending over a period of 35 years—£5 for every £100 advanced. They repay principal and interest at a certain rate over a fixed period. In practice the house and the land descend from one parish priest, or clergyman, or minister to his successor as parish property. The administration of the Act requires the Board of Works to satisfy themselves as to the title to the land, and also as to the solvency of the security offered, and, further, that the premises shall be kept insured, a great deal of work being thus thrown upon the Department. There are three securities required, of whom one must be other than the clergyman who makes the application. The total issue under the Act, as it has been renewed since 1870, has been £371,787. Of that very large sum the amount outstanding on the 29th of January last was no more than £373 0s. 10d. By this time, or by the 31st of this month, it is supposed that even that small arrear will have been made still less. The Act of 1870 was limited to expire in five years, and was, unfortunately, so worded as not to be capable of being continued by the annual Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, and so it has been re-enacted by successive Governments in 1875, 1878, 1880, and 1883. This last Act, the Act of 1883, expires on the 31st of August next, and what the present Bill proposes to do is to continue the Act for two more years, until the end of 1888—two and a-half years more—and then further to enable it to be continued, as other Acts of a similar kind are continued, in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill. These are the two objects of the Bill which I now beg to move be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

MR. T. O. HARRINGTON: I would wish, before this Bill is read a second time, to bring to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman a question connected with it which, I think, he himself will see the necessity of considering. Several deputations, representing clergymen of different persuasions and from different parts of Ireland, waited on one of his Predecessors in Office, the present Se-

Mr. John Morley

cretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan), and upon Earl Spencer, complaining that the annual payments were not extended over a longer period of years, and thereby saving or relieving clergymen who had purchased under the Act from the old owners from the very large responsibility cast upon them. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the case of clergymen purchasing and erecting houses under the Act. Well, these gentlemen complain of the great hardship which is put upon them to have to contribute large repayments during their own life-time, and having to leave to their successors an entirely free residence in their respective parishes. They think it would be far more desirable and convenient—and I would not confine this to any one denomination—to have the period extended over a certain number of years. Several representations of this kind have been made to the Irish Government from time to time. I do not know whether the subject has yet been brought under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary, owing to his having been but a very short time in Office; but now that I have referred to it, I trust he will give it his attention.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. H. H. FOWLER): I understand my right hon. Friend near me (Mr. J. Morley) to say that it is not in our power to alter the Bill.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

MOTIONS.

ULSTER CANAL AND TYRONE NAVIGATION BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for the transfer of the Ulster Canal and the Tyrone Navigation or Coal Island Canal from the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland to the Lagan Navigation Company, and for other purposes."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

COLONEL NOLAN: This is a very extraordinary Bill to be brought in by the Government without some consultation with the Irish Members, who have, if I am not mistaken, opposed a similar

proposal in two other Sessions of Parliament. It is not only opposed now by new Irish Members, but by at least three Members of the Commission which sat to consider the subject five years ago—namely, myself, the hon. Member who sat for County Leitrim and who now sits for an English constituency (Mr. Tottenham), and Mr. Dickson. And I should like to know if Lord Monteagle approves of the measure, because formerly he was opposed to its principle? I should like to say a few words in explanation of the measure. There is a sheet of water in the North of Ireland called Lough Neagh, of which the neighbouring farmers complain, as it injures their farms. Well, the Government propose to hand over a Canal to a Company with £3,000. The offer is a very generous one, and I do not complain of it; but I complain that in the Bill in which it is proposed to carry out this arrangement, a clause is inserted declaring that Lough Neagh should be kept up to its summer level, which is its technical Parliamentary level. It is possible by doing this to injure the people in the neighbourhood of the Lough to the extent of £100,000 or £200,000. I should be perfectly ready to assent to the Bill, if this clause having reference to the keeping up of the level of Lough Neagh were omitted from it. The passing of such a clause, besides doing present harm, may do much injury to those who may want to reduce the level of the Lough at some future time. The Ulster Canal is a valueless concern; but there is another one which is still worse. The Ulster Canal, I believe, is of some little use, though a very little; but if, for the sake of this and the other Canal I mention, this clause is inserted, whilst doing a vast deal of harm to the farmers on the shores of the Lough, very little good will accrue to anybody. As having been a Member of the Commission, and as never having found any of the Irish Members support the Bill—not even those through whose localities the Canal passes—I conceive it desirable to offer this protest. I want Her Majesty's Government to promise to omit this clause of which I speak.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): It is rather unusual to offer opposition to a Bill of this kind at this stage. It seems

to me that the title of the measure sound like the refrain of a very old song that we have heard year after year and seen put off night after night. My desire in bringing it in so early in the Session was to obtain the judgment of the House upon it, one way or the other, as soon as possible, and finally to dispose of it. If the Members from Ireland are of opinion that the measure should be referred to a Select Committee, I shall be happy to concur in that view, and have it carefully considered in that way; but I must say it has been represented to the Government that there is a strong feeling in favour of the Bill in the neighbourhood which will be affected by it. It is said that the Bill will operate to the advantage of the people living on the banks of the Canal. The Canal is 40 miles in length, and is costing £1,100 a-year, whilst earning nothing. It has been thought that if, by handing it over to a Navigation Company, it could be rendered more useful, it would be well to make the experiment. The Government do not propose to give the Company more than £3,000; but if we hand over the Canal, we shall, of course, put those who receive it under a strict obligation to put it under thorough repair, and make it efficient for the navigation of the district through which it runs. The question is one on which we should wish the House to be free to express an opinion; and all I would say is that this is hardly the time—before the measure is printed and is in the hands of hon. Members—to enter into a discussion of its details. If it is now read a first time, I would take care not to put down the second reading at an hour when it would be inconvenient for hon. Gentlemen opposite to deal with it. As I have said, after the second reading, if it is desirable to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, I should be glad to assent to it. A large portion of the Irish people say that the measure is one which will operate greatly to their advantage. I am not here to say whether they are right or wrong; but I think Parliament should pass judgment on it, so as to dispose of it one way or the other.

MR. JOHNSTON: I hope the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) will see his way to the withdrawal of his opposition to the introduction of the Bill. He takes a deep

interest in the development of the industrial resources of Ireland. I had the pleasure of working with him on the Piers and Harbours Commission, and am in a position to say that the interest he took in that matter and the ability he displayed have greatly benefited the fishermen of Ireland. This Bill which the Secretary to the Treasury wishes to introduce to-night will largely develop the industrial resources of Ulster, and I therefore trust that it will not be opposed by those hon. Members who really desire to develop the industrial resources of the country. I regret that I am almost alone here to-night on this side of the House; but it was not expected that opposition would be offered to the first reading of the Bill. If it had been known that this opposition was to be offered, hon. Gentlemen who are interested in the development of the industrial resources of Ulster would have taken care to attend in order to say something about it. I trust the House will listen to the views of the Secretary to the Treasury, and that the Bill will be read a first time now. I beg hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway not to throw obstacles in the way of developing the resources of Ireland; and I assure them that this measure happens to be one which will largely develop the resources of the Province of Ulster, which they say they would like to see at one with the rest of Ireland.

MR. BIGGAR: The hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston) has spoken about developing the industrial resources of the Province of Ulster. Well, I should like to point out to the House the extent to which the Province of Ulster is benefited by the Canal he wishes to hand over to this Navigation Company, at a cost of £3,000 to the State. At present the Canal has an income, derived, I believe, from coals, of something less than £50 a-year, whilst the cost of putting it in something like decent order and looking after it amounts to something over £1,000 a-year. If that is the way in which the industrial resources of the Province of Ulster are to be developed, I think the sooner the development of the industrial resources of the Province of Ulster is given up the better. The hon. Member says he is very sorry that he is the only Tory Member from Ulster present at this moment. I also am very sorry that that

is so, because I should have liked to hear some of them express their opinions upon this matter—I should have liked to have heard some of those who went the other day with an *ex parte* statement to the Secretary to the Treasury. And here I would protest as strongly as I can against this system of private ear wiggling. Any representations that have to be made to the Government on subjects of this kind should be made here—any pressure which it is thought desirable to put upon them should be attempted on the floor of this House. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury has made no defence at all for this Bill; or, if at all, one of a very weak nature. What he says is, that the measure is one that has often been before the House, and which has often been opposed, and opposed successfully. No doubt, he thinks it only right that he should have an opportunity of trying his skill to effect that which his Predecessors have hitherto failed to do. This may be all very well from his point of view; but to my mind it is a serious waste of the time of this House. It seems to me that no more effective system for wasting time could be devised than that of persisting, Session after Session, in the introduction of a Bill which is thoroughly indefensible. But, as I have said, the hon. Member has not offered a word in favour of his measure. In opposition to the Bill we have heard the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), who was a Member of the Royal Commission which investigated the facts, in connection with this project, on the spot, and which saw that the proposal was untenable. We are told that this Canal is one of those links in the chain of water communication which is to lead from the North of Ireland to the Shannon; but it is a useless link, like that one lower down, upon which a former Government spent £200,000. The link to which I refer, for which a former Government were responsible, was so utterly useless that no boat could navigate it; it was so stupidly constructed that no Canal boats could go below the bridges without being rebuilt. That is an example of the way in which the Board of Works in Ireland carries on its business. There is no doubt that some few people—some few resident in the locality of the Canal—may be more

Mr. Johnston

or less satisfied with this Bill, and probably a coal dealer or two, non-resident in the locality, will be benefited by it; but I would point out that the whole district, through which the Canal runs, is at the present moment uncommonly supplied with railway accommodation. The railways do not charge a higher rate for the carriage of produce along their route in the absence of competition than they would do if the Canal competed for the traffic. We have no reason to suppose that the railways would raise their rates a single *1d.* if the Canal were done away with. Whilst, therefore, there are no advantages to be gained by the passing of this Bill, I would point out that it may have a very mischievous effect, because it would render it impossible for all time to come to lower the level of Lough Neagh. Even at the present moment people living on the banks of Lough Neagh periodically suffer injury from floods. There is another objection to Bills of this sort; there are no Local Authorities in Ireland who are competent to superintend their operation. I think it is fatal to any Bill of this kind if there is no Representative Body by whom it can be carried out. It is all very well for irresponsible people, who, in some cases, know nothing of the facts of the case, to promote such Bills as this. I know that several of the hon. Members from the North of Ireland have no local knowledge whatever, and that, in point of fact, they know nothing of the merits of this case. I maintain that until we get a Local Representative Body in the North of Ireland, who can represent the ratepayers fairly and honestly, no Bill dealing with questions of taxation for drainage and other matters of that sort should be allowed to pass. I trust my hon. Friends will divide with me against the Bill even at its present stage; and I think that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the opposite side of the House, who are in favour of economy, will see it would be very much better to sell the land of the Canal for the £5,000 which it would bring than to expend any more money upon it. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury Mr. H. H. Fowler told us that this Canal Company had entered into a certain undertaking. It is no use to talk about the Company entering into undertakings. We know what a shady public Company will

undertake. In point of fact, it will undertake anything; but to get it to fulfil its undertakings is a very difficult matter. I think that, unless the Government is able to offer very much stronger reasons than they have done yet why this Bill should pass, it is right that the House should insist upon a postponement to allow of further consideration.

MR. T. M. HEALY: On behalf of my constituents in South Derry, who have great interest in the drainage of the Bann, I wish to offer this Bill my strongest opposition. We often hear it said that the Irish people regard the English Exchequer as a cow from which they are continually drawing. But I wish to point out to hon. Gentlemen representing English constituencies that what we are doing in this case is to oppose the absolute throwing away of £3,000 of the taxpayers' money into the waters of the Ulster Canal. Now, the most astonishing thing to me is that some of the Members of the Opposition who approached the Treasury, in the form of a deputation, on Friday last, should have the hardihood to put forward some of the statements they did. The hon. Member for Mid Armagh (Sir James Corry had the superb audacity to say that our opposition to the development of this Canal was due to our having an interest in Railway Companies in Ireland. Any argument, of course, against a Parnellite Member is good enough. At one time we are represented as being in a state of the most wretched and depressed poverty, and at another time we are represented as having such great interests in Railway Companies that we are opposed to Canals. I am surprised the hon. Baronet Sir James Corry—because he was made a Baronet by the late Tory Government for value received—is not here to-night, in order to defend the unjust attack he made upon Gentlemen below the Gangway for their action in connection with this Canal. I will read, for the instruction of English Members, one statement made by a member of the deputation to the Secretary to the Treasury. Hon. Gentlemen will then understand the value of this Canal to Ireland. The Canal is now making a total of £50 per annum; what chance, therefore, is there of the Company ever repaying the £3,000 proposed to be advanced by the State? The secretary to the Canal Com-

pany—and I take this from the report in *The Belfast News Letter*, which was sent by a special reporter and across a special wire—said—

“There were 26 locks on the Canal, and it would take £10,000 to put the Canal in working order.”

£10,000 to begin with! At £50 a-year the House can imagine how many years it would take to make up £10,000.

“Two proposals had been made for raising this sum. The first was that the Government should lend it to the Navigation Company;”

—that was a most cynical and delightful attempt to offer adequate security for the repayment of loan and interest—

“And the second proposal was that £3,000 should be given by the Government, the Company being left to borrow the other £7,000. The hon. Gentleman's Predecessors were prepared to accede to the latter proposal.”

The first proposal was that £10,000 should be expended, and when that would not wash the Company were content with £3,000. Yes; I venture to say they would have been satisfied with £2,000, or £1,000, or £500, or anything they could squeeze out of the Government. I will not say they wanted to share it amongst themselves; but, no doubt, they wished to make the pretence they were going to do something with these 26 locks, and then become bankrupt in the face of the public. The whole question of the Canalization of Ireland is a very difficult one. In my judgment, the number of Canals in Ireland is much too large. On this Lower Bann you are at present taxing the farming population of Ireland £15,000 a-year for the maintenance of these navigation locks, some of which locks were so objectionable to the peaceable population generally—to the non-Catholic population along the banks—that they blew them out with dynamite. The people argued that not a single boat passed along the Canal but hundreds and thousands of acres of their land were being flooded. What a farce it is to pretend to go on with navigation when you have nothing to navigate. There are railways on each side of the Canal to take all the traffic the districts produce. There is no boat upon the Canal, and yet you tax the people thousands of pounds to make useless works for the purpose of navigation, instead of letting the rivers do what God intended, and that is to drain the land of Ireland

Mr. T. M. Healy

down to the sea. You keep, by means of these useless locks, Lough Neagh to a level three or four feet higher than was ever intended; but the worst of all is that when you appointed a Government Commission to inquire into the whole subject—a Commission consisting, as it did, of the late Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. Dickson), the hon. and gallant Gentleman who, in the last Parliament, represented County Dublin, but who now sits for the Isle of Thanet Division of Kent (Colonel King-Harman), and the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), and that Commission condemns the thing root and branch—which has also been done by many men of independent character—the Government still comes forward and proposes to cast the money of the ratepayers into the fetid waters of the Ulster Canal. On behalf of my constituents, who are deeply interested in the drainage of Lough Neagh, I join my hon. Friend the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) in his opposition to this Bill. I think it is a monstrous thing that gentlemen should be allowed to come over from Ireland and pretend to the Treasury that they are entitled to borrow £3,000, when they admit that to do properly what is suggested an expenditure of £10,000 is necessary. For them to say they can ever pay the interest on the borrowed money is a sham and a delusion, and if my hon. Friend goes to a division I shall certainly support him.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: This is a matter which a number of us now sitting on these Benches have persistently fought against a series of Financial Secretaries to the Treasury, and I know for a fact that one of the Predecessors of the present Secretary to the Treasury, in his own mind, did not approve of the Bill which his official position compelled him to support in the House. I put it to Members opposite, who have manifested a much greater desire than I have ever witnessed before to give effect to the wishes of the Representatives of Ireland, that this is a matter in which we have reached practical unanimity, and that in no assembly in Dublin would such a project as this have the least chance of success. If carried at all, the Bill will be carried against the unanimous wish of the Representatives of Ireland. It is supported by a very

small number of men, who do not appear to have really studied the case in all its bearings, and therefore cannot be alive to the very serious and joblike character of the measure proposed. I do not wish to quote extensively from Reports of the Commissioners appointed to examine this question; but I venture to call attention to the fact that so far back as 1861 Sir John Maclean, who was certainly very unbiassed, reported that the only plan he could suggest by which the Canal could be made useful was to take off the lock gates, drain the Canal, and convert its bed into grass land which might be let for grazing; that gentleman adding that the banks and waste land, which in many places were of considerable width, might be let for tillage. Later Commissioners had reported against any further expenditure of money—they showed it was perfectly useless; and they also showed that the loss of money taken at the lowest rate of interest charged by the Treasury for any advances of this kind must amount annually to over £6,000. Now we are asked to make a drain on the Treasury of a very considerable amount, and to hand that sum over to a Company which undertakes to do something. What that something is is not very clear; but the inevitable result will be that in a short time the Treasury, as mortgagees, will be obliged to foreclose because they will not be able to receive either their interest or principal, and then they will be in precisely the same position as now, with a worthless security on their hands, and have to come to the House with another Bill in order to induce some other Company to take it up. And so the game will go on. Public money will be wasted, and, as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy) has said, injury will be done to the agricultural land in the neighbourhood. They have done the same thing here as in many other parts of Ireland; they have dammed up the watercourses and prevented the watercourses doing what they ought to do—namely, carry off the surplus water to the sea. I have, myself, seen tens of thousands of acres in one stretch under water, which, if these rivers were only allowed to do what they were intended and made to do, might never have been flooded at all. I do not know whether the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H.

Fowler) recognizes the evident sense of the majority of the House; but perhaps he would prefer to have time to consider his position. He may possibly be prepared to assent to the Motion to adjourn the present debate. If it meets with his view of the present situation, I will move that this debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That the Debate be now adjourned."
 —(Mr. Arthur O'Connor.)

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): I assure my hon. Friends that I have no wish to force on this Bill against the opposition of the Irish Members. Of course, there is to this, as to every question, two sides, and I should like the House to hear the other side. I may add that the Treasury are to be relieved from £1,100 a-year, and that is, perhaps, the bait held out to us. But I am quite willing to assent to the adjournment of the debate, on condition that ample Notice be given of its resumption in order that all Members from Ireland may have an opportunity of expressing their views upon the Bill.

Motion agreed to.

Debate adjourned till Monday next.

POST OFFICE — SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CONTRACT (ST. VINCENT TO THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA).
 RESOLUTION.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER) moved—

"That the Contract, dated the 19th day of January 1886, for the construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa be approved."

MR. HENNIKER-HEATON objected to the Motion being taken at that hour of the night.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: It was arranged that this should be taken to-night; but I have no wish to press it at this late hour if any objection is raised. I therefore propose to postpone it till to-morrow.

Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

SHOP HOURS REGULATION BILL.

Select Committee on Shop Hours Regulation Bill nominated of,—MR. BARRY, MR. BROADHURST, SIR JAMES FERGUSON, MR. THEODORE FRY, SIR JOHN LUBBOCK, MR. FRANCIS POWELL,

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS, and Mr. STUART-WORTLEY:—Three to be the quorum.—(Sir John Lubbock.)

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 2nd March, 1886.

MINUTES.]—*Took the Oath*—The Lord Minster (Marquess of Conyngham).
PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment* (25).
Third Reading—Freshwater Fisheries (Eels) • (23), and *passed*.

MOUNTED VOLUNTEER INFANTRY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON, in rising to ask the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether there is any objection to mounted men being attached to infantry volunteer corps at the request of the commanding officer if no extra charge be thereby entailed? said, since he had placed the Notice of this Question upon the Paper he had received information that it was the desire of the 1st Middlesex Infantry Volunteers, better known as the Victorias, to have a small squad of mounted Infantry attached to their regiment. The replies, however, that had been received from the War Office upon the subject had been unsatisfactory. If permission were given to form such mounted squad but little expense would be incurred by the country, because the men who would form it were perfectly willing to defray the cost of equipping themselves out of their own pockets, the only demand made being that they should receive the ordinary capitation grant of 30s. now paid to efficient Volunteers.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Lord SANDHURST), in reply, said: The experiment of allowing mounted men to be attached to Volunteer corps at their own expense is now being tried in six cases. In two cases out of the six the authority has been cancelled, and in a third it is doubtful whether the scheme can be continued. Therefore the Secretary of State does not think it advisable to further extend the permission until

he has gained more experience of the working of the remaining existing companies.

VENTILATION OF THE HOUSE.

RESOLUTION.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK rose to move—

"That the evidence of John Percy, Esquire, M. D., taken before the Select Committee on the Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod in session 1869, be laid upon the Table, and that the same be printed."

The noble Earl said, the evidence would be of much value in reference to the lighting and ventilation of the House.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked whether the evidence referred to had not been already printed?

THE EARL OF LIMERICK said, that he understood it had not been printed.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, he failed to see what advantage was to be derived from adopting the Motion of the noble Earl, especially as the attention of the Committee had been directed to Dr. Percy's evidence. It seemed to him that the ventilation of the House would be all that could be desired if they would open the windows and dispense with the elaborate system they had introduced.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he thought the House should be lighted by electricity, and they would then get rid of the heat created by the gas falling on their Lordships' heads, and a great deal of the misery and discomfort suffered by them. The machinery below for pumping up fresh air was of a most elaborate and costly description, and the steam-engine required for it could be utilized to generate the electric light.

Motion agreed to.

The said evidence laid on the Table accordingly, and to be *printed*. (No. 26.)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend and extend the Electric Lighting Act, 1882.—Was *presented* by The Lord Rayleigh: read 1st. (No. 25.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 2nd March, 1886.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — Town Holdings, appointed.

PRIVATE BILLS (by Order).—*Second Reading*—London and South Western Railway*; Midland Railway, debate adjourned.

Second Reading—*Referred to Select Committee*—East London Water.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

EAST LONDON WATER BILL (by Order).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(Sir Charles Forster.)

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I beg to move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee on the same terms as those suggested yesterday by the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney) in regard to the Lambeth and Southwark and Vauxhall Water Bills.

MR. BUXTON: In addition to the reasons which were given by my hon. Friend yesterday, I wish to add one more why these Bills should have a somewhat wider inquiry than is ordinarily given to a Private Bill. The Bill itself proposes to absorb a piece of valuable property in the shape of a foot-path which is very much used by working people. The proposal will enable the Company to absorb public property without giving compensation, and in a way in which it can never be restored.

COLONEL MAKINS: I believe there is no opposition to the course which the hon. Member for Southwark Mr. Thorold Rogers proposes to take; and when the Bill is referred to a Select Committee the question raised by my hon. Friend the Member for South West Essex (Mr. Buxton) will be dealt with by the Committee before whom the Bill is sent.

Question put, and agreed to.

VOL. CCCL.

[THIRD SERIES.]

Ordered, That it be referred to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill, presented within the time limited by the Standing Orders, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions.—(Mr. Thorold Rogers.)

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL (by Order).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(Sir Charles Forster.)

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON: I have given Notice of my intention to move an Amendment upon the second reading of this Bill which is as follows:—

"That this House, whilst not unwilling to consider favourably an application from the said Company, under proper conditions, for power to make arrangements with other Companies tending to economise the cost of transport to the Company, refuses to entertain the same as a mere incident in a Bill for miscellaneous objects, and unaccompanied by the offer of any compensating advantages to the public."

It is well known that copies of Private Bills introduced into this House are not circulated among Members in the same way as other Parliamentary Papers; and I may add that very important powers, and powers affecting great questions of principle, may be sought by a Private Bill without the attention of the House being directed to it. With regard to the Bill now under consideration, it seeks to confer very large additional powers upon the Midland Railway Company; and I do not find, in the report of the proceedings of the Wharfedale meeting, that any mention is made of some very extraordinary powers which I am about to show are included in the Bill. Going through the different heads, I find that the Bill gives, in the first place, power to make roads, to prepare roads, to acquire land, and so on. And then all at once I come to an entirely different matter. By a clause in the Bill powers are asked for, which amount virtually to the power of amalgamation with other Companies, and not only to a power of amalgamation with other Companies, but absolutely to a power of amalga-

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mation with any Company with which this railway is in communication. Now, the House is aware that the Midland Railway and its branches extend over a wide extent of England, and that the line is in communication with railways from the Land's End to the frontier of Scotland. Therefore the Bill, as it stands, actually asks for the power of amalgamation with almost every Company; at any rate, in England and Wales. [An hon. MEMBER: And Scotland, too.] My hon. Friend says that it touches Scotland also; and therefore, by assenting to the second reading of the Bill, the powers contained in it will also apply to the Scotch railways. I do not know whether that is the intention of the promoters of the Bill; but, to my apprehension, that would be the effect of passing the Bill in its present shape. Surely that is a question of principle which ought to be carefully considered by the House before the second reading is passed. For my own part, I am prepared to say that I believe it is desirable that there should be a reconstruction and amalgamation of Railway Companies; and I believe that the sooner that is effected the better, for this reason—that it would enable the Railway Companies to diminish their expenses, and give them the means of reducing their rates and charges to the public. But it is one thing for this power to be obtained by the Railway Companies, in order that they may be in a position to lower their rates, and it is quite another thing to feel sure that they would make use of that power in the interests of the public when it is conferred upon them. I certainly cannot find, within the four corners of this Bill, anything which will insure to the public any compensating advantages for the powers given to the Midland Railway Company if this Bill passes. That is the point to which I think it is important to direct the attention of the House. I believe that every hon. Member will admit that of all the Railway Companies the Midland Railway Company is probably the one which, on the whole, has done more in the interests of the public than any other Railway Company. I candidly acknowledge that they were the first to introduce a system of running trains at a comparatively cheap and uniform rate of fares. But that is

not a reason why we should not take precautions in order to be certain that the powers we grant to them will be used, not only to their own advantage, but also to the advantage of the public. Evidence was given before the Railway Rates Committee, which sat during two Sessions, that certain promises, which the Midland Railway held out when they applied for an extension of their system, have not altogether been fulfilled. I have no knowledge of the facts of the case myself; but I think there are hon. Members in the House who will be able to give information upon the matter. However honest a Railway Company may be, I think it is our duty in this House to see that the public interests are safeguarded. This is a question in which, at any rate, we ought to know that the attention of any Committee to whom the Bill may be referred will be fully drawn, and that the intentions of the House will be fully indicated and distinctly understood—namely, that if increased powers are to be given to this or any other Railway Company, some compensating advantages to the public will be looked for. For this reason I beg to move the Resolution which I now submit.

MR. HICKMAN: I rise for the purpose of seconding the Motion, and I ask for that indulgence of the House which is usually accorded to those who address it for the first time. I promise to be as brief as possible. My grounds of opposition to the Bill are quite distinct and separate from those of the hon. Baronet. I object to the Bill because, on a former occasion, in Private Bill legislation, the Midland Railway Company held out to the great iron districts of Staffordshire certain expectations, and gave certain pledges, which they have since altogether ignored and refused to carry out. The history of the transaction to which I refer is shortly this. In 1882 a Bill was promoted, called the Wolverhampton, Walsall, and Midland Junction Railway Bill. In opening the case before the Commons Committee, Sir Edmund Beckett said that the object of the line was not to serve mere local purposes, but to introduce the Midland system into Staffordshire. Although this was nominally a Private Bill, the Midland Company paid the expenses of promoting it, and they have since made the line. It is now in

Sir Bernhard Samuelson

their possession, and worked by them. Sir James Allport, the then General Manager of the Midland Railway, in his evidence before the Commons Committee, was asked this Question—

"The promoters and ironmasters say that if you get to Wolverhampton they will have a reduction of rates. What is your opinion of that?"

The answer was—

"I have always been of opinion that the rates of the South Staffordshire district are too high. We have had no control of them. The London and North Western are the people who have fixed the rates, but they are too high."

In answer to another Question Sir James Allport said—

"I have no hesitation in saying that, in looking at other iron districts, the South Staffordshire rates are too high."

He was asked if there would be a permanent reduction, and his answer was—

"I should think so."

Sir James Allport was then asked—

"Suppose that you and the London and North Western Company got to Wolverhampton, and then come to an arrangement: would that arrangement be permanent or temporary?"

Sir James Allport said, in reply—

"I cannot give you a better illustration than what we are doing, where we have it entirely in our own hands. We charge at present from the Staveley ironworks to London 10s. 6d. per ton."

Question—

"Who competes with you there?"

Answer—

"Nobody. It is entirely on our own line, and it is either 10s. 6d. or 11s. From South Staffordshire it is, I believe, 15s. I cannot give any better answer than that."

Asked—

"What is the difference between the distances?"

The answer was—

"The distance from Staveley to London is greater than from Wolverhampton. That shows what the Midland Company do."

Now, Staveley is 149 miles from London, and Birmingham only 113; but the Birmingham rate is 15s. for 113 miles, while the Staveley rate is only 12s. 6d. for 149 miles. Sir James Allport repeated the same evidence before a Committee of the House of Lords; and he added that his Company had done very little in Staffordshire in respect of the London trade, which, he said, was owing to the excessive gradients on

their existing lines. He was asked this Question—

"If you could get a line more suitable for the traffic, you would be inclined to push that trade to a considerable extent?"

Answer—

"Yes."

Question—

"Even by competing rates, if necessary?"

Answer—

"Yes; there is no reason why we should not."

He was then asked by Earl Fortescue—

"Are the Midland Company prepared to bind themselves permanently to take lower rates under the clause in the Act of Parliament?"

Answer—

"No; I do not think the Midland Company would bind themselves to take whatever rates are put in a Bill of this kind would be binding on the whole Midland system. I think the Midland Company, who have developed the ironstone and various trades upon their line, would be a guarantee to the trade that the Midland Company would put them on the same footing."

That is to say, the same footing as Staveley. Well, Sir, when the Midland Company made that railway, the Iron Masters' Association of Staffordshire applied to Sir James Allport to redeem the pledges he had given. But he said—

"We cannot without the consent of other Companies; we have entered into an agreement with other Companies, and without them we cannot reduce our rates."

Now, what we complain of is that such a combination should have been entered into. I venture to say that it is an unholy combination, because the result of it is this—that, although we could easily satisfy a particular Company that it is to their interest to reduce certain rates and charges, they are unable to do it, because the other Companies with whom they are acting will not agree. Suppose, for instance, a trader goes to the London and North-Western Railway Company in order to get a rate between two stations on their line; the Company see that their traffic would be increased by granting a rate; but they cannot do it without having first obtained the consent of the Great Western and the Midland Companies. As they are competing with each other for the traffic, it is impossible to obtain their consent; and the effect is that no reduced rates are secured. Originally there was only one railway to Liverpool; but since that day two other Companies have lines to Liver-

pool. Nevertheless, since this competition has existed the rates to Liverpool, instead of having been lowered, have been increased by 25 per cent, and our rates in Staffordshire are higher at this moment to ports of embarkation than in any district in the world. I believe that there is no case in which the charges are so high as in South Staffordshire. We had thought that when the Midland Company obtained their Bill we should have had some reduction; but I am sorry to say that we have got none. I ask this House, therefore, to mark in a solemn manner their feeling that they object to pledges of this kind being given if they are to be followed by a refusal to carry them out. I beg, Sir, to second the Resolution which has been moved by the hon. Baronet.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, whilst not unwilling to consider favourably an application from the said Company, under proper conditions, for power to make arrangements with other Companies tending to economise the cost of transport to the Company, refuses to entertain the same as a mere incident in a Bill for miscellaneous objects, and unaccompanied by the offer of any compensating advantages to the public.—(*Sir Bernhard Samuelson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. MAPPIN: I do not think that the arguments which have been advanced by the hon. Gentlemen who have moved and seconded the Resolution are such as to justify the House in taking this Bill out of the ordinary course. It has been admitted that the Midland Railway Company have always been desirous of consulting the interests of the traders. This is hardly a question which can be discussed in this House; but all questions in regard to rates may be discussed before a Select Committee; and will the hon. Members, or anybody else, say that this is a ground for objecting to the second reading of this Bill in order to insert in the measure provisions of an unusual character? We have been led to believe that a Bill will be introduced shortly into the House which will deal specially with the subject of the railway rates of all Companies; but if questions of this kind are to be dealt with in Private Bills, the expense which will be entailed upon the promoters of such

Mr. Hickman

Private Bills will be enormous. I think the clauses which are inserted in the Bill, as it now stands, are very reasonable clauses. We must consider the immense competition which Railway Companies have to meet. We must also remember that these Companies are compelled to run daily a superfluous number of trains, far beyond what the Companies require, in order to afford facilities for their traffic. I believe there are about 40 passenger trains daily from Manchester to London; and when we know that many of these trains are not half-filled, it is apparent that in some cases they do not pay their working expenses. Under these circumstances, I do not think the House will be prepared to say that a clause of this kind to compel Railway Companies to make terms with their competitors for the sole purpose of securing the public convenience ought to be inserted. The clause as it stands in the Bill is, I believe, a wide one; but it may be altered in Committee, and special terms laid down on which the Midland Railway might be able to base its arrangements. I trust that the hon. Baronet will not feel called upon to press his objections to this Bill. If the Bill is sent up to a Committee in the same way as other Private Bills, I believe that the interests of the public will be protected, while, at the same time, the interests of the Midland Railway will also be studied.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: I hope the House will allow me, for a few moments, to refer to the general question which has been raised by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Hickman) below the Gangway. I think that he has hit the nail on the head in the observations he has made. He complains that after the traders of Staffordshire had supported the Midland Railway Company in opposition to another line they failed to obtain the benefits which they hoped to secure for the district. I believe that Parliament has done great injury by granting competing lines of railway, instead of regulating those which already existed. The hon. Member for the Hallamshire Division of the West Riding (Mr. Mappin) has referred to the fact that Railway Companies are compelled to run duplicate trains at an enormous loss; but so long as this is the case, and so long as this ruinous system of competition is carried on and

asked for by the traders, the traders of the country will have to complain of the conduct of the Railway Companies, and of the high tolls charged by Companies which used to run as competing railways, but who are now compelled to work in co-operation. The effect of all our system of railway legislation has been to oblige the Railway Companies to raise double and treble the amount of capital which the country requires for the conveyance of its traffic. If the House will allow this Bill to go to a Committee with the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Banbury (Sir Bernhard Samuelson), all these questions will be carefully considered, and the Midland Company enabled to make arrangements which will suit the interests of the trade.

Mr. WIGGIN: My hon. Friend the Member for Banbury (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) has admitted that no Company has acted more liberally and more generously to the public than the Midland Company. I happen to know something about that Company; I know the Directors personally; and I know that they all feel that the interests of the Midland Railway are bound up with the interests and prosperity of the country. They have done everything to develop and increase the trade of the country. This Bill will give increased facilities to the Company for making better arrangements with regard to competing railways, by means of which a reduction in the number of trains and a considerable saving in the working expenses of the line may be effected. If the hon. Member for Wolverhampton

Mr. Hickman) has a grievance, his proper plan is to go before the Committee; and therefore I hope the House will take the course in regard to this Bill which it usually takes on other occasions—that is, that they will allow the Bill to be read a second time and sent to a Select Committee, before whom any suggestion, any grievance, or any recommendations will, doubtless, be properly attended to. I hope the hon. Member for Banbury will be satisfied with the clause already contained in the Bill, and that he will not press the Amendment.

Mr. MAGNIAC: My hon. Friend who spoke after the Mover of the Amendment (Mr. Mappin) said that there was no reason for taking this Bill out of the ordinary course. Now, I

think that there is every reason for doing so. The Bill itself appears to involve a new departure from railway legislation; and I venture to assert that in the Midland Counties there is universal dissatisfaction as to the way in which those counties are served by the Railway Companies. There is not one of them which has not tied down and bound its own hands by agreements with other Companies which render it utterly impossible for them to do justice to the people whose interests they ought to serve. To-day we hear the old story—let the Bill be read a second time, and it can be amended in Committee. We have heard that over and over again in this House for the last 30 years. A Railway Company, be it remembered, goes into a Parliamentary Committee with the money of the shareholders; it obtains the most expensive legal advice that can be got; perhaps it gets beaten one year; but it will be found that the next year the same measure is brought forward again. What is the result of this? The opponents have exhausted their means and their money in opposing it in the first instance. Everyone connected with the Midland Company is aware of that fact, and knows very well that it has been going on for years. The Midland Company has been asking every year for fresh legislation; not only have they dealt with the question of rates, but it is impossible to tell in a Bill of this sort what question is not dealt with; and I defy anybody to say what a Bill of this kind may not do. I think there ought to be some better mode of ascertaining the nature of the provisions of Private Bills, so that the public may know at once what is really going to be proposed. I hope that my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) will not take the disinterested advice which has been given to him; that he will not allow this Bill to go into Committee; but that he will take the sense of the House upon this new departure in railway legislation.

Sir RICHARD PAGET: I have no desire to find fault with the Midland Railway Company for the course it has taken; but I simply wish to say that we have no evidence, if the House refuses to accept this Resolution, that the matter can be dealt with in Committee, and for this reason—that the interests of the general public are not represented

upon a Committee, nor do the public appear before the Committee. The only questions fought are the interests of rival Companies, and the public have nobody to support them, so that it is in vain to attempt to get their interests considered. It is invariably the case that a Select Committee upstairs only deals with those questions which are fought out in the interests of rival railways. I think this is not a Bill which ought to go before a Committee without some such Resolution as that which my hon. Friend has prepared; and therefore I give my hearty support to the Amendment.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. MUNDELLA): My hon. Friend the Member for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) is perfectly justified in opposing this Bill as it stands; and unless the Midland Railway Company are prepared, as I understand them to be, to accept a clause safeguarding the interests of the public, I shall certainly oppose, or ask the House to postpone, the second reading of the Bill until some arrangement with the Company can be made. This Bill contains, no doubt, powers of amalgamation quite unprecedented in an Omnibus Bill of this character. I do not say that these powers may not be most desirable, not only in the interests of the Company, but of the public. No doubt, the principle of competition has in many instances been carried to an unreasonable length. A large number of trains are run, many of which are comparatively empty; and it is time that some better means were come to for putting an end to the wasteful system of management now pursued by Railway Companies. But this House has a right to know, before assenting to a Bill of this character, the nature of the arrangements proposed by the Company; and we have a right to be told what advantage the public will derive from it. A perfectly correct account has been given by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Hickman) in regard to the Midland Company and its dealing with the traders of South Staffordshire; but I think that the statement of the hon. Member would have been more appropriate on the second reading of the Bill which I hope to introduce to the House next Monday. This is, undoubtedly, a case for investigation and

inquiry, and possibly a case for the consideration of the Railway Commissioners themselves. A clause has, however, been submitted to the Railway Department of the Board of Trade to-day on behalf of the Company which, if introduced into the Bill, will provide that any agreement made under the powers of the Bill shall receive the assent of the Board of Trade, or of some tribunal nominated by that Department. That clause is as follows:—

"Any agreement made under the powers of this Act shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Trade or a tribunal to be nominated by them in that behalf in manner provided by Part III. (relating to Working Agreements) of 'The Railway Clauses Consolidation Act, 1863'; and in considering any agreement submitted to them for approval the Board of Trade, or such tribunal as aforesaid, shall have due regard to the interests of the public and of other railways, and may attach to their approval of any agreement such terms and conditions as they may think necessary or just for the public protection and advantage, and for the security of any other Railway Company or Companies."

I should not have been prepared to assent to the second reading of the Bill if I had not received information from the officials of the Board of Trade that this clause is to be introduced, and that they are satisfied with it. I trust that my hon. Friend the Member for the Hallamshire Division of the West Riding (Mr. Mappin), who, I believe, represents the Company here, will be prepared to engage on the part of the Company that if the Bill is read a second time this clause will be introduced into it. If not, I must certainly oppose the second reading.

MR. MAPPIN: I have no instructions to do so.

MR. MUNDELLA: If any hon. Member on behalf of the Midland Company will accept the clause, I will ask the House to allow the Bill to be read a second time; because I certainly consider that some of the powers which it asks for are very desirable. I have no wish to protract the further procedure in regard to this Bill, if there is an understanding that this clause is inserted, giving the Board of Trade, or any tribunal the Board of Trade might appoint, a control over the arrangements.

MR. J. W. BAROLAY: Are we to understand that the Board of Trade is going to take the responsibility of assenting to a contemplated amalgamation between the Midland Railway Company

Sir Richard Paget

and other Companies? [Mr. MUNDALLA: No; not at all.] If that were so, I think the opposition to the Bill should be continued. I think it is impossible to follow this Bill clause by clause in a discussion upon the second reading; and I think the best course would be to withdraw the Amendment on the understanding that we reserve the right of opposing the Bill when it comes back to us on the Report of the Committee. There would also be a further understanding that the Board of Trade will appear before the Committee in order to see that this clause is inserted in the Bill, which, in their opinion, will fully protect the interests of the public. If the interests of the public are hereafter found not to be protected by that clause, it will be open for any hon. Member to oppose the Bill on Report.

MR. STAVELEY HILL: We have only at present the Bill before us; and although the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has placed before us a clause, we have not yet had an opportunity of seeing it. The right hon. Gentleman further tells the House that the Bill which he is going to introduce on Monday is likely very seriously to affect this question. Then, what I wish to propose, under the circumstances, is a course which, I venture to think, will meet the urgency of the case. Certainly, I, for one, am not prepared, having only just heard the clause read, to accept it. I would therefore propose that the debate be adjourned for the purpose of affording an opportunity for the consideration of the Bill, together with the clause referred to by the President of the Board of Trade.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That the Debate be now adjourned."
—(Mr. Staveley Hill.)

Motion agreed to.

Debate adjourned till Tuesday next.

BELFAST MAIN DRAINAGE BILL. RESOLUTION.

MR. SEXTON, in rising to move —

"(1.) That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, that they do insert in the Bill Clauses for the following purposes:—

To assimilate the Municipal franchise of the borough of Belfast to the existing Parliamentary franchise;

To enable every person qualified to vote at a Municipal election in Belfast to be

a candidate for election to the office of councillor or alderman;

To constitute the present boundary of the Parliamentary borough of Belfast the boundary of the Municipal borough, and to direct and provide for a new division of the Municipal borough into wards, as recommended in the Report of the Municipal Boundaries (Ireland) Commission, dated the 27th of June 1882, and to authorize a proportionate increase in the number of aldermen and councillors;

To provide for an entire new election of all the aldermen and councillors of the borough, upon the reformed franchise, within the present year.

"(2.) That it be an Instruction to the Committee, that they do strike out of the Bill such Clauses as do not relate to the Main Drainage Scheme."

said: In moving these Resolutions I would venture respectfully to solicit for this matter the particular attention of the House. The occasion is singularly exceptional, for although this Motion is directed immediately to the matter of a Private Bill, it will be found to have a bearing, and an important bearing, at the present juncture, upon the great public question of the local government of town communities in Ireland. The Bill referred to in the Motion is a Bill promoted by the Town Council of Belfast for the purpose of executing a main drainage scheme. The Town Council has been peddling with the subject of main drainage for the last quarter of a century; and the result of their exploits upon this question, legislative and otherwise, was summed up the other day with general assent at a public meeting of the ratepayers of that town, when a speaker said that the Corporation of Belfast were the chief polluters of river and sea in the Three Kingdoms. I do not propose to discuss the merits of the scheme, except to say that it rests upon the authority of one solitary engineer; that it is opposed by many engineers; that it was emphatically condemned 20 years ago by a Commission acting on behalf of the Local Harbour Board; and that the general drift of the local opinion is that this scheme, if carried into effect, would create in the vicinity of Belfast a vast cesspool, which would endanger the public health; and, finally, that although the Corporation only propose to expend £150,000 on this project, good judges think that the scheme, if it is ever carried into effect, will cost the good round sum of £500,000 in addition to the debt of £500,000 now resting upon the Cor.

poration. My object, however, is not to discuss the scheme, but to point out the constitution and conduct of the Governing Body of Belfast, and to urge the House to seize this opportunity of reforming the conduct of the Corporation of Belfast in the only way open to the House, by reforming its constitution. The fact which I will place in the foreground in respect to the local government of Belfast is this—that there are three Local Boards in Belfast, and that this Bill is promoted by one of them, while the other two oppose it. The Bill is promoted by the Corporation, and it is opposed by the Water Board and by the Harbour Board; so that the condition of local government in Belfast is this—that these three Boards, instead of sensibly agreeing among themselves at home by appointing arbitrators or by some other method, have changed the scene of conflict from Belfast to London; and we are now about to engage a battalion of counsel and an army of witnesses to fight out their disagreements by the cumbersome and costly method provided by this House for the business of Private Bill legislation, with the result that the whole costs of this prolonged litigation will fall ultimately, in one form or another, upon the unfortunate ratepayers of Belfast. But cost is no consideration to the Town Council of Belfast; in fact, I must say the Town Council of Belfast appear to be possessed of what I would call a mania for legislation. How many local Acts have the Corporation passed in 40 years? The House will be astonished to find that they have passed no less than 14. I believe it would be hard to find anything to compare with that in the history of the legislation of any Municipality in the Kingdom. The expenditure in Parliamentary costs which this Corporation has placed on the town of Belfast in one generation is £150,000; and I am driven to the conclusion from the fact that there must be some official person or persons concerned with the Town Council of Belfast who find it convenient to promote Bills in this House year after year, and who find it desirable to spend thousands and tens of thousands of the ratepayers' money under the agreeably vague and general heading of "Parliamentary costs." Seven of the 14 local Acts have been passed within the last 20 years, about

which time the Town Council began to consider the question of main drainage. I want to know why the question of main drainage was not dealt with in any of these Acts? The last Act passed by the Town Council was in 1884. It was a very considerable measure. It cost a great deal of money. Why did not the Town Council of Belfast mature their main drainage scheme and include it in that measure; or why did they not postpone the Bill until the main drainage scheme was matured, instead of placing the cost of two considerable measures upon the ratepayers of the town? I am entitled to emphasize the fact, at the same time, that Belfast is suffering at the present moment from acute depression of trade, and that the bulk of the persons who have to pay the cost of these proceedings find it very hard indeed to procure the means of subsistence. I have also to complain that the ratepayers of Belfast were not consulted in reference to this Bill; they have not been afforded by the Town Council an opportunity of holding a public meeting to consider the Bill and criticize this scheme, or of offering any alternative scheme or schemes. It is no easy thing in Belfast to find men of different religious creeds agreeing upon any public question; but upon the question now before the House I am in a position to say that the great mass of the people of all religious creeds are absolutely of one opinion, and that that opinion is against the Corporation. [Sir JAMES CORRY: No, no!] It is proper to observe that the hon. Baronet who was lately expelled from the representation of Belfast says "No!" He is, I suppose, taking a Christian revenge on those who rejected him. Two public meetings of ratepayers have been held in Belfast in the course of the last six weeks—one of them attended by Protestants in St. George's Hall, and one attended by Catholics in St. Mary's Hall; and at both meetings the conduct of the Corporation in reference to this matter was strongly condemned. At the meeting in St. George's Hall, on the 29th of January, this Resolution was passed—

"That we are strongly of opinion that before the Corporation proceeded to obtain Parliamentary powers to carry out such an extensive scheme of sewerage as that which is at present before Parliament entailing such enormous ex-

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penditure, they ought to have publicly offered a prize of £100 for the best plan."

Mr. Dunwoody, the mover of the resolution, said that if the scheme should turn out a failure it would do infinitely more harm than at the best it could possibly do good; and that, therefore, the Council ought to take time and do the thing well and properly. At the meeting in St. Mary's Hall on the 1st of February the Chairman said that—

"They had no voice in the drafting of the Bill, that they had no representation in the Town Council to speak on behalf of the working men of Belfast, and that they looked upon the works and improvements of the Council with the greatest suspicion."

Mr. James Dempsey, a prominent citizen of Belfast, said—

"I do not think it long since the Town Councilors of Hull were mulcted in a large sum of money for introducing a Bill without calling a town meeting to ask the approbation of the people. The Town Council have no public spirit, it is simply the arrangement of a petty clique meeting monthly in public and occasionally in Committee. This Bill was concocted in Committee, it has not been discussed in public, and it has been published in only one newspaper. I wrote to Mr. Haskitt, and was unable to get a copy of it."

Another gentleman, Mr. Mellugh, said—

"If this measure regarding drainage were a good one the Council might have let the ratepayers know what it was. It would have done no harm to have called a meeting of ratepayers to see if it could have stood the light of day."

It cannot stand the light of day; and the ratepayers of Belfast, through me, have petitioned this House against the Bill. I desire to say that they would have opposed the Bill in the regular way were it not that the crisis through which they are passing, the shrinking of incomes, and the great poverty prevailing in the town, has prevented them on this occasion, as in former years, from opposing the Bill by counsel and witnesses in the regular way. They are unable, at this moment, from their poverty to do this. I have, however, presented a Petition from the ratepayers to this House; and I think that, under the circumstances, I am justified, and that it is my duty in the interest of these ratepayers, to direct the attention of the House to the matter. The Town Council in Belfast, with reference to this question, have pursued towards the ratepayers a policy which I must describe as a policy of stealth; and in the House of

Commons they have pursued, not a policy of stealth, but a policy of headlong haste. The first reading was taken, undoubtedly, before the Recess occasioned by the change of Government; but the second reading was taken without the ordinary and effective Notice to Members of the House, being snatched on the very day the House re-assembled after the Recess by an inpromptu Motion without Notice, at a moment when the Irish Members, who were well known to take a deep interest in the Bill, had not the slightest idea that it was intended to rush it through the House. Such a practice may be clever and may be sly, but it sometimes defeats itself. If the ratepayers had received proper notice of the second reading of the Bill I should not have troubled the House with this opposition; but the second reading was cleverly snatched, and that fact will insure that the Bill will receive much more vigilant consideration in all its further stages, if ever it reaches any further stage—a matter in regard to which I entertain a very considerable doubt. I ask the House to seize this opportunity of reforming the constitution of the Governing Body of Belfast; and the only way in which it can be reformed is by extending the municipal franchise, and giving the people of Belfast the right of deciding what schemes shall be carried out for the future benefit of the town. Now, the population of Belfast is 250,000. It has a municipal income of £200,000 annually, and a debt of £750,000. The Parliamentary voters number 32,000; but how stands the municipal franchise? The Chairman of the meeting at St. George's Hall, on the 29th of January, said—

"There is in this town a population of 250,000 souls. Less than 6,000 of that 250,000 are entitled to vote in the election of those who have charge of the rates. Forty persons constitute the Town Council. These 40 people are sufficiently shrewd in the management of their own concerns and in the disposal of their own funds to their own profit, but how different it is when they are dipping their hands into the money of the ratepayers."

The Chairman of the meeting said—

"The municipal franchise is a fictitious franchise. Out of almost 250,000 of a population only about 6,700 have a voice in the election of Town Councilors. It is a franchise for the extensive proprietors of house property, and not for working men, and we are determined to oppose the Bill unless a clause is inserted in it

mation with any Company with which this railway is in communication. Now, the House is aware that the Midland Railway and its branches extend over a wide extent of England, and that the line is in communication with railways from the Land's End to the frontier of Scotland. Therefore the Bill, as it stands, actually asks for the power of amalgamation with almost every Company; at any rate, in England and Wales. [An hon. MEMBER: And Scotland, too.] My hon. Friend says that it touches Scotland also; and therefore, by assenting to the second reading of the Bill, the powers contained in it will also apply to the Scotch railways. I do not know whether that is the intention of the promoters of the Bill; but, to my apprehension, that would be the effect of passing the Bill in its present shape. Surely that is a question of principle which ought to be carefully considered by the House before the second reading is passed. For my own part, I am prepared to say that I believe it is desirable that there should be a reconstruction and amalgamation of Railway Companies; and I believe that the sooner that is effected the better, for this reason—that it would enable the Railway Companies to diminish their expenses, and give them the means of reducing their rates and charges to the public. But it is one thing for this power to be obtained by the Railway Companies, in order that they may be in a position to lower their rates, and it is quite another thing to feel sure that they would make use of that power in the interests of the public when it is conferred upon them. I certainly cannot find, within the four corners of this Bill, anything which will insure to the public any compensating advantages for the powers given to the Midland Railway Company if this Bill passes. That is the point to which I think it is important to direct the attention of the House. I believe that every hon. Member will admit that of all the Railway Companies the Midland Railway Company is probably the one which, on the whole, has done more in the interests of the public than any other Railway Company. I candidly acknowledge that they were the first to introduce a system of running trains at a comparatively cheap and uniform rate of fares. But that is

not a reason why we should not take precautions in order to be certain that the powers we grant to them will be used, not only to their own advantage, but also to the advantage of the public. Evidence was given before the Railway Rates Committee, which sat during two Sessions, that certain promises, which the Midland Railway held out when they applied for an extension of their system, have not altogether been fulfilled. I have no knowledge of the facts of the case myself; but I think there are hon. Members in the House who will be able to give information upon the matter. However honest a Railway Company may be, I think it is our duty in this House to see that the public interests are safeguarded. This is a question in which, at any rate, we ought to know that the attention of any Committee to whom the Bill may be referred will be fully drawn, and that the intentions of the House will be fully indicated and distinctly understood—namely, that if increased powers are to be given to this or any other Railway Company, some compensating advantages to the public will be looked for. For this reason I beg to move the Resolution which I now submit.

MR. HICKMAN: I rise for the purpose of seconding the Motion, and I ask for that indulgence of the House which is usually accorded to those who address it for the first time. I promise to be as brief as possible. My grounds of opposition to the Bill are quite distinct and separate from those of the hon. Baronet. I object to the Bill because, on a former occasion, in Private Bill legislation, the Midland Railway Company held out to the great iron districts of Staffordshire certain expectations, and gave certain pledges, which they have since altogether ignored and refused to carry out. The history of the transaction to which I refer is shortly this. In 1882 a Bill was promoted, called the Wolverhampton, Walsall, and Midland Junction Railway Bill. In opening the case before the Commons Committee, Sir Edmund Beckett said that the object of the line was not to serve mere local purposes, but to introduce the Midland system into Staffordshire. Although this was nominally a Private Bill, the Midland Company paid the expenses of promoting it, and they have since made the line. It is now in

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their possession, and worked by them. Sir James Allport, the then General Manager of the Midland Railway, in his evidence before the Commons Committee, was asked this Question—

"The promoters and ironmasters say that if you get to Wolverhampton they will have a reduction of rates. What is your opinion of that?"

The answer was—

"I have always been of opinion that the rates of the South Staffordshire district are too high. We have had no control of them. The London and North Western are the people who have fixed the rates, but they are too high."

In answer to another Question Sir James Allport said—

"I have no hesitation in saying that, in looking at other iron districts, the South Staffordshire rates are too high."

He was asked if there would be a permanent reduction, and his answer was—

"I should think so."

Sir James Allport was then asked—

"Suppose that you and the London and North Western Company got to longerhads, and then come to an arrangement: would that arrangement be permanent or temporary?"

Sir James Allport said, in reply—

"I cannot give you a better illustration than what we are doing, where we have it entirely in our own hands. We charge at present from the Staveley ironworks to London 10s. 6d. per ton."

Question—

"Who competes with you there?"

Answer—

"Nobody; it is entirely on our own line, and it is either 10s. 6d. or 11s. From South Staffordshire it is, I believe, 15s. I cannot give any better answer than that."

Asked—

"What is the difference between the distances?"

The answer was—

"The distance from Staveley to London is greater than from Wolverhampton. That shows what the Midland Company do."

Now, Staveley is 149 miles from London, and Birmingham only 113; but the Birmingham rate is 15s. for 113 miles, while the Staveley rate is only 12s. 6d. for 149 miles. Sir James Allport repeated the same evidence before a Committee of the House of Lords; and he added that his Company had done very little in Staffordshire in respect of the London trade, which, he said, was owing to the excessive gradients on

their existing lines. He was asked this Question—

"If you could get a line more suitable for the traffic, you would be inclined to push that trade to a considerable extent?"

Answer—

"Yes."

Question—

"Even by competing rates, if necessary?"

Answer—

"Yes; there is no reason why we should not."

He was then asked by Earl Fortescue—

"Are the Midland Company prepared to bind themselves permanently to take lower rates under the clause in the Act of Parliament?"

Answer—

"No; I do not think the Midland Company would, because whatever rates are put in a list of this kind would be binding on the whole Midland system. I think the Midland Company, who have developed the ironstone and various trades upon their line, would be a guarantee to the trade that the Midland Company would put them on the same footing."

That is to say, the same footing as Staveley. Well, Sir, when the Midland Company made that railway, the Iron Masters' Association of Staffordshire applied to Sir James Allport to redeem the pledges he had given. But he said—

"We cannot without the consent of other Companies, we have entered into an agreement with other Companies, and without them we cannot reduce our rates."

Now, what we complain of is that such a combination should have been entered into. I venture to say that it is an unholy combination, because the result of it is this—that, although we could easily satisfy a particular Company that it is to their interest to reduce certain rates and charges, they are unable to do it, because the other Companies with whom they are acting will not agree. Suppose, for instance, a trader goes to the London and North-Western Railway Company in order to get a rate between two stations on their line; the Company are that their traffic would be increased by granting a rate; but they cannot do it without having first obtained the consent of the Great Western and the Midland Companies. As they are competing with each other for the traffic, it is impossible to obtain their consent; and the effect is that no reduced rates are secured. Originally there was only one railway to Liverpool; but since that day two other Companies have lines to Liver-

portionally increased, or, in other words, that the incidence of taxation might fall more heavily on the dwellings of the poor."

I will sum up by a reference to the speech of the Chairman at the meeting in St. George's Hall. He said—

"The householders and ratepayers of Belfast are totally exhausted by paying the rates, and the landlords of the houses are obliged to charge the tenant a high rent—a rent which is perfectly unendurable. In the locality in which I live house rent which 20 years ago was 1s. 6d. a-week is now 2s. 6d. a-week on account of the rates."

I condemn the system of local taxation as being unjust and iniquitous, and I wish to point out to the House that it has already been emphatically condemned by two Committees, which, by their composition, were of great authority, one being presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen), and the other by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), the present Leader of the Opposition. I rest my claim to the assimilation of the Municipal and Parliamentary franchises in Belfast upon this fact—and I beg the attention of the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney) to it—that this House four years ago, and Parliament four years ago, by the English Municipal Corporations Act, applied the principle for which I now appeal to all the boroughs in England. I further say that this House has, in several Sessions, by the passage of the Irish Municipal Franchise Act, endeavoured to apply the principle for which I now ask to all boroughs in Ireland. I pass on to point out that what I ask to be applied to Belfast has been for many years the law in the borough of Dublin. And, lastly, I say that this House last year took advantage of the introduction of a Private Bill by the Rathmines Township Board to pass a clause popularizing the franchise in the sense of my present Motion, and that clause is now part of the operative law, and has worked with most salutary effect. I ask the House to follow out in this case the policy they adopted last year in the case of the township of Rathmines. Next, I ask that the property qualification shall be removed, and I think everyone will admit that it is absurd to place in the path of municipal voters a property bar which no longer exists so far as Members of this House are concerned. The

chief defect in the town of Belfast is the dead level of uniformity; but if my proposition regarding the property qualification be adopted, the effect will be to produce in the Council more adequate representation of the variety of classes and the diversity of interests existing in the town. Clause 11 of the Act of 1882 provides that—

"Every person shall be qualified to be elected and to be a Councillor who is, at the time of election, qualified to elect to the office of Councillor."

["That does not apply to Ireland."] The Municipal Act of 1882 does not extend to Scotland or Ireland; but I ask that it should be made to do so. In the third place, I ask that the boundary of the borough and the division of the wards shall be revised. Four years ago a Royal Commission reported, after an elaborate inquiry of 12 days conducted upon the spot, that the boundary of the borough ought to be extended, and that the number of the wards should be increased from five to eight. That Report has been already adopted for two purposes. It was adopted in 1884 for the purposes of the Water Board, and this strange anomaly has been produced—that persons living outside the municipal boundary, but inside the Parliamentary boundary of Belfast, are now actually taxed for the purposes of water, although they have no voice whatever in the representation. In the second place, the Report of the Royal Commission was adopted for the Parliamentary borough of Belfast by the Redistribution of Seats Act of last year; and, seeing that the Report of the Royal Commission has been applied by this House to two uses for which it never was intended, I think I may very reasonably demand that now, after an interval of four years, the Report shall be applied to the particular use for which it was intended. The present boundary of Belfast was fixed 33 years ago upon a Report of a Royal Commission. The population of the town then was only one-half what it is now. The number of houses in the town was a great deal less than one-half, and the valuation of the town was only one-fourth what it is at the present moment. And, Sir, the town has progressed so much in every way; it has so rapidly and so greatly extended in all directions that the boundary and the wards made in 1853 have many years ago become

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absurdly inappropriate. I may add that the scheme which I propose for the extension of the boundary and the re-division of the wards was not only the scheme of the Royal Commission, but the scheme of the Corporation itself. If the wards are increased, the number of Councillors will have to be increased in proportion—from 40 to 64; 64 is, I think, about the number of the Corporation of Dublin. It is certainly not too large a number of Councillors for a town of the extent and importance of Belfast; but if there is any radical objection on this point, I would be willing the members of the Corporation should be re-distributed, and that to each of the eight wards there should be given one Alderman and four Councillors. Finally, I ask that there should be a new election of all the Councillors on the new franchise in the course of the present year. In this I follow the precedent of the Dublin Corporation Act of 1849. That Act altered the franchise and the division of the wards in Dublin; and by the 14th clause it enacted that there should be an entirely new election of Aldermen and Councillors for the borough; that the Councillors should all go out of office on the 25th of November; and that the Aldermen should hold office for two days longer in order to conduct the new elections. Now, if there was cause for a new election in the case of the borough of Dublin, it is stronger in the case of the borough of Belfast; because if you carry this Motion, not only will you alter the franchise and the division of the wards, but you will alter the boundary of the borough and the number of the wards. And there is a still stronger reason, and that is that you will be in the presence of a scheme involving the health and comfort and the convenience of the great body of the people in the town, and involving, as I have said before, the incurring possibly of a debt of £500,000. And I maintain that it is impossible for this House, in presence of the fact that all parties are agreed that in a year or two a measure such as that I propose for Belfast must be given for every borough in Ireland—in the presence of that fact it is impossible for the House, for anyone in the House, to contend that a sum of £500,000 should be expended by the Corporation of Belfast, which is a body now devoid of all moral authority, which would not repre-

sent the new electoral body, and which has acted in this matter without consultation with the ratepayers, but actually in the face of every evidence of disapprobation and dissent from the ratepayers. Now, Sir, I claim that the public voice of Belfast is altogether in my favour; that not a voice has been raised on behalf of the Corporation; that the merits and facts of the case as expounded by me are altogether upon my side; and that the House is bound, by the precedents I have correctly and precisely cited to it, to proceed in the direction I suggest in my Motion. I assure the House that in making this Motion I have not been actuated in the least degree by any political motive. *(A laugh.)* I perceive that that the hon. Members who laugh at that expression are Englishmen who know very little about Belfast, and I notice that the hon. Members for Belfast maintain a becoming gravity. The reason why I say I have no political motive is this—that upon the Parliamentary vote which I propose to apply to the municipal affairs of Belfast, Belfast at the General Election returned four Conservatives. Can I, then, have a political motive? Like the hon. Baronet Sir James Corry, formerly Member for Belfast, but now the Member for Mid Armagh, I am taking a Christian revenge—I am endeavouring to give the full franchise to the men in the municipality, to the men amongst others who, by their Parliamentary votes, defeated me. But, Sir, in the course of my canvass and campaign in Belfast, I went through the workmen's quarters, and I learned so much of the nature and the character of the municipal government of the town, of its secret ways, of its partiality, of its obstinacy, of its extravagance, of its supercilious disregard of the public opinion of the town—I learnt so much of the feelings of the ratepayers, their indignation, their helplessness, and the hardships they had to suffer, that I determined, and I promised—and I am keeping my promise now—that I would lose no opportunity which might offer to appeal earnestly to this House—lose no time, for there is no time to be lost—in endeavouring to place the local government of the town upon a convenient and reasonable footing. I see sitting in their places two of the Members for the town. They are promoters of the Bill. One is connected with

several members of the Council, the other is himself a member of the Council, an Alderman (Mr. Haslett). The worthy Alderman is recognized by public opinion in Belfast as being the Town Clerk's Grand Vizier—as being the person who, next to the supreme Town Clerk himself, is master of the Council, who, next to the supreme Town Clerk, is the ruling municipal spirit. Well, Sir, I challenge the hon. Gentleman to vote against this Motion, and then go and justify himself to the men who sent him here. With regard to the other two Members for the town—there are four in all—I am happy to say—and I have already quoted the crushing indictment levelled by one of them, the hon. Member for the East Division (Mr. De Cobain), against the fiscal policy which has been pursued for 40 years by the dominant party—I am sanguine of their support. They were elected by the votes of the working men; they have pledged themselves to the electors to support and defend the governing point of my Motion—namely, the assimilation of the Municipal and Parliamentary franchise. These two Gentlemen are proud of the title of Orange Democrats, and I should certainly be very much surprised if they did anything else but cordially support my Motion, the immediate effect of which will be to give the Protestant Conservatives, the Orange artisans of Belfast, their proper share in the control, levying, and expenditure of those local taxes which the law obliges them to pay. The great majority of the Members of this House are credited in Ireland with a desire to reform the local government of that country; and it is because I am persuaded of the sincerity of that desire that I confidently give the House an opportunity of affording the people of Ireland an earnest of that sincerity by accepting the present Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, that they do insert in the Bill Clauses for the following purposes:—

To assimilate the Municipal franchise of the borough of Belfast to the existing Parliamentary franchise;

To enable every person qualified to vote at a Municipal election in Belfast to be a candidate for election to the office of councillor or alderman;

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To constitute the present boundary of the Parliamentary borough of Belfast the boundary of the Municipal borough, and to direct and provide for a new division of the Municipal borough into wards, as recommended in the Report of the Municipal Boundaries (Ireland) Commission, dated the 27th of June 1882, and to authorize a proportionate increase in the number of aldermen and councillors;

To provide for an entire new election of all the aldermen and councillors of the borough, upon the reformed franchise, within the present year.”—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. COURTNEY): Mr. Speaker, the hon. Gentleman seems to have thought the Motion he has made is somewhat extraordinary, and he gave two reasons by way of apology for it. He says that the second reading of the Bill was snatched. I may point out that the Standing Orders of the House prescribe that three clear days' Notice of the second reading of a Bill should be given. Three clear days' Notice was given in this case; and, therefore, those who were opposed to the Bill had ample Notice of its coming on. [*Mr. SEXTON:* During the three days the House was in Recess.] It cannot be held that the second reading was snatched. Secondly, it is suggested that within the next 18 months or so what is now proposed to be done in respect to Belfast must be done in respect to the other cities and boroughs of Ireland. Well, that may be taken in two ways. Inasmuch as a general measure is coming on, it may be suggested that that is a very good reason why we should wait, and not deal with any special place beforehand; but I do not rise to dwell upon the merits of the case at all. I rise, Sir, to submit to the House some preliminary considerations which will enable hon. Members to pronounce an opinion as to whether this question should be now entertained. I have had to consider, of course, the matter, in fulfilment of the duties of the Office I have the honour to hold; and I confess I have some clear opinions on the subject myself, and I hope to be able to explain my meaning to the House, so that they may agree in my judgment of the matter. Now, the hon. Gentleman went at great length into the merits of the drainage question—he said a great deal about the cost, about the engineer, about the way the scheme was originated, and he went into several

facts as to which his Instruction has no bearing whatever. He also went at length into the propriety of assimilating the Municipal and Parliamentary franchises in Belfast, and of extending the borough boundaries, and said much in condemnation of the character of the existing Town Council of Belfast. Now, I am going to assume that all the hon. Gentleman's allegations are true—"Hear, hear!" and "No, no!" For the sake of argument I may assume them to be true. I assume the character of the Council at Belfast to be worse than it has been described by the hon. Gentleman; that the Council is as deficient in common sense as we are asked to believe; that it is unjust; that it is extravagant. I assume that it is desirable to assimilate the Municipal and Parliamentary franchises in Belfast; that it is proper the borough of Belfast should be enlarged; that the case the hon. Gentleman has made out is reasonable; even then I put it to the House that, all these things being conceded and accepted as true, the Instruction to the Committee which the hon. Gentleman has proposed ought not to be entertained. I come, as a lawyer would say, to demur. For the purpose of argument I accept his statement of the facts; but I demur to the action he proposes to take—namely, to move an Instruction to the Committee on the Belfast Main Drainage Scheme, by which the Committee will be ordered to insert the clauses he proposes to have inserted therein. So far as I understand it, the Instruction does not give the Committee any discretion; it orders the Committee to do all these things, not to discriminate between one and the other thing, but to give this one, and throw out the other. The Committee on this Private Bill is to be ordered to do all the things suggested. The Instruction is divisible into two parts, one the assimilation of the Municipal and Parliamentary franchises, and the other the enlargement of the borough of Belfast. I think that, in respect to both of these subjects, the House will see it is improper to entertain this Instruction at this moment. The assimilation of the Parliamentary and Municipal franchises in Belfast is, as the hon. Member himself has said, a public question. It is a question which we ought to be discussing later in the evening, and not at the time when Private Business is transacted. To introduce upon a Private

Bill, upon the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, the question of the assimilation of the Municipal and Parliamentary franchises in Belfast only confuses the Business of the House. [Mr. SEXTON: It was done last year on the Rathfriland Bill.] I will come to that in due time. My present object is to point out the extraordinary inconvenience which may result if what is now being done were accepted as a precedent. We might have introduced, upon some small Bill dealing with a family property, a proposal to alter the tenure of land, or to abolish estates entail; in fact, proposals might be made to make the most radical alterations in the law of England in respect to landed property. We on this side of the House are supposed to be favourable to a scheme for the reform of county government; and if what the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton) proposes were agreed to, and taken as a precedent, we should have great questions of county government discussed as an annex to some small proposal connected with a particular county. We may have, as in this case, a borough Bill brought in, and we may, in respect to that Bill, introduce any political question we like. I wonder the hon. Gentleman, if he thought about it at all, did not go on to do something more than propose the assimilation of the Parliamentary and Municipal franchises in Belfast—I wonder he did not propose that in Belfast women should have the vote—a very good object, I admit, but altogether impertinent to the particular subject under discussion. There is the subject of proportional representation upon which I myself feel very strongly. I should, however, be very much astonished if, supposing the Corporation of Birmingham were to promote a Bill in respect to gas and water, it was proposed that it should be an Instruction to the Committee having to deal with that Bill that they introduce into Birmingham the system of proportional representation. I should be strongly in favour of the proposal; but I think my sense of the order and decency of the Business of this House would lead me to refuse to entertain it. The hon. Member has referred to certain actions taken by the House. They were all actions taken by the House in respect to Public Business. But there is one question—the question of what happened last July—which is a precedent in his favour.

There was a Bill brought in with respect to a portion of Dublin—Rathmines. On the consideration of that Bill, late in July, after the Bill had gone through its stages before the Select Committee, after it had passed the other House, it was proposed by a right hon. Gentleman to alter the municipal franchise within the district of Rathmines, and that was done. I do not shrink from the fact that the proposal was carried. If you look at the discussion on that Bill as I have done, you will find that the point I am now endeavouring to press on the House was not mentioned at all. A great authority in the House made the proposal; it was accepted and carried; but it was accepted and carried without reference to the question of the propriety or impropriety of the measure. ["Oh!"] That is a mere statement of fact. Consult *Hansard*, and you will find that the case of the Rathmines Bill ought not to be taken as a precedent. I appeal to the House, if they wish that the Business of the House should be conducted properly, to disregard the action taken in reference to the Rathmines Bill. The other part of the Instruction relates to the boundary of Belfast and the division of the wards. The first part of the Instruction deals with a public question; but the second part deals with a private question, and private questions the Orders of the House have jealously guarded. The question of the extension of the boundary of the borough of Belfast, desirable as extension is, no doubt, depends very largely upon the exact line of extension. The question involves that of rating, the rating of the inhabitants within the parts proposed to be annexed, the rating of Belfast, and the rating of the county from which the parts annexed are taken. All these things are carefully guarded in the Standing Orders of the House; and it is provided that of every alteration of the boundary of a borough Notice should be given in October and again in November, and that the whole neighbourhood was previously well-informed and warned of what is proposed. But this proposal is made without any such previous Notice. Without any observance of the Rules and Forms laid down by the House, it is proposed that this Committee must, without looking at the facts of the case, extend the boundary of the borough of

Belfast. It is impossible to conceive that the House will be so careless of its own Rules, will act in such defiance of the safeguards laid down, will be so indifferent to the conduct of its own private legislation, as to pass the Motion which the hon. Gentleman proposes. The alterations proposed by the hon. Gentleman may be assumed to be quite right in themselves. If brought forward at the proper time and in a proper manner they might be adopted: they would undoubtedly be supported by a large number of Members. It is most improper to propose them at this time; and what I desire is to restrict, if possible, the attention of the House, in the first place, at all events, to the preliminary question, ought this Instruction to be entertained? Let us decide that in the first place, allowing the case made out to be a good case. If we decide that the Instruction ought not to be entertained I apprehend it will fall to the ground. If we decide that the Instruction ought to be entertained we can then proceed to inquire into its merits, with a view to its adoption or otherwise. But I wish, Sir, to raise the preliminary objection that this Instruction is one of a character which the House ought not to approve, and for that purpose I propose to move the Previous Question, on which hon. Gentlemen will vote without expressing any opinion whatever as to the propriety of the alterations recommended by the hon. Gentleman. We shall vote only upon the question as to whether the Instruction is one which ought to be entertained at all; and I apprehend, if I move the Previous Question, the debate will, in the first place, at all events, be necessarily confined to the narrow question whether the Instruction ought to be entertained. [*Cries of "Shame!"*] Hon. Gentlemen call "Shame." I trust I shall never be ashamed to do something which is in the fulfilment of the duties of my Office, and in the protection of the order and course of the Business of this House. For that purpose I ask that the Previous Question should be proposed, and that the House should decide, in the first place, whether they will go any further in this matter. I will move the Previous Question, and then we shall vote "Aye" or "No" shall the Question be put. I think that the great majority of the Members of the House, certainly of the

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older Members of the House, will be so zealous of our Orders and Regulations that they will vote for the Previous Question, and thus refuse to allow the merits of the Instruction to be gone into. I beg, Sir, to move the Previous Question.

Previous Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Mr. SEXTON: As a question of Order, Mr. Speaker, I desire to ask whether the Previous Question will deter the House from considering the merits of the Bill—whether it is proposed to confine the debate within the narrow limits suggested by the hon. Gentleman?

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the debate can be strictly confined, on the Previous Question being moved, to the facts relating to whether the Question shall, or shall not, be put. The Original Question was that it be an Instruction to the Committee on this Bill that they shall insert in it clauses for the purposes stated in the Motion, since which the Previous Question has been moved, "That the Original Question be now put."

Mr. HASLETT: After the challenge that has been thrown out to me that I should rise to defend this Bill as one of the Belfast Members, I must say at the outset that I regret very much being called upon in this House to defend the Town Council of Belfast against an attack, to some extent personal, and to a very large extent absolutely erroneous. It has been said that the public of Belfast had no knowledge whatever that this Bill would be brought forward. It has been said that the ratepayers were ignorant of what it was proposed to do, and had no means of expressing an opinion upon the Bill—indeed, that the whole matter was conducted in a hole-in-the-corner way, and brought in a full-fledged shape before the public, without their having had the slightest opportunity of expressing themselves with regard to it, or voting upon it. Possibly, Sir, the Members of this House will not be surprised to find that, by your own laws, it was absolutely necessary that the Bill should be brought in before November, and that on the 25th of November one-third of the entire Corporation retired. Well, if there had been the opposition to this

measure in Belfast, touching the Bill itself, of which we hear so much, surely the question would have been raised at the election of the Town Council; surely the question would have been made a Party one, or an election one on the 25th of November? On the contrary, however, not a single meeting was held in opposition to the Bill; and, so far as I know, not one solitary letter has even appeared in the public Press, in relation to the candidates who came before the burgesses for municipal honours, bearing upon this Bill. I am not aware that a single change occurred in the representation owing to this much talked of Bill which is to exercise such a severe influence upon the town. Now, it has even been said that three of our four Boards are interested in the Bill, and that two of them are against it. That is so; but the hon. Member who said that should have told you that the two Boards which have petitioned against the Bill have petitioned only on clauses. They desire to have inserted in the measure provisions sufficient to protect their interests as Boards; but the main question of the Bill is unopposed by them. Now, Sir, with regard to the Town Councillors themselves, it has been said that we never had a Roman Catholic on the Town Council.

Mr. SEXTON: You had one.

Mr. HASLETT: I distinctly understood the hon. Member to say that we never had a Roman Catholic on our Board.

Mr. SEXTON: I said that there was formerly one.

Mr. HASLETT: There was one, Sir, and he was an honoured Member—namely, Mr. Alderman Hughes, whose memory is very dear to us. There was also Mr. John Hamill, and I will remind the House that Mr. Biggar, who was then a Protestant, but is now a Roman Catholic, was a Member of the Board.

An Irish Member: He was a Presbyterian.

Mr. HASLETT: He is a Roman Catholic now, and I daresay if we antedate his present opinions we may say that when he was on the Board he represented the Roman Catholic faith. It has also been stated as a charge against the Belfast Town Council that we have passed 14 Acts of Parliament. That is true, and it is the highest tribute to the growth of Belfast. Other towns in

Ireland, represented by hon. Members below the Gangway, do not need Acts of Parliament. Their progress is in the opposite direction, and Acts of Parliament are not required by them to govern the necessary machinery of a progressive town. Then it is said that we are bringing forward this Bill as a kind of after-thought, because trade is dull. No doubt trade is dull in Belfast, and that, in common with other portions of the United Kingdom, we have suffered very much from depression. That is just one of the reasons why we thought it an especially favourable time to carry on a large public work. We thought that if ever it was to be done it should be done when general trade was dull, and when, if not for the sake of getting labour at a cheaper rate, we might expect to keep the labouring population of our town in employment. With regard to the sewage question, we have been working in Belfast on the very lines that we are taking in this Bill for a long number of years. In 1865 we received power from Parliament to construct arterial sewers under a special sewage rate; but these sewers are all constructed with the distinct object of being tributary to the great scheme which is now before the House. The scheme is by no means a new one. The hon. Gentleman below the Gangway (Mr. Sexton) says that the scheme is the outflow of one mind only, and he quotes a meeting at St. George's Hall. Well, I do not like to speak of that meeting, because I maintain that it was not thoroughly representative; but, take it as all it has been said to be, the objection raised is, that the Council did not offer £100 as a reward for some other scheme? [Mr. Sexton: For the best scheme!] Well, for the best scheme. So far from the present scheme being the outflow of one mind, it was the outflow of the long and careful consideration of our late borough surveyor, Mr. Montgomery, than whom no better authority upon this matter ever existed. It has been altered by our present borough surveyor, who succeeded Mr. Montgomery, and it has been carefully considered, and every line drawn out under the direction of Sir Joseph Bazalgette. That is no mean authority, and I do not think, under these circumstances, that the Corporation of Belfast can fairly be charged with hole-in-the-corner meetings, and

having an infinitesimal amount of mind and judgment devoted to this great scheme of sewage—when you find that they had the *fiat* of one who stands, if not at the head of his Profession, at least amongst the foremost of the engineers of this country. We are told that at that meeting to which I have referred Mr. Dempsey stated that he was unable to procure a copy of the Bill—I think I am right in that statement. Well, the House will be surprised to find that I myself sent him a copy, and received, after some time, a courteous letter returning the Bill, and saying that he had taken all the necessary notes from it.

MR. SEXTON: Did the hon. Member send that copy of the Bill to Mr. Dempsey before or after the 1st of February?

MR. HASLETT: This is the first time I have heard any question raised on that point. [*Laughter.*] It will just be as well, I think, if hon. Members will wait to laugh until they find whether or not a laugh is required. The hon. Member (Mr. Sexton) did not state time or circumstances, but made the declaration absolutely, that Mr. Dempsey had been unable to procure a copy of the Bill.

MR. SEXTON: I quoted a copy of Mr. Dempsey's speech at that meeting.

MR. HASLETT: I am endeavouring to follow the hon. Member's argument. After the statement of the Chairman of Ways and Means I should not have interfered, only that I think it is due to the Belfast Corporation that I should express my opinions here, lest the House should think they are the black sheep they have been painted. Now, the hon. Member says that the Catholic burgesses have no votes in these matters—that they are utterly unrepresented in the Belfast Town Council, and that even the Liberals had no representative till the name of Mr. Sexton was brought before Belfast as a kind of scare-crow in the Corporation. The hon. Member must surely have been wrong in his history. The member of the Belfast Corporation to whom he refers has been a member of it for many years—for a period extending long behind the time that we ever dreamt of Mr. Sexton coming to Belfast to honour us with representation. He says that the Town Clerk is the Corporation, and I

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am not prepared to say anything on that one way or the other; but he forgot to tell you that the Town Clerk is not only the Town Clerk proper, but that he embodies in himself both the Town Clerk and the Town Solicitor; that he carries on all the necessary machinery of the law without cost; and that he promotes Bills in Parliament without 1*d.* of reward—it is not a matter of the smallest coin in the Realm to him whether a Bill is brought before Parliament or not. There is no fee attached to his office, nor does he receive the smallest coin of the Realm for his services in that respect. And we are told again that the salaries are immensely advanced. The hon. Member, however, failed to tell the House that while Belfast has never been wanting in the necessary money to carry on its offices—while it has had its Mayors, that, I think, have done credit to Ireland in carrying out their office, they have not sought from the hands or pockets of the ratepayers any funds to enable them to carry on their Mayoral duties. He forgot to tell you that in the midst of increasing depression in Dublin the hon. Member's friends—his special friends—in that city advanced the Mayor's salary from £2,000 to £3,000 a-year in order that special entertainments might be given, and that there might be the means of carrying on the necessary machinery of the Corporation. He has spoken, Sir, of entertainments in Belfast. I would remind him that the Corporation of Belfast has never asked from the ratepayers one farthing for any entertainment, public or private, that was given in the four corners of our borough. Our Mayor, as I think, Sir, you will remember, was complimented—our town was complimented—on the splendid reception given to Royalty within recent times, a reception that we were proud of as Members of an Irish constituency; and all that was done without appealing to the ratepayers for a single farthing. Now, Sir, with regard to what has been said so well by the Chairman of Ways and Means. I do not like to go into the question of how little an Irish Member, one of the most experienced in this House, knows of a question on which he has been dilating to you, when he tells you that there is a qualification for the Belfast Town Council. One would have thought that he would have been well

informed on the Qualification Act that was passed some years since. It is a pity that we have to come to England for information on our own local affairs.

MR. SEXTON: You have a qualification.

MR. HASLETT: There is nothing of the kind. Any man is qualified to sit on the Town Council—the man who is qualified to vote is qualified to sit.

MR. SEXTON: A £10 qualification!

MR. HASLETT: A man who can vote is qualified to sit. Now, Sir, with regard to the extension of the borough, and the main question that has been so ably touched upon by the Chairman of Ways and Means, it would require an Act of Parliament longer than the entire Act that you have referred to the Committee to place Belfast in a proper condition on the lines that the hon. Member has brought before you. It is a very easy matter to say "reduce the franchise to the Parliamentary level;" but I would point out that you would have all the machinery of administration to follow. You have all the machinery of Courts of Law; you have all the machinery of taxation, and all the machinery that accomplishes the distribution of taxation between the town and boroughs and the counties. You have the question of relieving the county from the borough, and the distribution of taxation on the one and the freeing of the other, save in so far as the provisions will settle the relative amount which shall be applied by the borough; we have all these things to attend to, and yet we are told that it can be done almost with a stroke of a pen. Instances are cited, and I have in my mind the statement of the Chairman of Ways and Means in regard to the Rathmines illustration. It seems to me that that illustration was not at all germane to the Question before the House. In the very notice issued in the case of Rathmines the question of franchise was actually introduced, whereas you are asked to deal with a franchise in Belfast without either the outside population being asked whether they were willing to be taken into the borough, or the inside population being asked whether they were willing that the outside population should be taken in. Let me say at the present moment, as I stated before a Committee some years since, that the taking in of that outside population would be an absolute

loss to those inside, but that it may become necessary. I believe it will be necessary, and I am prepared to yield to no man in my earnest desire, if a public measure is brought forward, to give it the most favourable consideration; but I should not be ashamed to face my constituency, after the vote I shall give in this matter, distinctly stating that I did not agree that that question should be introduced into a Bill that has been framed for an entirely different purpose. Then, as to the water question, many districts around Belfast have asked for a water supply. They have asked for a supply of water from our Water Board, and when that Water Board came to get additional powers they added to those powers they already possessed others enabling them to sell water to the outside population. The hon. Member says the people are taxed for water without representation; but that is not the case—those who take water from us are represented on the Water Board. They could not expect representation elsewhere, for that is the only subject for which they are taxed; and that brings me to the subject of the outside population, and the system of taxation. This House has passed judgment on an equal system of taxation under a Public Act, which we know as the Sanitary Act. If these improvements were carried out under that Act the tax on which we should levy the rate to carry out these works would be the borough rate. That would not be a differential tax. In addition to that there is a kindred subject to look at—namely, the Sewage Question of 1865. This House distinctly gave its voice to the carrying out that scheme of sewage upon an equal, and not a differential, system of taxation. I have to apologize for having trespassed for so long on the time of the House; and as a young Member I have to thank hon. Members for the attention they have given to me, and I trust that the vote of this House will be given in favour of its own Rules—Rules that we believe are for the public welfare. I trust hon. Members will not allow themselves to be diverted into a side issue, having nothing to do with the main question of this Bill.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I, Sir, rise to ask a question on a question of Order, or rather of interpretation. Sir, it seems to me, in looking at the Motion

of the hon. Member put down here, that if the Committee is instructed to carry out the first part of this Motion, consisting of four clauses, the second part of it will distinctly neutralize the first. The first part of the Motion says—

“That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, that they do insert in the Bill Clauses for the following purposes,”

and then the Motion goes on to enumerate the purposes for which the clauses are to be passed—namely, the assimilation of the franchise, to enlarge the qualification, to alter the boundary, and to provide for a new election of the Town Council. These are all admirable things, and for all of them I should be willing to vote; but the hon. Member has a second Resolution which says—

“That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they do strike out of the Bill such clauses as do not relate to the Main Drainage Scheme.”

If I understand English, the result of that would be that, after having passed the Resolution deciding to insert all these admirable things I have mentioned, we should then proceed to eliminate from the Bill all which we had so agreed to. If the hon. Member would say “any such other clauses,” the difficulty would be overcome; but as I read it, it seems to me that, supposing the House agrees to pass that Resolution, if it adopts the second, it will thereby state that all the work of the first should be slaughtered.

MR. SPEAKER: We are not discussing the second Instruction at all, but the first. The question of interpretation is one for the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The House has just heard two speeches on this question, one of some importance and the other of not much importance. The important one was that delivered for the first time, perhaps, in his official capacity, by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means (Mr. Courtney), and I regret very much that I cannot congratulate him on his first appearance in this House in his official capacity; for, Sir, not only has he appeared as an opponent to the extension of the franchise, but to a considerable extent, he himself, being the Chairman of this House and one who should be the guardian of its liberties, has been the one who has attempted to stifle debate. I think it can scarcely be considered dignified, having barely just,

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so to speak, got his foot in the stirrup, having just taken his seat on that Bench as Chairman of Ways and Means, that he should attempt, I will not say to jockey the House, but, at all events, to give what I would call a friendly lead—a friendly lead to induce you, Sir, by suggestion and insinuation, to believe that he, in his official position as Chairman of Ways and Means, should instigate you into adopting the view that the Previous Question being moved by him should have the effect of preventing all discussion on the merits of the Bill. Well, Mr. Speaker, it is not often that I enjoy the happiness and honour of being able to congratulate our Party in this House on being allowed great latitude in debate—certainly not often that one could congratulate them on being allowed such latitude as they have enjoyed to-day. I think we are greatly indebted to you, Sir, for your ruling, and for having refused to permit yourself to be intimidated by such a suggestion from one in the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. and learned Gentleman is entitled to speak of the Chair in that manner.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I think, Sir, you must have misunderstood me. What I said was that I congratulate—

MR. SPEAKER: What I intended to say, if I did not say it, was that there is no question of the Chair having been intimidated by any Member in any way.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I will simply say that I am glad what the Chairman of Ways and Means attempted to say from his place, as Chairman of Ways and Means, has had such little influence upon the Chair. I am glad that so great an authority as that of the Chairman of Ways and Means was not sufficient to prevent the discussion of the merits of this case by the moving the Previous Question. The hon. Gentleman appears, as I have said, for the first time in his Office of Chairman of Ways and Means, as the director of debate in this House, and he refers to what has been cited as a precedent—to the fact that the right hon. Baronet the Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke) moved in the Rathfriland Water Works Bill to insert a clause similar to that of my hon. Friend. He says that

that was no precedent at all. I have to remind the hon. Gentleman that that Instruction was moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Chelsea under the direction of the then Chairman of Ways and Means. They were moved by the direct sanction and with the direct approval of a right hon. Gentleman whom Ireland and our Party will always have reason to speak of with gratitude—namely, Sir Arthur Otway, a Gentleman who was an ornament and a dignity to the Chair in this House, and whom we have had such good reason at all times to respect. Sir, Sir Arthur Otway saw no reason at that Table to object to the Motion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Chelsea. Sir Arthur Otway occupied the Chair of this House as Chairman of Ways and Means for a space of six years—he did not step into it a fortnight ago—("Question!") I am dealing with the argument of the Chairman of Ways and Means, and my point is that Sir Arthur Otway agreed to a similar principle as that laid down in the Motion before the House, when it was brought forward by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Chelsea, and I am pointing out that the House is entitled to pay much greater respect to the decision of Sir Arthur Otway last year, than it is to the opinion of the present Chairman of Ways and Means, who has only just come into Office. Moreover, you yourself were in the Chair when that Bill, as amended, had to be considered, and this thing was done under your sanction. Well, am I to be told that what was done last year in an unreformed Parliament, a Parliament that had not a single man in it returned from any county under the present franchise, nor in Ireland from any borough, am I to be told that what the last Parliament was willing to do under the sanction of an experienced Chairman of Ways and Means, this present Parliament is to refuse to do under the opinion of a Chairman of Ways and Means owing to some crotchet that I am not able to understand? Of course, I know very well that the first Order for this evening is the Women's Suffrage Bill. I am well aware that this question raised by my hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) may tend to some extent to bring that Women's Suffrage Bill under the operation of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule; but I would say that I am a supporter of that

Women's Suffrage Bill—I am as anxious as the Chairman of Ways and Means can be that it should come on for discussion; but I will not for a moment allow the fact that a Bill, which I am a supporter of, is to come on later in the evening, prevent my exercising my right as a Member of this House in debating a question of great importance to the utmost extent I think desirable. As to that question, I put it to the House whether it is worthy of it to take into consideration the arguments put forward by the Chairman of Ways and Means? He says, if you have a Bill coming down from any English borough, such as the borough of Birmingham, you have no right, on a question of Water Works or Gas Business, to attempt to introduce into it the principle of proportional representation or Women's Suffrage. That might be a good argument addressed to England; but we have in this House passed a Franchise Bill time after time, and it has invariably been kicked out in the House of Lords. We feel that it is our duty, then, to seize every opportunity that may offer itself for pushing forward this question. Birmingham may not be anxious for proportional representation; but this House has time after time affirmed the principle of a reduction of the franchise in Ireland. Am I to be told that because the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means chooses to set up his crotchets he is to be accepted as an authority when we have the authority of his respected Predecessor in the post of Chairman—Sir Arthur Otway—and of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke) for distinctly accepting a similar Amendment in regard to the Rathmines Bill last year? I trust the House will be of opinion that precedent is to govern the Rules and Orders of this House; and I should have thought that the Chairman of Ways and Means would be bound to be guided by precedent as much as the Judges of the land. Instead of being so bound, the hon. Gentleman chooses to set up his own private opinion over what I would call the cream of authority—namely, the action of his Predecessor, in order to secure the rejection of the Amendment. I cannot believe that the House will be led away by any consideration of the kind. I believe that hon. Members will

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fairly consider the merits of the case, and the fact that we have been struggling for years to bring forward Resolutions of this kind, many of which have been accepted by the House time after time; and we should be neglecting our duty if we did not take every opportunity of endeavouring to effect a reform of the municipal franchise. It has actually been made a taunt to the Irish Members that they allowed the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Chelsea to seize the opportunity of dealing with the question on the Rathmines Bill; that we ought to have shown ourselves more alert and watchful, and, as Representatives of the Irish people, should not have allowed the right hon. Gentleman to take the matter out of their hands. My hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) has taken advantage of a similar opportunity to-night, and he hopes to accomplish what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Chelsea did. I can only say that if my hon. Friend imagined that his flank was likely to be turned by the action of the Chairman of Ways and Means he would prove himself of little courage if he did not imitate the action taken by the hon. Member for East Belfast (Mr. De Cobain). It is very fortunate for the people that they are now represented by no less than four Members. Notwithstanding the speech of the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett), anybody who will turn back to the struggle which took place in the elections last November will find that the question on which one Tory candidate was defeated, and on which Tory candidates were opposed in two or three divisions, was the question of the Town Council of Belfast. The hon. Member for West Belfast says that this question was not raised. I say that it was distinctly raised; and I challenge the late Borough Treasurer, who is now the Representative for the Eastern Division of Belfast (Mr. De Cobain), to say that it was not raised.

MR. HASLETT: I did not say that the question was not raised at the Parliamentary Election; but what I did say was that it was not raised at the municipal election.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am happy to receive the correction, because I think it very much strengthens my position. The hon. Member says that it was raised at the Parliamentary Election, but that it

was not raised at the municipal election. Why was it not raised at the municipal election? It was because the persons who raised it had no votes. The hon. Member admits that at the Parliamentary Election the question was raised; and having been raised it formed a most important factor in the election, as I well know, having closely followed the affairs of Belfast, and being a subscriber to its newspapers. What happened was this—the Borough Treasurer, who now sits as Member for East Belfast (Mr. De Cobain), was dismissed from his situation by gentlemen like the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett). He was dismissed for daring to come forward against a gentleman known as Sir James Corry; and Sir James Corry was defeated on the distinct issue of the reform of the Town Council. The ex-Treasurer of Belfast gave up his valuable situation, which, if we are to judge by the salary paid to the Town Clerk, must have been worth at least £1,000 a-year, in order that he might go against the Town Council ring represented by Sir James Corry. And what is more, aided, I am happy to say, by the Nationalists of Belfast, he defeated the Town Council. The hon. Member who sits for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston), who is fond of military tactics, also opposed the dominant ring of the Town Council; and so small was the power of the Town Council ring that it was only able to give the hon. Alderman the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett) a most unsafe seat, and one which he carried only by 30 votes. That is the exact strength and power of the Town Council ring over the people of Belfast. Why have not the three Colleagues of the hon. Member for West Belfast got up in this House as the opponents of the extension of the municipal franchise? The hon. Member was the best candidate who could be got to contest the seat with my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). Why does not the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston), lately Fishery Inspector, get up and oppose this Resolution? What was the first Parliamentary act of the hon. Member on the first day the House met? It was to bring in a Bill to reduce the municipal franchise in Ireland. I challenge him, then, to get up and say that he challenges the Instruction to the Committee on the Belfast Bill, to reduce

the municipal franchise, moved by my hon. Friend. Will the hon. Member for East Belfast (Mr. De Cobain the dismissed Borough Treasurer, get up and oppose the Resolution? Belfast, at this moment, enjoys the honour of being represented by two dismissed officials. I challenge the hon. Member for East Belfast to get up and oppose this Instruction. I challenge any one of these Gentlemen to face his Parliamentary constituents at the next election with a record that in this House he opposed the assimilation of the Parliamentary and borough franchise. The hon. Alderman the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett) says that he will do so; but he is simply the champion of an unsafe seat, and the defence of the Town Council is entirely left to him. I challenge any man of Belfast who holds a safe seat to say that he will oppose the assimilation of the Parliamentary and Municipal franchise. I should not be surprised to find the hon. Member for Mid Armagh (Sir James Corry), who formerly represented the City of Belfast, getting up to oppose the Motion. He has now the good luck to sit for Mid Armagh; but it is a long drive from Mid Armagh to Belfast, and we may find the hon. Baronet standing up to champion the Town Council, since the Town Council championed him. Whatever lustre was shed upon the Bill by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett), I do not think that his arguments will have much effect. I would point out to the House that within the last 20 years there have been Bills—14 in number—brought into Parliament by this tinkering Town Council, and that it has cost these anti-Home Rulers of Belfast to come over here to London, where they can only get men to manage their business for them, a sum of £150,000. I venture to say that a Parliament sitting in Dublin would have done the work much better, and for much less money. Indeed, I cannot help thinking that the ratepayers of the City of Belfast are beginning to consider what advantage they have obtained for the 150,000 golden sovereigns they have expended in getting an independent verdict upon their private business from the wisacres of this House, headed by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means. "Order!"

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member is certainly not in Order in referring to any Member of

that Body. I look with confidence to the result of this division, and I hope the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney) will meet with a proper rebuke at the hands of the young and intelligent Liberal Members.

MR. CLANCY: I, too, must express surprise that three of the Members for Belfast have not seen fit to rise upon this occasion. Our appeals to these hon. Gentlemen have been addressed to them in vain. They may, and they do in Ireland, talk fire and brimstone about preserving the rights of the Orange Democrats in Ireland; but when they have an opportunity of serving these Orange Democrats in the House of Commons they deliberately neglect it, and turn a deaf ear to all appeals that they should stand up in defence of their own constituents. But, Sir, there is another Gentleman in the House to whom an appeal has also been made. I am surprised that he has not before now risen to answer the appeal. I allude to the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill). The noble Lord went to Belfast a week ago, and was received by the Orange Democrats with open arms. He made them great promises. He spoke bravely of their spirit—

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is not confining his remarks to the subject before the House.

MR. CLANCY: I was trying to show, Mr. Speaker—

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is entirely out of Order in the course he is taking.

MR. CLANCY: Of course I bow to your ruling, Sir; but I was expressing surprise—

MR. SPEAKER: I have told the hon. Gentleman that he is out of Order. I expect he will obey my ruling.

MR. CLANCY: I bow with readiness to your ruling, and pass on to the Question before the House, which, I admit, I have not already dwelt upon. The hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney) has, I think, been answered on all the points he raised by my hon. Friends around me; but still I desire to put to him one question in reference to the observations he addressed to the House. The hon. Gentleman said he is in favour of the proposal of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), but added that there was a

time for pressing it, and the present was not the proper time. I would like to know what, in his opinion, is the proper time? I assert that this is the proper time. We Irish Members have not the opportunity which English Members have, and which Members of the Government have, of bringing forward our Bills. The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston) has not that opportunity; and I say, under these circumstances, we must seize the first opportunity we can get—and this is the first opportunity we have had—to endeavour to effect this most desirable reform. We would be false to the declarations we have made if we were to let such an opportunity as the present slip. It must be borne in mind that when we do bring Public Bills into this House, and succeed in passing them, there is another House which deals with them in a very different manner. Hon. Gentlemen know quite well that in very recent years Bills, embodying very useful and necessary reforms in Ireland, have been passed by this House, but ignominiously kicked out in "another place." I also wish to say a word or two in reference to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt). The right hon. Gentleman's speech appeared to me to be a most amusing one, although it was delivered with great gravity of manner. He said in effect—"We share your opinions; but, nevertheless, we will not take advantage of the opportunity to carry them out." He gave us no reason to suppose that this opportunity is a wrong one. He pointed to the Rathmines incident; but I not only express my own opinion, but the opinions of all the Members around me when I say that he gave us no answer whatever to the argument that the Bill of the Rathmines Township affords a very proper precedent. The Rathmines precedent remains the same: it has not been affected by anything the right hon. Gentleman has said; and I must invite the House, if he has nothing better to say, to take no heed of his speech, but act upon the Rathmines precedent. If the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister were present, I would appeal to him to rise above the pettifoggish arguments that have been addressed to the House from the Treasury Bench in opposition to the

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Irish proposal. If he were here, I would ask him to answer that appeal, and, if necessary, to throw over his Colleagues in order to do an act of justice, the necessity of which everyone admits. I rise to support this proposal with great pleasure, and I do it with all the greater pleasure because not one of the Ulster Tory Members has been found to have the courage to rise in his place and demand for his constituents, the Orange Democrats of Ireland, the rights the Tory Members advocated when they were seeking election.

MR. T. C. HARRINGTON: I think there is a great deal of force in the arguments that have been addressed to us, both by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir William Harcourt and by the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney). The course we have entered upon to-night is an unusual, and sometimes a very inconvenient one; and I, for my part, would not attempt to justify it if I did not believe that the circumstances with which we have to deal are circumstances of a most unusual and a most exceptional character. Nay, furthermore, I maintain that the opportunity now presented to us of redressing grievances that have prevailed for a long time upon the people of Belfast is an opportunity not likely to be presented to us again in the course of the present Session. If, therefore, we missed this opportunity we should show ourselves neglectful of the best interests of the people. It has been shown in the course of the debate upon the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that while the Parliamentary constituency comprises 32,000 voters, the Body which is promoting this Bill in the House is elected by so limited a constituency as 3,700 voters. I maintain that these figures in themselves show at once an exceptional state of affairs as to justify us in taking the very first opportunity presented to us of dealing with so great a grievance as they establish. It is further contended, Sir, that this Corporate Body, representing a limited constituency of this kind, and ruling an important Irish town in a manner which has been very justly characterized by different speakers as wholly bad, is not fit to be intrusted with an expenditure of £150,000. A very fair issue has been raised by the

Motion of my hon. Friend. If the Corporation find that the proposed expenditure is necessary—if they find that the requirements of the borough of Belfast are such as to justify them in expending so enormous a sum of money, let them assent to the proposal which is made by my hon. Friend—let them, at the time at which they are entering upon this large expenditure, assent to the proposal to extend the franchise, so as to show that they are really desirous of representing the majority of the citizens and of acting on their behalf. Notwithstanding the precedents that have been cited—and the course we have taken is justified by precedents, and the precedent quoted by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees is not the only one to be found—I am ready to admit that it might be highly inconvenient for the House if we were to seek many similar occasions on which to make proposals of this kind. The strength of our case is that we could not bring in a separate Bill dealing with this question with any hope of success, because, while Belfast has two, or possibly three, Members in this House who would be in sympathy with the general nature and scope of the Bill, Belfast has another Member; and the Corporation of Belfast, in an especial sense, has a Member in this House, and he would avail himself of every opportunity to block the Bill and prevent its being discussed. We further maintain that, even if we did succeed in passing a Bill through this House, this hon. Gentleman would use his influence in "another place" to prevent the Bill becoming law. Our purpose, therefore, can only be served by a course such as we have taken to-night. I do not intend to detain the House longer. I maintain that we are justified in the course we have taken; that the circumstances with which we have to deal are of an unusual and exceptional character; and that if anything could justify our tacking on to a Bill of this kind provisions, I admit, of a wide, perhaps sweeping, character, but yet provisions the justice of which cannot be denied, the exceptional circumstances with which we have to deal would do so.

MR. CRILLY: Mr. Speaker, I only intend to speak for a very brief period on this Bill. At the outset I may be permitted to point out that this discus-

sion, useful and instructive as it undoubtedly has been—very instructive to Irish Members, but doubly instructive to English Members, if they desire to obtain information with regard to the situation in Ireland—has already lasted for nearly three hours, a fact which in itself, apart altogether from the many other facts having the same tendency which have occurred within my experience, shows the absolute necessity and wisdom of this House finding out some legislative means or other by which such Business as this may be relegated to Ireland to be dealt with there by a Local Authority. We have spent nearly three hours in discussing this Bill, and only last night we occupied an hour of the time of this Imperial Parliament in transacting purely Municipal Business. To-night we have trespassed on the time and the attention and the capacity of Members other than those from Ireland, while great interests, English and Scotch—I will say National interests—have been waiting to be dealt with by English and Scotch Members. On this point I have only to say further that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) said, in addition to what other Members who have opposed the Motion of my hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton), had urged, in the course of the debate, that it was not convenient to raise questions of public interest on Private Bills. Now, Sir, I hold that the question which has been raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) is not a question of general public interest. It is a question purely local to Belfast; and as this Bill deals with the whole question of local self-government in Belfast, and as Parliament can give its opinion upon the point, we, on these Benches, are fully entitled to draw attention to questions concerning the franchise in Belfast, and the extension of the boundaries of the town. Now, I may be permitted to object to this Bill on somewhat different grounds to those which have been already urged. I obtained a copy of the Bill this morning, and the opinion I have formed of it, after a careful study of its provisions, is that it is either too comprehensive, or it is not comprehensive enough. The measure raises questions which, to my mind, should be dealt with by separate legislation entirely. It consists of 12

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parts, and of something like 80 clauses. It does not deal only with the purification of the River Lagan and with the main drainage of Belfast, as it is stated in the title; but it deals with large schemes of sanitary and financial value which ought certainly to be dealt with in a separate measure. It deals with so many purposes other than the one referred to in the title that it seems to me to be a sort of legislative kaleidoscope—if you give it one shake you get a glimpse of the River Lagan; if you give it another shake you get a view of the drainage of Belfast; if you give it another shake you perceive a great financial or sanitary scheme; and I have no doubt that if the 39 gentlemen, to whom my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) referred in his opening statement, had delayed the introduction of this measure for some little time, and that then you had given the kaleidoscope another shake you might see the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) as Ajax on the platform of the Ulster Hall defying the lightning of Irish Nationality. It seems to me to be a monstrous condition of affairs that where you have, as you have in Belfast, 32,000 Parliamentary voters, you have less than 6,000 persons on the Municipal Register. And it also seems to me, Sir, a huge anomaly and an injustice that deserves the immediate attention of Parliament that where there are 70,000 Catholics, as there are in Belfast, and where there are 10,000 Catholics on the Parliamentary Register, as there are in Belfast, there should only be 1,000 or 2,000 Catholics on the Municipal Register. In my opinion a strong case has been made out in favour of the points which have been urged by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo and the hon. Gentlemen on these Benches who have so ably supported him. I hold that the municipal franchise in Belfast should be at once identified with, or lowered to the level of, the Parliamentary franchise. I hold, too, that the municipal boundary of Belfast should be extended to the limits of the Parliamentary boundary; and I trust that this House will, in the division which I have no doubt will take place, accede to the Motion of the hon. Member (Mr. Sexton). Either the Bill as it stands, and which is wrongly described in the title as a Bill

dealing with the Belfast main drainage—either the Bill should be widened and extended so far as to include the points which have been raised by my hon. Friend, or else it should be made to apply only to the regulation and improvement of the main drainage of Belfast, and the purification of the River Lagan. In the event of the latter plan being adopted, the last portion of my hon. Friend's Motion should be adopted—namely,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they do strike out of the Bill such clauses as do not relate to the main drainage scheme."

I desire, Sir, before I conclude, to emphasize one point that was raised by the hon. Member for Sligo, and that is, that before this huge and elaborate and costly scheme—this scheme which, in the event of its being sanctioned, will cost the ratepayers of Belfast £150,000—is passed, it shall be submitted to the ratepayers and inhabitants of Belfast in order that they may have the opportunity of expressing their opinions regarding it. From all I have heard in this debate, and from what I have seen of the Bill, having read it through most carefully to-day, I have very much pleasure in supporting the Instruction to the Committee which has been proposed.

MR. LANE: I should not have attempted to give any information whatever to the English Members who propose to take part in the discussion upon this Bill were it not for the extraordinary line of defence taken up by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haalott), who has been already so frequently referred to as the only Member representing Belfast who has interfered in this debate. That hon. Gentleman, with a modesty characteristic of the Ulster Tory Representatives in this House, introduced himself as a young Member. I must say that the ability with which he spoke afterwards would incline us to be rather sceptical as to the fact of his being a young Member, because he travelled over such a number of topics that he might almost be taken for an "old Parliamentary hand." But I think, Sir, that after the able speech in which my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) introduced his Motion to the House he certainly was entitled to some better reply from those who are promoting this main drainage

Bill than that made by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Haalott). The hon. Gentleman must have convinced the House, by the line of argument he adopted, that he and his Friends have practically no defence to make to the serious allegations which were made against the Corporation by the hon. Member for Sligo. Imitating what is known as the Old Bailey direction, the hon. Gentleman confined himself to an abuse of his opponents rather than to a vindication of the action of his friends. In the extraordinary line of argument, with which he tried to justify the conduct of himself in this matter, he appealed to the House for its sympathies on the ground that the Belfast Corporation, within the last 40 years, had come to this House and asked for 14 or 15 local Bills. Well, we were told by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), and others that the passing of these 15 local Bills through this House cost the taxpayers of Belfast a sum of no less than £150,000. I have no doubt, speaking with a little experience myself of these matters, having been a member of another Corporation in Ireland, that this £150,000 was the initial expenditure incurred in connection with these 15 Bills—the first part of the expenditure necessary to make the contemplated works reproductive to the ratepayers of Belfast. The hon. Member was not satisfied with trying to enlist the sympathy of the House for himself and the Belfast Corporation by stating that the Corporation of Belfast had applied to this House 15 times in the 40 years for local Bills; but he also said that the best proof that the other Corporations of Ireland were not actuated by the same spirit of loyalty to this Imperial Parliament as the Corporation of Belfast, was that in late years, since these Corporations came under the management of the Party to which I have the honour to belong—namely, the National Party—we had entirely ceased to apply for Bills for our different localities. I do not at all acknowledge or concede the argument which the hon. Member tried to force upon the House, and I refuse to do so on account of the intimate acquaintance my official connection with an Irish Municipality has given me of the subject of the relief of ratepayers of these towns from local Bills which are so frequently obtained in this Imperial Parlia-

ment. My experience in connection with the Municipality to which I have the honour to belong, and which, I presume, was one of those municipalities to which the hon. Member for West Belfast referred so sneeringly, has shown me that previous to the period when the National Party obtained the ascendancy in the Town Council, several applications were made to Parliament for local Bills. I am speaking of the period previous to that in which the management of the Corporation of the City of Cork came under the control of the National Party. As a matter of fact, whilst the Party in Cork, holding the same views as this Belfast Party, of which the hon. Member for West Belfast is a member, were supreme in the Cork Municipality, it is well known that they appealed, not once in the year, or once in three years as the municipality of Belfast appealed, but they came to Parliament to grant them local legislation once, and sometimes twice, in the year. And what was the result of these frequent appeals to Parliament by the Corporation of the City of Cork? Why, the result has been that at the present moment the unfortunate ratepayers of that city have saddled upon them, as the result of only three of these measures, a debt of something over £100,000 on which they are paying interest. And I am sure hon. Members on both sides of the House will be surprised to hear that these appeals to Parliament, which cost so much, were, almost in every case, abortive for the purposes in regard to which they were made. A Bill costing £38,000 — one of those the hon. Gentleman referred to — was obtained in order to bring about the removal of a railway track from a certain part of the town, in the hope that when the land thus reclaimed was put at the disposal of the Municipality, it would be turned to profitable account, and that, consequently, a large income would be put into the pockets of the ratepayers. But from that day to this that expenditure has never yielded 1d. The ratepayers have never received an atom of profit from the expenditure of that £38,000 or £40,000. Another case in which the Party in Cork, to which the hon. Member belongs in Belfast, appealed for a local Act of Parliament, when they were in power in the Council, was in connection with the artisans' dwellings scheme.

Mr. Lane

They applied for power to spend £22,000 in the carrying out of an artisans' dwellings scheme in the City of Cork. What was the result? Why, although the Bill was brought in under the artisans' dwellings scheme, it entirely omitted any clause enabling the Corporation to build a single house for artisans in the city. It gave them power to spend this money in the destruction and demolition of property, and though it had the effect of turning out a number of tradespeople it provided no new dwellings for them to go into. A great part of the ground cleared in that way is lying unoccupied at the present moment, whilst a great part of it has been let to the people for little or nothing. In a third case, the Corporation of Cork applied to Parliament for provision to spend £16,000 or 18,000 in the re-erection or reconstruction of a bridge. Well, before the whole matter was concluded, the ratepayers had to pay no less than £34,000. With that experience, Sir, in the local Parliament—as I might call it—of Cork, I have no hesitation in standing up here in my place to-night to support this measure. I consider that every one of us upon these Benches represent the people of Ireland. I do not look upon any Member on these Benches as representing any particular locality or constituency in questions of this kind. I appeal for the whole of Ireland; and though I have the honour of sitting here for a constituency in the South—one of the Divisions of the County of Cork—I consider myself equally the Representative of the ratepayers of Belfast, or of any other part of Ireland, when I stand up to discuss a matter of this kind. I should be neglecting my duty to those who sent me here, and to the whole of my countrymen, if I did not stand up here this evening to support the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), because I know that if this Motion be carried, and it is an Instruction to the Committee to make the proposed alterations in the Bill, the Corporation of Belfast will soon be in the position of the Corporation of the City of Cork—that is to say, the real ratepayers of Belfast will be properly represented on the Board, and will be in a position to prevent the passing of such Bills as those I have mentioned, and the one which the Belfast Corporation are now endeavouring to

force through Parliament. It will, in the future, be impossible for the Party to whom the hon. Member for West Belfast belongs, to fasten the expense of schemes like this upon the backs of the ratepayers, like the Old Man of the Sea. The hon. Member for West Belfast was not satisfied with taunting us and other Municipalities of Ireland, with neglecting our duty in not coming here from time to time to get rid of the ratepayers' money in the promotion of useless schemes, but he also indulged in a sneer at the Corporation of the City of Dublin, the chief Municipal Authority in Ireland. He went on to urge the great claim that the Corporation of Belfast had upon the Imperial Parliament and the people of this country by referring to the action of the Mayor and Corporation of Belfast on a certain occasion; he pointed out how they had given magnificent entertainments at a lavish expenditure, not out of the ratepayers' money, but out of their private pockets, and especially out of the pocket of their Chief Magistrate. Well, Sir, I think that on the very few occasions that the Chief Magistrates of Belfast have indulged in that extravagance—and I call it nothing but extravagance for anyone to spend a sum of £18,000 upon an entertainment, which I understand was spent in Belfast on the occasion in question—these gentlemen have acted from no desire to further the interests of the public; they had no especial desire to show any exceptional loyalty to the Crown or to the Throne; but their action was apparently dictated by the sordid and selfish motive of advancing their own interest and obtaining for themselves that title—that miserable title—which has been the cause of so much demoralization in Ireland, and which has always been the bane of public men in that country. Most of our public men have always striven to achieve or purchase one of these—if I may so call them—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for some time past has not been speaking relevantly to the Question before the House. I must remind him of the necessity of keeping more close to the subject of the Instruction to the Committee on this Bill.

Mr. LANE: I bow, Sir, with great respect to your ruling. I will try to be guided by it; but when the hon. Mem-

ber for West Belfast was allowed uninterruptedly—

Mr. SPEAKER: I told the hon. Member that for some time past he has not been speaking relevantly to the subject before the House. I again caution him to be more relevant.

Mr. LANE: I shall go to the subject of my hon. Friend's Motion, and that is in reference to the reduction of the franchise in Belfast. When you interrupted me, Mr. Speaker, I was about replying, as I thought I might do, to the hon. Member for West Belfast.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have twice told the hon. Member that he is irrelevant; if I have occasion a third time to tell him so I shall be compelled to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. LANE: Then, Mr. Speaker, I must refer to the subject of the Instruction to the Committee. The 1st clause in the Instruction is that the House be asked to affirm that the municipal franchise of the borough of Belfast be assimilated to the existing Parliamentary franchise. Now, Sir, the object of that is, of course, that the people of Belfast should have a thorough representation on the Corporation of that City. The declaration made here by the hon. Member for West Belfast this evening, or rather the admission made by him, was that there was not a single Roman Catholic in the Corporation of Belfast. I think that is an argument in itself, independent altogether of the statement with which the hon. Member for Sligo opened this debate, as a present justification for this Instruction. That argument, I think, ought to have weight with hon. Gentlemen opposite—of course, there is no hope whatever of its exercising any influence upon any hon. Gentlemen on my right hand. It is no use appealing to them upon any question of religious toleration whatever; but I do appeal to hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, who are constantly saying that if they could only be satisfied that religious toleration exists in Ireland, on the part of the majority towards the minority, they would immediately take a different view of the great question which is now occupying public attention to that which they do take. Therefore, having read the statements of these hon. Gentlemen, made from time to time on platforms during the General Election, and in speeches they have de-

livered since, I appeal to them, whether a stronger argument could possibly be advanced in this House in support of the Motion of the hon. Member for Sligo than the admission of the hon. Member for West Belfast, that in a city possessing such an enormous population as that of Belfast—a population in which there is such a large proportion of Roman Catholics—there is not upon the Governing Body a single Roman Catholic? It must be borne in mind that this Governing Body has the management of all the local affairs, and yet there is not upon it a single person to advocate the rights or claims of the Roman Catholic population. I do not know whether hon. Gentlemen opposite, to whom I am now making my special appeal, are aware that in the Municipalities of Ireland there is no question which comes up so frequently for consideration by the Corporations as those very questions which are decided to a very large extent by the religious composition of the Boards. There are very large grants given to different hospitals; we have very large grants always being given to industrial schools, reformatories, and other institutions; and in a vast number of other instances there are questions cropping up every day on Irish Municipal Boards, which depend almost altogether on the religious elements of which those Bodies are composed. From my experience of another Corporation—representing, it is true, a locality where the Parties are more evenly divided than they are, perhaps, in the generality of Irish Municipalities—I know how difficult it is at times for the authorities to do equal or proper justice to the claims of different religious persuasions. I can imagine, therefore, how almost next to impossible it must be for the Roman Catholic population in Belfast to get fair play when any question turns up in which it is possible for those who represent different parts of Belfast to show in their corporate capacity that intolerance, and bigotry, and sectarian hatred that they invariably show on public platforms when they are speaking on any subject. On that ground, if on no other, I would appeal to hon. Members of this House to affirm that clause of the Resolution brought forward by the hon. Member for Sligo which bears upon this point. The 2nd clause of my hon. Friend's Motion is—

Mr. Lane

“To enable every person qualified to vote at a Municipal election in Belfast to be a candidate for election to the office of councillor or alderman.”

I must say I do not feel myself so competent to speak upon this subject, because I cannot conceive the difference which was raised here to-night between a man being entitled to vote for a Municipal Corporation and to stand as a candidate for one of the wards represented on that Corporation. I am under the impression, unless there is something unconstitutional in the Municipal Council of Belfast, that anyone qualified to vote at a Town Council election would also be entitled to stand for the position of one of its members. From what my hon. Friend tells me, I can now understand what this clause in the Motion refers to. It is dependent on the previous clause being accepted by the House. I did not quite see it until this moment. It is, of course, that the municipal franchise should be reduced to the same level as the Parliamentary franchise, and that any man taking advantage of that should be able to stand as a candidate. The 3rd clause of the Instruction is—

“To constitute the present boundary of the Parliamentary borough of Belfast the boundary of the Municipal borough, and to direct and provide for a new division of the Municipal borough into wards, as recommended in the Report of the Municipal Boundaries (Ireland) Commission, dated the 27th of June, 1882, and to authorise a proportionate increase in the number of aldermen and councillors.”

I would appeal to the House—or rather I would again recommend them, rather than appeal—that my hon. Friend and his Colleagues on these Benches are only asking the House to give force this evening on a formal decision to the Report issued by a Royal Commission sent over to Ireland by the Imperial Parliament to investigate on the spot the local circumstances of the Belfast Municipality in all its bearings. That Royal Commission, when they had exhausted the inquiry on the spot into all the surrounding circumstances, recommended that Parliament should extend the borough boundaries. So that we, in asking the House to affirm the Resolution of my hon. Friend, are not asking them to affirm anything that comes solely and only from this quarter of the House. We are asking them to give legal effect to the recommendations of a Royal Com-

mission. I am afraid I have intruded a little too long upon the House. I will not trespass upon its patience any further, although I should certainly like to ask hon. Gentlemen and right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench to give a little consideration to the course of this debate here this evening, and to study for the future what has been the effect, particularly on these Benches, of the very jarring note that was struck from opposite by the Chairman of Ways and Means. I do not think in this House, amongst the 500 or 600 Members who were listening so carefully and attentively to the eloquent speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo, that a second Member in this House, besides the Chairman of Ways and Means, would have risen at once to reply to that careful and moderate speech in the spirit and in the tone that characterized the remarks of that hon. Gentleman. As the hon. Member has returned to his seat in the House, I will respectfully say to him that, instead of shortening the debate this evening, or instead of contributing to the shortening of it, as he endeavoured to do by applying a form of *clôture*, the course he took has had an opposite effect to that he intended, and has induced many hon. Members on these Benches to stand up and prolong the discussion. I and those of my Colleagues who have come for the first time into Parliament have not come for the purpose of falling into the views of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench on every occasion on which they wish us to sit here silently, and allow Irish discussions to go by default. If right hon. Gentlemen opposite have not seen already, they very soon will see before this debate concludes, that any attempt such as that made by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means to prevent hon. Members on these Benches from discussing Irish questions which either a portion or a part of Ireland takes the keen interest in that the people of Belfast take in this measure, will not have the desired effect. I do not think, Mr. Speaker, I can contribute very much more to this debate. There is one point which has been very largely touched upon by the hon. Member for West Belfast and others this evening which I would certainly like to refer to for a moment, and that is to the fact that the Town Clerk

of Belfast, in advocating or allowing the Corporation of Belfast to appeal again to this House for a local Bill, does not in any way whatsoever gain any pecuniary profit. I am quite willing to admit that; but we were also told before that the gentleman who is the Town Clerk of Belfast is also, I presume, the law adviser of the Corporation. I need not say, Sir, that with that sympathy which lawyers always have for each other, I am quite sure that this gentleman, in his capacity as law adviser to the Corporation, never in any way advised the Corporation of Belfast from coming to this House for local Bills, on the principle that "hawks don't pike out hawks' een."

Mrs. BIGGAR: I think it would have been well if the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means had abstained from raising a technical point, because it seems to me that it was perfectly within the province of this House to refuse to allow this Bill to go before a Committee upstairs, if they thought the parties bringing it forward were not those in whom they could repose confidence. In this particular case this Corporation of Belfast comes before the House of Commons and asks for large borrowing powers, and for liberty to carry out very extensive work, which borrowing powers and extensive work will be carried out by them if Parliament gives them this authority. Not only so, but this Corporation coming before Parliament comes in a great measure with an *ex parte* statement of the case, because we know very well that no one can be heard as petitioning against a Bill promoted in this way unless they have a *locus standi*. It must be known to everyone who has experience of Private Bill legislation—that is to say, in regard to opposition offered to Private Bills—that the process of endeavouring to influence the opposition of one of these measures by a private individual is very expensive, and that it is a very difficult thing to succeed even after the expenses have been incurred. It is also very clear that the parties who took part in the public meetings at St. George's Hall, in Belfast, did not belong to the class who would be likely to raise any very large sum of money in order to press their views upon the Committee upstairs. Seeing that that is the state of the case, I think it is extremely prudent and proper for this

House to see to what extent this Belfast Corporation represents the views of the people of Ulster, and if it can be shown that it does not represent the opinions and views of a very large proportion of the people of Belfast, and that the opinions of the ratepayers have not been asked by the Corporation, and that the general body of ratepayers have no Constitutional mode of offering an opinion on the subject, I think, I say, it is very prudent and proper for this House that the people, who at the present moment are not represented, should have an opportunity of expressing their opinion on such a matter as this when the Bill becomes an Act, but before it comes into operation. In this measure means should be given to the ratepayers of Belfast for expressing an opinion through the elections that are proposed by the Resolution of my hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton). If they approve of the Act as then passed, why, all is well, and the Corporation newly formed by the new electoral body would have an opportunity of carrying out the work embodied in this scheme. But, on the other hand, if the majority of electors on the new Registration Roll believe that this is an objectionable Act, then they could refuse to carry it into operation, and either bring in a new scheme, or say—"We will have no main drainage scheme at all." For these reasons, I think it is quite within the duty—not only within the power, but also within the duty—of this House to do what my hon. Friend proposes. It seems to me rather strange that the present Government, who a short time ago were such very earnest advocates of the extension of the franchise to all classes of electors in this Kingdom, should be so very anxious on this occasion to throw obstacles in the way of enfranchising the ratepayers of the borough of Belfast. Not only so, but the fact being so notorious that the franchise in Belfast is so very objectionable and of such a meagre character, the practical result is that four-fifths of the ratepayers, who are considered competent to select Members of Parliament, have no power in the selection of members of this Town Council, and therefore have no voice in the matter of the Bill which is now before the House. I think that it is the duty of the House to see that some mode of obtaining the opinion of these four-fifths should be provided. I must say also, in

Mr. Biggar

regard to the speech of the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett), that it was a very artful speech, because he entirely evaded the important question of rating, and also that raised by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). Now, the hon. Gentleman very artfully refrained from discussing that question; but still he asked that we should give power to the Belfast Corporation to let in the £8 a-year householder. Well, that being so, we consider that these people should have an opportunity of expressing their opinion before this Bill is passed. The hon. Gentleman has also evaded another important question—namely, the exclusive nature of the Town Council of Belfast, which is almost confined to one narrow class of the community. It entirely excludes what I may call the Orange Democracy of Belfast. The Town Council is, in fact, almost entirely represented by the small wholesale and large retail tradesmen of Belfast. For years it has only had two Catholic members—one of whom was elected by a Tory body, and would on no account have been elected by any body of Catholics. And yet we have this body, representing only one-fifth of the population of Belfast, coming to this House and asking to be allowed to saddle the whole community with a large amount of taxation. It would be well for the Government to take this matter into their serious consideration, and give the ratepayers of the second largest town in Ireland an opportunity of expressing their opinion before such a measure as this is allowed to pass.

MR. PARNELL: I wish to say, Sir, I should have been surprised at the way in which this Motion has been met by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney), were it not that he has, unfortunately, within my own Parliamentary connection, distinguished himself on every occasion which presented itself, by taking up a position in opposition to Irish claims, and I suppose that one of the reasons why the hon. Gentleman has been placed in his present position is that it was thought that it could not possibly fall in his power to take part in the debates of this House against the reasonable claims of Ireland. But if that were the worthy idea, it is a disappointed one, because the hon. Gentleman—with that ingenuity which is sometimes acquired by long

Parliamentary experience—has found an opportunity of distinguishing himself in this particular manner. He has endeavoured to create a precedent after a precedent has been established by his Predecessor, Sir Arthur Otway—one of the most distinguished occupants of the Chair in recent times, and certainly not one of whom it can be said, speaking as I do after a long experience of the occupants of the Chair, that he had been fair to Irish Members. But he laid down a precedent as to what could and what could not be done in reference to a Bill of this nature. Now, I must say I do think we have not been fairly treated by the hon. Member. My hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) appealed to a recent precedent, and one which fitted very well to the present case. It is true that my hon. Friend has gone a little further than was the case in regard to the Rathmines and Rathgar Bill, and has introduced matters which were not sought to be introduced on that occasion; but I would ask the House to consider this—an unreformed Parliament, a Parliament which gave many hon. Members of this House an opportunity which they otherwise would not have had of becoming Members—a Parliament which opened the franchise to the householders of British and Irish counties, agreed to a reform of franchise on a precisely similar Bill to this, with regard to an Irish municipal body. It said—"We have seen Irish Bills for a general reform of the municipal franchise in that country introduced into several Parliaments. We have seen these Bills rapidly pass through the House of Commons. We have seen them on more than one occasion thrown out by the House of Lords"—at the instance of this very body whom we ask the House to check now, and of the body which the unreformed Parliament checked in the case of the Bill which constitutes the precedent on which my hon. Friend relies—"if we cannot by the ordinary process of legislation—if our ordinary attempts at legislation have been defeated at the instigation of these unreformed bodies partly by means of the money of the ratepayers levied by a power over which the ratepayers had no control, is it not right, when these bodies come before us and ask for additional power of taxation, that we should say we cannot continue

to give these enlarged powers of taxation without saying that the people who are going to be taxed shall have an effectual voice in the expenditure." That was all that was asked in 1845; and that is all we ask in 1886. The only difference is simply this, that in 1845 we were appealing and appealed successfully to an unreformed Parliament, and in this case we are appealing to a reformed Parliament, which ought to be additionally impressed with the justice of our claim. Well, Sir, the only valid argument that could have been used by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees, or the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, against the claim of my hon. Friend has not been used—namely, that considering the whole question of the Government of Ireland is now under the consideration of the Administration, under those circumstances it is scarcely worth our while insisting upon the addition of this clause. This is an argument which might fairly and with some considerable force have been used by the opponents of the measure; but it has not been used, and, indeed, they have been very chary of speech. Of course, that argument would have raised a comparative question, and if it had been addressed to us early in the evening it might have had some weight; but that is not the policy which has been adopted. My object in rising is to suggest a compromise. I have said that my hon. Friend has gone to the precedent of 1845; but this Amendment provides that in addition to the assimilation of the Parliamentary and municipal franchises an arrangement is to be made by which all who are qualified to vote at a municipal election in Belfast should be enabled to be a candidate for the office of Councillor or Alderman, and he has also asked for an extension of the boundaries of the present municipal borough. Well, now, what I would suggest as a compromise is this—that if my hon. Friend should confine himself to two points, the first and the fourth, in the first Resolution that he has alone moved, I think he would bring himself strictly within the limits of the precedent of 1845. Now, we know that this House is governed by strict precedent, and it is scarcely fair for the Chairman of Committees to interpose a technical objection, and so prevent us from taking the sense of the

House on the substantial question, which I believe otherwise would be in our favour. If my hon. Friend would agree to this limitation of his Resolution on these two points, I cannot see why the House should refuse the Motion. No attempt has been made, except by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett), to argue against the Motion on its merits; and there is practically nothing to be said against it, otherwise it would have been said over and over again. In conclusion, I would appeal to the justice and judgment of the House, whether it, as a reformed Parliament, is going to refuse that which an unreformed Parliament did for us so willingly by a great majority in 1885?

MR. HOOPER: As a member of an Irish Municipal Body myself, I wish to make a few remarks on this subject. In commencing my observations I cannot but think that it is unfortunate that the right hon. Gentleman who did so much to pass the Act under which the present Parliament was elected is not present to-night—I mean the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke). The House is asked to set this Motion aside on extremely technical grounds; but if there ever was a question on which that course should not be adopted it is upon a question like this, and in presence of statements such as those which have been put forward from these Benches. The House has already heard that the 60,000 Roman Catholics of Belfast are unrepresented in the Town Council; but I do not know whether it has been mentioned that there is only one gentleman upon it professing Liberal politics. Now, if we added these two classes together, I am quite sure that they would form a majority of the people of Belfast; and, therefore, I ask the House whether it is public policy that the reform of such an abuse should be longer delayed? This is not the time when the House should stand on old precedents, and there is nothing in the history of Belfast that the House should be slow to interfere with its municipal arrangements. I can say, from my knowledge of Bills introduced by Irish Municipalities, that the likelihood is that before the expenditure on this scheme is concluded, instead of £150,000, it will reach £500,000; and it is this which gives rise to a good deal of opposition on the part of the

townspeople. If this £150,000 is granted, I have not the slightest doubt that the borough of Belfast will be here again for a Supplementary Bill to enable them to raise further funds for the purposes embraced in the scheme now before us; and very likely they will come again after that for a third Bill. Coming, then, to the question of the principles involved in the Motion of my hon. Friend, I must confess that I can find nothing new or dangerous which it is sought to import into this Bill. The first refers to the assimilation of the borough to the Parliamentary franchise. If there is anything dangerous in that, I think the House will be glad to hear from the hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition Benches who have been so silent to-night what are the dangerous principles. Will my hon. Friend who is now looking towards me, who is an ex-official of Belfast, condescend to enlighten us on the subject. But if he does not desire to wash the dirty linen of the Belfast Corporation in this House to-night, then he was quite right not to take part in this discussion. But what is the meaning of this conspiracy of silence on these Benches? As regards the enlargement of the municipal franchise to that which prevails at Parliamentary elections, although I know something of Belfast, I am not sufficiently acquainted with the town to speak specially in reference to it alone; but I can say generally that the assimilation would in future take out of the hands of narrow cliques the work which they now performed so badly, and it would do much for the purity of public administration in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman who represents West Belfast (Mr. Haslett) made, I think, a very unworthy remark to-day against those municipalities who pay their Mayors. I do not know if he is aware to what an extent that argument can be used against himself. It is not only those who had large fortunes, and who were able to dispense municipal hospitality, who should be the sole occupants of the Civic Chair; and in my opinion one of the benefits to be derived from the extension of the municipal franchise is that men of moderate means can aspire to the highest honour which their fellow-townsmen can confer upon them. So far, I take it, therefore, the hon. Member who used the argument has not advanced the

Mr. Parnell

cause of, or reflected credit upon, the Orange Democracy of Belfast. My hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) has stated that there is no Party motive connected with his Motion to-night; and I can only say that, notwithstanding any Nationalist complexion that may be put upon it, he has the entire approval of the whole Liberal Party of Belfast—a very powerful and large body in the North of Ireland. The question of the assimilation of these two franchises is one that can be raised, moreover, more appropriately in regard to Belfast, speaking from a Belfast and North of Ireland point of view, than in any other constituency in Ireland; because how often are we not told that Belfast, in every way—in sentiment, in the industrial habits of the people, and in every other way—is almost unrecognizable from an English or a Scotch town? If that was so, and if the extension of the municipal franchise was good in towns in England and Scotland, what possible objection could there be to its extension in this almost English or Scotch Municipality? Is it likely that the Town Council of Belfast is going to spend the public money in reforming itself? I do not believe that it is possessed of so self-debasing a tendency as to be guilty of that. We should be glad to hear from the hon. Member for East Belfast Mr. De Cobain—and I am sorry that the hon. Member, who is an ex-official of the Belfast Corporation, is not now in his place—some facts in connection with the transactions of the Town Council, which I think would very much enlighten hon. Members. I believe that a strong public feeling is growing in Belfast on this subject; and it may be some consolation to the hon. Members for Belfast who have not yet spoken, to learn that I hold in my hands a telegram which states that yesterday seven members of the Town Council voted for an assimilation of the franchise—a thing which no member of the Town Council had ever been known to do before. It would therefore seem that public opinion has not been without effect, even upon the Belfast Town Council; and I would advise the hon. Member for East Belfast to take advantage of this circumstance to stand up here and make a full confession, as the apostle of Terry Democracy.

Mr. HARRIS: As I happen to possess some local knowledge of the facts which have been brought under the

notice of the House, I think it is only right that I should say a word or two before this debate closes. I do not wish to urge anything at this moment against the hon. Members who represent the borough of Belfast. They seem to be in a state of transition at the present moment; they appear to be wavering between aristocratic and democratic ideas, and I hope that whatever decision they may arrive at will be one which will forward the interests of the town they represent. This question of extending the franchise in the Municipality of Belfast is a very important one, in this sense, that over and over again measures have been brought forward in this House and passed, which, after having received the approval of the House of Commons, was rejected by the House of Lords. If we cannot begin above, we must begin below, and in this case it is necessary to begin with the municipalities. If, on the other hand, we decided upon taking action in the way recommended by the Chairman of Ways and Means, it would be at once our duty to bring forward a measure for the abolition of the House of Lords. I must express my surprise that the Radical Party in this House do not enter more energetically into this important question. We certainly cannot expect the House of Lords to bring forward a measure for their own extinction; but I have never heard any strong expression of opinion upon it here. Hon. Members seem to have been perfectly content to sit quietly by and to endorse the opinion of the landowners generally. More especially has this been the case in connection with the action of the Town Council of Belfast. A large amount of money has been expended in Cork, as well as in Belfast, in undertakings which have not had the sanction of the ratepayers generally; and as we are on the eve of a legislative reform of local government, which is to be extended to Ireland, I think it might save us a considerable amount of expense in connection with the promotion of Bills of this character if steps were taken to hold over the action of the Town Council of Belfast until such time as we have a National Parliament in Ireland. In the meantime, they will be able to approach the Irish Party with some proposals of a conciliatory nature; and in such a case I am inclined to believe that an Irish Parliament would accede to their wishes, after

taking care to impose proper checks upon their action. As I have already said, there is a large question of principle involved in this question. And the most important principle of all is the principle of right; and when the principle of right comes to be argued on higher grounds than the interests of Belfast, it is questionable whether the action of former Parliaments, in which the people were not fairly represented, will be taken into consideration. I take it that the principle of right is founded on the right of every man who is taxed to be represented, and it is quite clear that any action taken prior to the present time by the Municipality of Belfast, or any other Public Body, was not founded on the great and broad right of representation—the right of every man who is taxed to be represented. I think that every act which may have been done outside the representative principle is open to be questioned by a Native Parliament; and I think, further, that this important question ought to be raised in the case of every act which involves the outlay or the distribution of money. I would therefore ask the House to suspend its judgment in this matter, and not allow this large amount of money to be granted to a body of men who are not fairly representative of the interests of the Municipality. If they were fairly representative, they might say that they spoke in the name of all of the inhabitants of Belfast, rich and poor; and I need not tell the House that in any matter connected with the Municipality the poor are in a higher degree interested than the rich. If the Municipality of Belfast were founded on a broad representative principle—if they were elected by the entire body of taxpayers, and were entitled, therefore, to come forward on that ground and speak in the name of the people, I should not object to this Bill; but when we take into consideration the present narrow representation, I think we should hesitate before we granted such a large amount of money. With these remarks, I beg to support the proposal of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton).

MR. DEASY: I am very sorry that the hon. Member for East Belfast (Mr. De Cobain) is not in his place, in order to favour the House with his opinion as to the action of the Corporation of Belfast in reference to this Bill, and the

Mr. Harris

course which he intends to take with regard to it. I am also desirous of ascertaining what course the Government propose to adopt with regard to the suggestion of my hon. Friend and Leader the senior Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). My hon. Friend has asked the House to consent to accept two of the four paragraphs of the Motion which stands in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton); but, so far, we have not received the slightest indication of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government upon the matter. It appears to me that nearly sufficient has been said from these Benches to give the House to understand how we regard this matter. As far as the debate has gone the Irish Members have entered a strong protest against the course which has been taken upon this question; it is the intention of my hon. Friends unduly to prolong the debate, but to proceed at once to take a division, if a division is forced upon us by the Government, as a final protest. The Chairman of Ways and Means stated, in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo, that we had received sufficient Notice of the second reading of the Bill. Now, I deny that altogether, because previous to the adjournment of the House, occasioned by the late change of Government, the first reading of the Bill was taken, and on the first day of the meeting of the House after the present Government had been constituted the Bill was read a second time at a time when there was not a single Member of the House who knew what was being done. Under these circumstances, I think the statement of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo did not exceed the exact truth when he said that this measure had been pressed forward without that due Notice which every Member of the House was entitled to receive. I should be sorry that a division should be taken at this moment upon this particular question. I should prefer to have the subject dealt with in a more comprehensive manner. I find, from a Return presented to the House a few days ago in reference to the valuation and population of the several wards in the City of Belfast, that certain facts have been brought to light which are of an alarming nature, and which require careful consideration in order that redress may be given without further delay. This Return was

moved for on the 24th of July last, and it was laid upon the Table last Friday. It shows that the valuation of the City of Belfast is £600,000 and its population 208,000; but the number of municipal electors are only 6,000. It has been shown that the number of Parliamentary electors are 32,000; but, nevertheless, there is only a constituency of 6,000 which returns members to the Town Council. While 32,000 have the right of sending Members to the Imperial Parliament, 6,000 are considered sufficient to return members to the Town Council. In point of fact, only one in 40 in a great Irish town enjoys the municipal franchise, whereas in the large towns of England one in eight enjoy the right of voting in the municipal elections. Now, I think that that is a glaring injustice as between England and Ireland; and there is even a greater contrast when we come to consider the different valuations and the disproportion between the wards. In one there is a population of 158,000, while in another—the Smithfield Ward—the population is 88,000, or about one-half. But the number of electors in the one case is 1,817, while in the other it is only 630. I think the electors in the Smithfield Ward have a just ground of complaint; and I hope, that in the face of such injustice, we shall not be told that we must wait until other questions of greater importance have been settled. If the Government do not intend to bring on these questions of greater importance in the next month or six weeks, there is no reason why a Bill dealing with the municipal franchise in Belfast might not be introduced and passed without delay. I believe that a Royal Commission some years ago unanimously recommended that the boundaries of the municipal borough should be extended; but up to this time no Government has taken up the question. If any hon. Member has at any time raised the question of the extension of the boundaries of Belfast, Cork, or Dublin, he has been told to wait until the whole question of Local Government in Ireland can be dealt with; but I fail to see what there is to prevent the Government from bringing in a Bill at once. It is quite apparent, from the silence of three of the hon. Members for Belfast, that they have not the courage to get up and express

any disagreement from the views of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo Mr. Sexton. I am, therefore, fairly entitled to say that they are on our side, although, for some reason or other, they refrain from expressing an opinion. They may tell us what they please about the Corporation being representative of the citizens of Belfast; but we know from previous experience that all Corporations and Public Bodies elected on a narrow footing are corrupt, and that the members of such Bodies have the greatest possible objection to any interference on the part of Parliament with their constitution. Hitherto the members of this particular Corporation have been engaged in plundering the ratepayers. One official of the Town Council of Belfast receives a salary of £2,000 a-year; and while the unfortunate ratepayers strongly object to the payment of so extravagant a sum, they are compelled to pay it, and are excluded from having any voice in the control of their own affairs. I am glad to find that the people of Belfast are at last aroused to a sense of duty, and that they protest against being any longer guided by this autocratic body. We have been told within the past week, and it has been repeated to-night by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett), that before any step is taken by Parliament the question of municipal reform ought to be considered and decided at the municipal elections. I should like to know how, in the City of Belfast, it is to be raised? There are only two ways in which it can be done—the one in public meeting assembled, and the other by sending Representatives to this House. Hitherto the working classes have been deprived of their rights to the municipal franchise, and the result has been that those who have put forward the interests of the Corporation have enjoyed a monopoly of the representation. I must express my deep regret that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury Mr. H. H. Fowler is not here to give the House his views on the suggestion which has been thrown out from this side of the House. We are most anxious to have the views of the Government on this question; and we shall do the only thing in our power this evening—namely, divide against this Bill in favour of the proposition of

my hon. Friend. I hope that whenever we may have an opportunity of raising this question again we shall be able to protest much more vigorously than to-night against the great injustice it is proposed to inflict on the citizens of Belfast.

MR. SEXTON: I think the time has now arrived when the House may proceed to take a division upon the question. I regret that the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees is absent, because I should have been quite ready to accept the suggestion of my hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and to strike out a portion of the Resolution, limiting my Instruction to the assimilation of the franchise and to provide for a new election on the new franchise. But you, Sir, have been good enough to inform me, on a personal reference to you, that as the Previous Question has been moved, you are not in a position to allow any further Motion to be moved. I regret that the Chairman of Committees is not here, and I protest against the course which the hon. Gentleman has taken, because, by the form of his Motion, he has put it out of my power to amend my Instruction in the way I have indicated. I will only add that the division is on the merits of my Motion. If the Motion should be successfully evaded by carrying the Previous Question, I shall, on the consideration of the Bill as amended, move the insertion of clauses amounting in substance to my present Motion.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 84; Noes 200: Majority 116.—(Div. List, No. 14.)

NOTICE OF AMENDMENT.

MAINTENANCE OF SOCIAL ORDER (IRELAND).

MR. HOLMES gave Notice that, on going into Supply on the Civil Service Estimates, he would move, as an Amendment to the Motion that the Speaker do now leave the Chair—

“That this House is unwilling to entertain Estimates for the Civil Establishments in Ireland before being placed in possession of the policy which Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue for the restoration and maintenance of social order in that Country.”

Mr. Deasy

QUESTIONS.

HARBOURS (SCOTLAND)—INVERGORDON HARBOUR.

DR. R. M'DONALD asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he, or his predecessor in office, having had notice of the following facts, viz. that a man was drowned in Invergordon Harbour, Ross-shire, in October last, that two men were immersed and nearly drowned on the 28th ultimo, and that another man was drowned on the 29th ultimo, that these accidents occurred at night, and were due to the want of light on said pier, such pier being part of a public ferry largely used, and for which the proprietor draws a rental of from £1,200 to £1,400 a year, what steps he is taking, or is going to take, against the proprietor of the said pier for the loss of life that has occurred; and, what steps he means to take to prevent loss of life in the future at this place?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. MUNDELLA): Invergordon Harbour is a private harbour not regulated by any Statute, and over it the Board of Trade has no control. I received, last month, from one of the Police Commissioners of the district, complaints of the accidents referred to in the hon. Member's Question, and at once communicated with the proprietor of the harbour, who informs me that since the last accident he has been taking steps to obviate a recurrence of these misfortunes by providing life-buoys and by placing lights on the jetties. He adds, however, that while there are two public-houses close to the harbour it is to be feared that no lighting will suffice to prevent these accidents. In case of any laches on the part of the proprietor of the harbour, I presume a remedy could be obtained in a Court of Law.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. JOHN O. PAYNE, J.P., CORK.

MR. GILHOLLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that Mr. John O. Payne, a Justice of the Peace for the county of Cork, refused on February 20th to attest the signatures of voters named Cotter to claims to vote at an election of Poor Law guardians, and if the voters were deprived of their right

to vote by his refusal; and, if true, what action the Government will take relative to the matter?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The matter has been brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and is now receiving consideration.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — ARMAUGH UNION—REMOVAL OF A PAUPER BY THE RELIEVING OFFICER.

MR. ALEXANDER BLAINE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What action the Local Government Board will take with reference to the relieving officer of the Armagh Union, who, contrary to the rules of the Board, went to Markethill recently and removed an old woman named Patterson, suffering from bronchitis, out of her bed, contrary to the wishes of her friends, had her conveyed six miles on a stormy day, which caused her death three days afterwards; whether the relieving officer had her buried, without giving notice to her friends, though he had their address; and, whether the Local Government Board will institute an inquiry into all the circumstances of the case?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): It appears that the relieving officer visited the old woman referred to on the application of the dispensary medical officer, and found her in a very wretched state, with bad bedding and little clothing. She had been previously in the workhouse, and when the relieving officer asked her whether she would return she expressed her desire to do so. No opposition was offered to her removal, which seems to have been effected with care. She died five days after her removal. It did not appear to be the duty of the relieving officer in particular to communicate with her friends. The case was investigated by a committee of the Guardians, who have come to the conclusion that the removal did not accelerate her death. The doctor of the workhouse also certifies to the same effect. It does not appear to the Local Government Board to be necessary to hold any further inquiry into the matter.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—THE TWEED FISHERIES ACTS.

SIR CHARLES TENNANT asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether his

attention has been called to the case of William Melrose, at Selkirk; whether he is aware that the Tweed Fisheries Acts give the Sheriff power to infer intent to commit an offence by fishing with an illegal implement even though no illegal implement is found on the accused; whether he is aware that the same Acts, which are private Acts, give the right of searching any one who may be on the banks of the river to men in the employment of a body of country gentlemen, whose only qualification to sit on that body is that they possess a Salmon Fishing; and that the fines which are levied in public courts, by the sentence of Her Majesty's Judicial Officers, are handed over to these gentlemen to be used in paying these water bailiffs of theirs; and, whether he is prepared to legislate for the amendment of this system?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN): My attention has been called to the case of William Melrose. Law and justice is the only important part of Scottish affairs which is not under the control of the Secretary for Scotland; and I have not the responsibility of revising sentences. The sentence was inflicted under Section 69 of the Tweed Act of 1857, which authorises the Special Commissioners appointed to inquire into the working of the Tweed Acts recommended should be repealed, for the best of reasons. The general state of things on the Tweed is described by my hon. Friend in the longest clause of his Question with remarkable force and precision. Under Section 81 of the Act of 1857 the fines inflicted go, among other purposes, to the payment of the water bailiffs. The Tweed Acts are condemned by the public opinion of almost all classes of the population of the district. I am making careful inquiries as to the course to be proposed with regard to them.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POSTMASTER OF BALA.

MR. HENRY CAMPBELL asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, with regard to the appointment of the postmaster for Bala, the memorial in favour of Mrs. Evans was forwarded to the Postmaster General early in January; whether, as the late Government resigned Office upon the 29th January, and their resignation was

House to see to what extent this Belfast Corporation represents the views of the people of Ulster, and if it can be shown that it does not represent the opinions and views of a very large proportion of the people of Belfast, and that the opinions of the ratepayers have not been asked by the Corporation, and that the general body of ratepayers have no Constitutional mode of offering an opinion on the subject, I think, I say, it is very prudent and proper for this House that the people, who at the present moment are not represented, should have an opportunity of expressing their opinion on such a matter as this when the Bill becomes an Act, but before it comes into operation. In this measure means should be given to the ratepayers of Belfast for expressing an opinion through the elections that are proposed by the Resolution of my hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton). If they approve of the Act as then passed, why, all is well, and the Corporation newly formed by the new electoral body would have an opportunity of carrying out the work embodied in this scheme. But, on the other hand, if the majority of electors on the new Registration Roll believe that this is an objectionable Act, then they could refuse to carry it into operation, and either bring in a new scheme, or say—"We will have no main drainage scheme at all." For these reasons, I think it is quite within the duty—not only within the power, but also within the duty—of this House to do what my hon. Friend proposes. It seems to me rather strange that the present Government, who a short time ago were such very earnest advocates of the extension of the franchise to all classes of electors in this Kingdom, should be so very anxious on this occasion to throw obstacles in the way of enfranchising the ratepayers of the borough of Belfast. Not only so, but the fact being so notorious that the franchise in Belfast is so very objectionable and of such a meagre character, the practical result is that four-fifths of the ratepayers, who are considered competent to select Members of Parliament, have no power in the selection of members of this Town Council, and therefore have no voice in the matter of the Bill which is now before the House. I think that it is the duty of the House to see that some mode of obtaining the opinion of these four-fifths should be provided. I must say also, in

regard to the speech of the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett), that it was a very artful speech, because he entirely evaded the important question of rating, and also that raised by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). Now, the hon. Gentleman very artfully refrained from discussing that question; but still he asked that we should give power to the Belfast Corporation to let in the £8 a-year householder. Well, that being so, we consider that these people should have an opportunity of expressing their opinion before this Bill is passed. The hon. Gentleman has also evaded another important question—namely, the exclusive nature of the Town Council of Belfast, which is almost confined to one narrow class of the community. It entirely excludes what I may call the Orange Democracy of Belfast. The Town Council is, in fact, almost entirely represented by the small wholesale and large retail tradesmen of Belfast. For years it has only had two Catholic members—one of whom was elected by a Tory body, and would on no account have been elected by any body of Catholics. And yet we have this body, representing only one-fifth of the population of Belfast, coming to this House and asking to be allowed to saddle the whole community with a large amount of taxation. It would be well for the Government to take this matter into their serious consideration, and give the ratepayers of the second largest town in Ireland an opportunity of expressing their opinion before such a measure as this is allowed to pass.

MR. PARNELL: I wish to say, Sir, I should have been surprised at the way in which this Motion has been met by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney), were it not that he has, unfortunately, within my own Parliamentary connection, distinguished himself on every occasion which presented itself, by taking up a position in opposition to Irish claims, and I suppose that one of the reasons why the hon. Gentleman has been placed in his present position is that it was thought that it could not possibly fall in his power to take part in the debates of this House against the reasonable claims of Ireland. But if that were the worthy idea, it is a disappointed one, because the hon. Gentleman—with that ingenuity which is sometimes acquired by long

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Parliamentary experience—has found an opportunity of distinguishing himself in this particular manner. He has endeavoured to create a precedent after a precedent has been established by his Predecessor, Sir Arthur Otway—one of the most distinguished occupants of the Chair in recent times, and certainly not one of whom it can be said, speaking as I do after a long experience of the occupants of the Chair, that he had been fair to Irish Members. But he laid down a precedent as to what could and what could not be done in reference to a Bill of this nature. Now, I must say I do think we have not been fairly treated by the hon. Member. My hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) appealed to a recent precedent, and one which fitted very well to the present case. It is true that my hon. Friend has gone a little further than was the case in regard to the Rathfriland and Rathgar Bill, and has introduced matters which were not sought to be introduced on that occasion; but I would ask the House to consider this—an unreformed Parliament, a Parliament which gave many hon. Members of this House an opportunity which they otherwise would not have had of becoming Members—a Parliament which opened the franchise to the householders of British and Irish counties, agreed to a reform of franchise on a precisely similar Bill to this, with regard to an Irish municipal body. It said—"We have seen Irish Bills for a general reform of the municipal franchise in that country introduced into several Parliaments. We have seen these Bills rapidly pass through the House of Commons. We have seen them on more than one occasion thrown out by the House of Lords"—at the instance of this very body whom we ask the House to check now, and of the body which the unreformed Parliament checked in the case of the Bill which constitutes the precedent on which my hon. Friend relies—"if we cannot by the ordinary process of legislation—if our ordinary attempts at legislation have been defeated at the instigation of these unreformed bodies, partly by means of the money of the ratepayers levied by a power over which the ratepayers had no control, is it not right, when these bodies come before us and ask for additional power of taxation, that we should say we cannot continue

to give these enlarged powers of taxation without saying that the people who are going to be taxed shall have an effectual voice in the expenditure." That was all that was asked in 1885; and that is all we ask in 1886. The only difference is simply this, that in 1885 we were appealing and appealed successfully to an unreformed Parliament, and in this case we are appealing to a reformed Parliament, which ought to be additionally impressed with the justice of our claim. Well, Sir, the only valid argument that could have been used by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committee, or the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, against the claim of my hon. Friend has not been used—namely, that considering the whole question of the Government of Ireland is now under the consideration of the Administration, under those circumstances it is scarcely worth our while insisting upon the addition of this clause. This is an argument which might fairly and with some considerable force have been used by the opponents of the measure; but it has not been used, and, indeed, they have been very chary of speech. Of course, that argument would have raised a comparative question, and if it had been addressed to us early in the evening it might have had some weight; but that is not the policy which has been adopted. My object in rising is to suggest a compromise. I have said that my hon. Friend has gone to the precedent of 1885; but this Amendment provides that in addition to the assimilation of the Parliamentary and municipal franchise an arrangement is to be made by which all who are qualified to vote at a municipal election in Belfast should be enabled to be a candidate for the office of Councillor or Alderman, and he has also asked for an extension of the boundaries of the present municipal borough. Well, now, what I would suggest as a compromise is this—that if my hon. Friend should confine himself to two points, the first and the fourth, in the first Resolution that he has alone moved, I think he would bring himself strictly within the limits of the precedent of 1885. Now, we know that this House is governed by strict precedent, and it is scarcely fair for the Chairman of Committee to interpose a technical objection, and so prevent us from taking the sense of the

House on the substantial question, which I believe otherwise would be in our favour. If my hon. Friend would agree to this limitation of his Resolution on these two points, I cannot see why the House should refuse the Motion. No attempt has been made, except by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett), to argue against the Motion on its merits; and there is practically nothing to be said against it, otherwise it would have been said over and over again. In conclusion, I would appeal to the justice and judgment of the House, whether it, as a reformed Parliament, is going to refuse that which an unreformed Parliament did for us so willingly by a great majority in 1885?

MR. HOOPER: As a member of an Irish Municipal Body myself, I wish to make a few remarks on this subject. In commencing my observations I cannot but think that it is unfortunate that the right hon. Gentleman who did so much to pass the Act under which the present Parliament was elected is not present to-night—I mean the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke). The House is asked to set this Motion aside on extremely technical grounds; but if there ever was a question on which that course should not to be adopted it is upon a question like this, and in presence of statements such as those which have been put forward from these Benches. The House has already heard that the 60,000 Roman Catholics of Belfast are unrepresented in the Town Council; but I do not know whether it has been mentioned that there is only one gentleman upon it professing Liberal politics. Now, if we added these two classes together, I am quite sure that they would form a majority of the people of Belfast; and, therefore, I ask the House whether it is public policy that the reform of such an abuse should be longer delayed? This is not the time when the House should stand on old precedents, and there is nothing in the history of Belfast that the House should be slow to interfere with its municipal arrangements. I can say, from my knowledge of Bills introduced by Irish Municipalities, that the likelihood is that before the expenditure on this scheme is concluded, instead of £150,000, it will reach £500,000; and it is this which gives rise to a good deal of opposition on the part of the

townspeople. If this £150,000 is granted, I have not the slightest doubt that the borough of Belfast will be here again for a Supplementary Bill to enable them to raise further funds for the purposes embraced in the scheme now before us; and very likely they will come again after that for a third Bill. Coming, then, to the question of the principles involved in the Motion of my hon. Friend, I must confess that I can find nothing new or dangerous which it is sought to import into this Bill. The first refers to the assimilation of the borough to the Parliamentary franchise. If there is anything dangerous in that, I think the House will be glad to hear from the hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition Benches who have been so silent to-night what are the dangerous principles. Will my hon. Friend who is now looking towards me, who is an ex-official of Belfast, condescend to enlighten us on the subject. But if he does not desire to wash the dirty linen of the Belfast Corporation in this House to-night, then he was quite right not to take part in this discussion. But what is the meaning of this conspiracy of silence on these Benches? As regards the enlargement of the municipal franchise to that which prevails at Parliamentary elections, although I know something of Belfast, I am not sufficiently acquainted with the town to speak specially in reference to it alone; but I can say generally that the assimilation would in future take out of the hands of narrow cliques the work which they now performed so badly, and it would do much for the purity of public administration in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman who represents West Belfast (Mr. Haslett) made, I think, a very unworthy remark to-day against those municipalities who pay their Mayors. I do not know if he is aware to what an extent that argument can be used against himself. It is not only those who had large fortunes, and who were able to dispense municipal hospitality, who should be the sole occupants of the Civic Chair; and in my opinion one of the benefits to be derived from the extension of the municipal franchise is that men of moderate means can aspire to the highest honour which their fellow-townsmen can confer upon them. So far, I take it, therefore, the hon. Member who used the argument has not advanced the

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cause of, or reflected credit upon, the Orange Democracy of Belfast. My hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) has stated that there is no Party motive connected with his Motion to-night; and I can only say that, notwithstanding any Nationalist complexion that may be put upon it, he has the entire approval of the whole Liberal Party of Belfast—a very powerful and large body in the North of Ireland. The question of the assimilation of these two franchises is one that can be raised, moreover, more appropriately in regard to Belfast, speaking from a Belfast and North of Ireland point of view, than in any other constituency in Ireland; because how often are we not told that Belfast, in every way—in sentiment, in the industrial habits of the people, and in every other way—is almost unrecognizable from an English or a Scotch town? If that was so, and if the extension of the municipal franchise was good in towns in England and Scotland, what possible objection could there be to its extension in this almost English or Scotch Municipality? Is it likely that the Town Council of Belfast is going to spend the public money in reforming itself? I do not believe that it is possessed of so self-debasing a tendency as to be guilty of that. We should be glad to hear from the hon. Member for East Belfast (Mr. De Cobain) and I am sorry that the hon. Member, who is an ex-official of the Belfast Corporation, is not now in his place—some facts in connection with the transactions of the Town Council, which I think would very much enlighten hon. Members. I believe that a strong public feeling is growing in Belfast on this subject; and it may be some consolation to the hon. Members for Belfast who have not yet spoken, to learn that I hold in my hands a telegram which states that yesterday seven members of the Town Council voted for an assimilation of the franchise—a thing which no member of the Town Council had ever been known to do before. It would therefore seem that public opinion has not been without effect, even upon the Belfast Town Council; and I would advise the hon. Member for East Belfast to take advantage of this circumstance to stand up here and make a full confession, as the apostle of Terry Democracy.

MR. HARRIS: As I happen to possess some local knowledge of the facts which have been brought under the

notice of the House, I think it is only right that I should say a word or two before this debate closes. I do not wish to urge anything at this moment against the hon. Members who represent the borough of Belfast. They seem to be in a state of transition at the present moment; they appear to be wavering between aristocratic and democratic ideas, and I hope that whatever decision they may arrive at will be one which will forward the interests of the town they represent. This question of extending the franchise in the Municipality of Belfast is a very important one, in this sense, that over and over again measures have been brought forward in this House and passed, which, after having received the approval of the House of Commons, was rejected by the House of Lords. If we cannot begin above, we must begin below, and in this case it is necessary to begin with the municipalities. If, on the other hand, we decided upon taking action in the way recommended by the Chairman of Ways and Means, it would be at once our duty to bring forward a measure for the abolition of the House of Lords. I must express my surprise that the Radical Party in this House do not enter more energetically into this important question. We certainly cannot expect the House of Lords to bring forward a measure for their own extinction; but I have never heard any strong expression of opinion upon it here. Hon. Members seem to have been perfectly content to sit quietly by and to endorse the opinion of the landowners generally. More especially has this been the case in connection with the action of the Town Council of Belfast. A large amount of money has been expended in Cork, as well as in Belfast, in undertakings which have not had the sanction of the ratepayers generally; and as we are on the eve of a legislative reform of local government, which is to be extended to Ireland, I think it might save us a considerable amount of expense in connection with the promotion of Bills of this character if steps were taken to hold over the action of the Town Council of Belfast until such time as we have a National Parliament in Ireland. In the meantime, they will be able to approach the Irish Party with some proposals of a conciliatory nature; and in such a case I am inclined to believe that an Irish Parliament would accede to their wishes, after

taking care to impose proper checks upon their action. As I have already said, there is a large question of principle involved in this question. And the most important principle of all is the principle of right; and when the principle of right comes to be argued on higher grounds than the interests of Belfast, it is questionable whether the action of former Parliaments, in which the people were not fairly represented, will be taken into consideration. I take it that the principle of right is founded on the right of every man who is taxed to be represented, and it is quite clear that any action taken prior to the present time by the Municipality of Belfast, or any other Public Body, was not founded on the great and broad right of representation—the right of every man who is taxed to be represented. I think that every act which may have been done outside the representative principle is open to be questioned by a Native Parliament; and I think, further, that this important question ought to be raised in the case of every act which involves the outlay or the distribution of money. I would therefore ask the House to suspend its judgment in this matter, and not allow this large amount of money to be granted to a body of men who are not fairly representative of the interests of the Municipality. If they were fairly representative, they might say that they spoke in the name of all of the inhabitants of Belfast, rich and poor; and I need not tell the House that in any matter connected with the Municipality the poor are in a higher degree interested than the rich. If the Municipality of Belfast were founded on a broad representative principle—if they were elected by the entire body of taxpayers, and were entitled, therefore, to come forward on that ground and speak in the name of the people, I should not object to this Bill; but when we take into consideration the present narrow representation, I think we should hesitate before we granted such a large amount of money. With these remarks, I beg to support the proposal of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton).

MR. DEASY: I am very sorry that the hon. Member for East Belfast (Mr. De Cobain) is not in his place, in order to favour the House with his opinion as to the action of the Corporation of Belfast in reference to this Bill, and the

course which he intends to take with regard to it. I am also desirous of ascertaining what course the Government propose to adopt with regard to the suggestion of my hon. Friend and Leader the senior Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). My hon. Friend has asked the House to consent to accept two of the four paragraphs of the Motion which stands in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton); but, so far, we have not received the slightest indication of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government upon the matter. It appears to me that nearly sufficient has been said from these Benches to give the House to understand how we regard this matter. As far as the debate has gone the Irish Members have entered a strong protest against the course which has been taken upon this question; it is the intention of my hon. Friends unduly to prolong the debate, but to proceed at once to take a division, if a division is forced upon us by the Government, as a final protest. The Chairman of Ways and Means stated, in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo, that we had received sufficient Notice of the second reading of the Bill. Now, I deny that altogether, because previous to the adjournment of the House, occasioned by the late change of Government, the first reading of the Bill was taken, and on the first day of the meeting of the House after the present Government had been constituted the Bill was read a second time at a time when there was not a single Member of the House who knew what was being done. Under these circumstances, I think the statement of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo did not exceed the exact truth when he said that this measure had been pressed forward without that due Notice which every Member of the House was entitled to receive. I should be sorry that a division should be taken at this moment upon this particular question. I should prefer to have the subject dealt with in a more comprehensive manner. I find, from a Return presented to the House a few days ago in reference to the valuation and population of the several wards in the City of Belfast, that certain facts have been brought to light which are of an alarming nature, and which require careful consideration in order that redress may be given without further delay. This Return was

Mr. Harris

moved for on the 24th of July last, and it was laid upon the Table last Friday. It shows that the valuation of the City of Belfast is £600,000 and its population 208,000; but the number of municipal electors are only 6,000. It has been shown that the number of Parliamentary electors are 32,000; but, nevertheless, there is only a constituency of 6,000 which returns members to the Town Council. While 32,000 have the right of sending Members to the Imperial Parliament, 6,000 are considered sufficient to return members to the Town Council. In point of fact, only one in 40 in a great Irish town enjoys the municipal franchise, whereas in the large towns of England one in eight enjoy the right of voting in the municipal elections. Now, I think that that is a glaring injustice as between England and Ireland; and there is even a greater contrast when we come to consider the different valuations and the disproportion between the wards. In one there is a population of 158,000, while in another—the Smithfield Ward—the population is 88,000, or about one-half. But the number of electors in the one case is 1,817, while in the other it is only 630. I think the electors in the Smithfield Ward have a just ground of complaint; and I hope, that in the face of such injustice, we shall not be told that we must wait until other questions of greater importance have been settled. If the Government do not intend to bring on these questions of greater importance in the next month or six weeks, there is no reason why a Bill dealing with the municipal franchise in Belfast might not be introduced and passed without delay. I believe that a Royal Commission some years ago unanimously recommended that the boundaries of the municipal borough should be extended; but up to this time no Government has taken up the question. If any hon. Member has at any time raised the question of the extension of the boundaries of Belfast, Cork, or Dublin, he has been told to wait until the whole question of Local Government in Ireland can be dealt with; but I fail to see what there is to prevent the Government from bringing in a Bill at once. It is quite apparent, from the silence of three of the hon. Members for Belfast, that they have not the courage to get up and express

any disagreement from the views of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo Mr. Sexton. I am, therefore, fairly entitled to say that they are on our side, although, for some reason or other, they refrain from expressing an opinion. They may tell us what they please about the Corporation being representative of the citizens of Belfast; but we know from previous experience that all Corporations and Public Bodies elected on a narrow footing are corrupt, and that the members of such Bodies have the greatest possible objection to any interference on the part of Parliament with their constitution. Hitherto the members of this particular Corporation have been engaged in plundering the ratepayers. One official of the Town Council of Belfast receives a salary of £2,000 a-year; and while the unfortunate ratepayers strongly object to the payment of so extravagant a sum, they are compelled to pay it, and are excluded from having any voice in the control of their own affairs. I am glad to find that the people of Belfast are at last aroused to a sense of duty, and that they protest against being any longer guided by this autocratic body. We have been told within the past week, and it has been repeated to-night by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Haslett), that before any step is taken by Parliament the question of municipal reform ought to be considered and decided at the municipal elections. I should like to know how, in the City of Belfast, it is to be raised? There are only two ways in which it can be done—the one in public meeting assembled, and the other by sending Representatives to this House. Hitherto the working classes have been deprived of their rights to the municipal franchise, and the result has been that those who have put forward the interests of the Corporation have enjoyed a monopoly of the representation. I must express my deep regret that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) is not here to give the House his views on the suggestion which has been thrown out from this side of the House. We are most anxious to have the views of the Government on this question; and we shall do the only thing in our power this evening—namely, divide against this Bill in favour of the proposition of

my hon. Friend. I hope that whenever we may have an opportunity of raising this question again we shall be able to protest much more vigorously than to-night against the great injustice it is proposed to inflict on the citizens of Belfast.

MR. SEXTON: I think the time has now arrived when the House may proceed to take a division upon the question. I regret that the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees is absent, because I should have been quite ready to accept the suggestion of my hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and to strike out a portion of the Resolution, limiting my Instruction to the assimilation of the franchise and to provide for a new election on the new franchise. But you, Sir, have been good enough to inform me, on a personal reference to you, that as the Previous Question has been moved, you are not in a position to allow any further Motion to be moved. I regret that the Chairman of Committees is not here, and I protest against the course which the hon. Gentleman has taken, because, by the form of his Motion, he has put it out of my power to amend my Instruction in the way I have indicated. I will only add that the division is on the merits of my Motion. If the Motion should be successfully evaded by carrying the Previous Question, I shall, on the consideration of the Bill as amended, move the insertion of clauses amounting in substance to my present Motion.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 84; Noes 200: Majority 116.—(Div. List, No. 14.)

NOTICE OF AMENDMENT.

MAINTENANCE OF SOCIAL ORDER (IRELAND).

MR. HOLMES gave Notice that, on going into Supply on the Civil Service Estimates, he would move, as an Amendment to the Motion that the Speaker do now leave the Chair—

"That this House is unwilling to entertain Estimates for the Civil Establishments in Ireland before being placed in possession of the policy which Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue for the restoration and maintenance of social order in that Country."

Mr. Deasy

QUESTIONS.

HARBOURS (SCOTLAND)—INVERGORDON HARBOUR.

DR. R. M'DONALD asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he, or his predecessor in office, having had notice of the following facts, viz. that a man was drowned in Invergordon Harbour, Ross-shire, in October last, that two men were immersed and nearly drowned on the 28th ultimo, and that another man was drowned on the 29th ultimo, that these accidents occurred at night, and were due to the want of light on said pier, such pier being part of a public ferry largely used, and for which the proprietor draws a rental of from £1,200 to £1,400 a year, what steps he is taking, or is going to take, against the proprietor of the said pier for the loss of life that has occurred; and, what steps he means to take to prevent loss of life in the future at this place?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. MUNDELLA): Invergordon Harbour is a private harbour not regulated by any Statute, and over it the Board of Trade has no control. I received, last month, from one of the Police Commissioners of the district, complaints of the accidents referred to in the hon. Member's Question, and at once communicated with the proprietor of the harbour, who informs me that since the last accident he has been taking steps to obviate a recurrence of these misfortunes by providing life-buoys and by placing lights on the jetties. He adds, however, that while there are two public-houses close to the harbour it is to be feared that no lighting will suffice to prevent these accidents. In case of any laches on the part of the proprietor of the harbour, I presume a remedy could be obtained in a Court of Law.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. JOHN O. PAYNE, J.P., CORK.

MR. GILHOOLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that Mr. John O. Payne, a Justice of the Peace for the county of Cork, refused on February 20th to attest the signatures of voters named Cotter to claims to vote at an election of Poor Law guardians, and if the voters were deprived of their right

to vote by his refusal; and, if true, what action the Government will take relative to the matter?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The matter has been brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and is now receiving consideration.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — ARMAGH UNION—REMOVAL OF A PATTER BY THE RELIEVING OFFICER.

Mr. ALEXANDER BLAINE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What action the Local Government Board will take with reference to the relieving officer of the Armagh Union, who, contrary to the rules of the Board, went to Markethill recently and removed an old woman named Patterson, suffering from bronchitis, out of her bed, contrary to the wishes of her friends, had her conveyed six miles on a stormy day, which caused her death three days afterwards; whether the relieving officer had her buried, without giving notice to her friends, though he had their address; and, whether the Local Government Board will institute an inquiry into all the circumstances of the case?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): It appears that the relieving officer visited the old woman referred to on the application of the dispensary medical officer, and found her in a very wretched state, with bad bedding and little clothing. She had been previously in the workhouse, and when the relieving officer asked her whether she would return she expressed her desire to do so. No opposition was offered to her removal, which seems to have been effected with care. She died five days after her removal. It did not appear to be the duty of the relieving officer in particular to communicate with her friends. The case was investigated by a committee of the Guardians, who have come to the conclusion that the removal did not accelerate her death. The doctor of the workhouse also certifies to the same effect. It does not appear to the Local Government Board to be necessary to hold any further inquiry into the matter.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND);—THE TWEED FISHERIES ACTS.

Srs CHARLES TENNANT asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether his

attention has been called to the case of William Melrose, at Selkirk; whether he is aware that the Tweed Fisheries Acts give the Sheriff power to infer intent to commit an offence by fishing with an illegal implement even though no illegal implement is found on the accused; whether he is aware that the same Acts, which are private Acts, give the right of searching any one who may be on the banks of the river to men in the employment of a body of country gentlemen, whose only qualification to sit on that body is that they possess a Salmon Fishing; and that the fines which are levied in public courts, by the sentence of Her Majesty's Judicial Officers, are handed over to these gentlemen to be used in paying these water bailiffs of theirs; and, whether he is prepared to legislate for the amendment of this system?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN: My attention has been called to the case of William Melrose. Law and justice is the only important part of Scottish affairs which is not under the control of the Secretary for Scotland; and I have not the responsibility of revising sentences. The sentence was inflicted under Section 69 of the Tweed Act of 1857, which section the Special Commissioners appointed to inquire into the working of the Tweed Acts recommended should be repealed, for the best of reasons. The general state of things on the Tweed is described by my hon. Friend in the longest clause of his Question with remarkable force and precision. Under Section 81 of the Act of 1857 the fines inflicted go, among other purposes, to the payment of the water bailiffs. The Tweed Acts are condemned by the public opinion of almost all classes of the population of the district. I am making careful inquiries as to the course to be proposed with regard to them.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — THE POSTMASTER OF BALA.

Mr. HENRY CAMPBELL asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, with regard to the appointment of the postmaster for Bala, the memorial in favour of Mrs. Evans was forwarded to the Postmaster General early in January; whether, as the late Government resigned Office upon the 29th January, and their resignation was

accepted on the 30th, this appointment was actually made after they had resigned; and, is it the fact that no intimation has yet been received by Mrs. Evans, or the gentleman appointed, that an appointment has been made?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that the Memorial alluded to was dated 14th January, and was received by the Treasury on the 15th. The appointment to the Bala Post Office rested with and was made by my Predecessor, the late Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury, who resigned Office on the 10th February. I understand that an intimation has been received both by Mrs. Evans and John Williams informing them of the appointment of the latter. The Post Office Authorities report that they have no objection, so far as the Service is concerned, either to John Williams or to his premises.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

MR. JACOBY asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, if he will consider the desirability of granting State aid in support of technical education?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR): Perhaps I can best answer the Question of the hon. Member for Mid Derbyshire by reading a short extract from the Report of the Royal Commission on Technical Education, page 515—

“In the United Kingdom one-half the cost of elementary education is defrayed out of Imperial funds, and the instruction of artisans in Science and Art is almost entirely borne by the State. Hence it will be necessary to look in the main to local resources for any large addition to the funds required for the further development of technical instruction in this country.”

I quite agree with that opinion. If the hon. Member will refer to page 12 of the last Report of the Charity Commissioners, he will find that it is intended to make the educational endowments of the country more applicable to the promotion of technical education, and I hope this subject will receive the attention of the Select Committee lately appointed.

Mr. Henry Campbell

THE PHOENIX PARK (DUBLIN)—BARRACKS FOR MARRIED CONSTABULARY—THE PUBLIC PARKS.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Is it the fact that further encroachments are taking place in the Phoenix Park, Dublin, by reason of the proposed erection of barracks for married constables of the Royal Irish Constabulary; who sanctioned those buildings; what will they cost; when the Estimate will be laid upon the Table; how many trees were cut down in the park to clear a space for them; what area will the new barracks cover; from how many acres of the park will the general public now be excluded; how many acres does the park contain altogether; and, what area is occupied in any of the London parks by barracks, powder magazines, soldiers' schools, official residences, enclosed cricket grounds, and polo grounds, for the use of civil servants and officers?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. H. H. FOWLER): The works referred to by the hon. Member were sanctioned by the Treasury, on the application of the Irish Government, the estimated cost being £3,750. A Vote of £1,400 on account was taken in the Estimates of 1885-6, and a sum of £2,400 has been inserted in the Estimates for 1886-7, which I hope will be circulated to-morrow. Seven or eight trees have been cut down in preparing the ground for the barracks. The building, with its approaches and yards, will occupy portions of an irregular angle of ground, containing 1½ acre, lying between the back of the stables of the Constabulary depot and the North Circular Road gate. The building will occupy about two-thirds of that space. The Viceregal demesne and other inclosures occupied for Governmental purposes contain 379 acres, 0 roods, 4 perches, the zoological garden 19 acres, 1 rood, 5 perches, five cricket grounds about 16 acres—total, 413 acres, 1 rood, 9 perches. The Park contains 1,752 acres, 3 roods, 21 perches. The area occupied in the London Parks by barracks, powder magazines, and official residences, is as follows:—namely, St. James's, the Green, and Hyde Parks, and Kensington Gardens, about 4½ acres; Victoria Park, one-third of an acre; Greenwich Park,

19 acres; Regent's Park, about three-quarters of an acre; Battersea Park, about 1½ acre; Kennington Park, about 1-16th of an acre. There are no soldiers' barracks, inclosed cricket grounds, or polo grounds.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, Whether, considering the fact that more than one-quarter of the Phoenix Park, Dublin, has been purloined from the public for the purpose of building official residences, and that it is now proposed to take five acres more, upon which it is proposed to erect residences for married police officers, and for this purpose is to be devoted £3,000 or £4,000 of the taxpayers' money, which would be expended in shutting out the public from one of the chief portions of the park, he will give orders that such erections shall not be proceeded with until a discussion has taken place upon it?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he had had no opportunity of giving attention to the question, and was not prepared to give an answer at present. His impression, however, on hearing the case, was that attention ought to be given to it. Beyond that he could not go at present; he would, however, confer with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary upon the matter.

MR. T. M. HEALY: There has been already an enormous amount of expenditure of money upon the Royal Irish Constabulary Force, and now it is proposed that there should be a further outlay and further taking up of ground in the Park. I will, therefore, at the first opportunity, move that the Irish Government be directed to give orders to suspend the further cutting down of trees pending the decision of the House on the subject. The Royal Irish Constabulary never wanted these residences for half-a-century before, and the Irish Members will oppose their erection now.

IRISH LAND PURCHASE SETTLEMENT COMPANY.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can say how much money was advanced by the Treasury to the Irish Land Purchase Settlement Company, and the terms upon

which the advance was made; how many tenants have purchased their farms under the Company; on what terms they have done so; and how many, if any, have been transplanted to the property; and, what was the original capital of the Company in question, and how much was subscribed and actually paid up; and if the repayments to the Treasury have been punctually made?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): The amount of the advance by the Land Commissioners in this case was £42,300. The terms were: 1) that the Company should lodge in the Bank of Ireland a sum of £2,115 in the joint names of themselves and of the Land Commission; 2) that they should charge a further sum of £2,115 on their unpaid subscribed capital; 3) that they should pay an annuity of £1,972 19s., which was a charge on the land sold for 40 years by half-yearly payments. Agreements have been lodged with the Land Commission for the sale of their holdings to 30 tenants from the estate in question. They occupy 527 statute acres, and the price to be paid is £6,442, which will, I believe, be advanced by the Land Commissioners. The Land Commissioners have no knowledge of any tenants having been transplanted to the estate. The advance to buy the estate was obtained for the purpose of re-sale to the existing tenants. The 30 tenants for the sale of whose holdings agreements have been lodged were mainly, I believe, small tenants, whose holdings had been enlarged with land added by the Company. Prior to the advance the Land Commissioners ascertained that there were 867 shareholders in the Company, and that 11,342 shares were subscribed for; that a sum of £2,838 had been paid on foot of 5s. per share on application, and £1,567 15s. on foot of 5s. per share payable on allotment. The payment of the instalment due in January last by the Company has not yet been made; but I am given to understand that there is a period of grace.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN FIFE.

VISCOUNT GRIMSTON asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether it is true that a case of foot

and mouth disease has broken out at a place called Markinch, in Fifeshire, which has been traced to some straw imported from France; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take measures, by legislation or otherwise, to stop the importation of hay and straw from countries where disease is known to exist, and to save the agricultural community from such disastrous results?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY (Mr. HENEAGE): In reply to the noble Viscount's first Question, I have to state that there is no reason to believe that foot-and-mouth disease has been introduced into Fifeshire by means of straw imported from France or elsewhere; and in reply to the second Question, that Her Majesty's Government have no intention to propose any legislation to prohibit the importation of hay and straw from foreign countries.

EVICTIIONS (IRELAND)—CASE OF THE WIDOW, ANNE SHAW, CO. MONAGHAN.

MR. MACARTNEY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has inquired into the allegations made against Colonel Lloyd in respect of his action in the case of Anne Shaw, recently brought before the notice of this House?

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the intention of the Government, in reference to the charge made against Colonel Lloyd, J.P., the Monaghan Clerk of the Peace, of tampering with the records in the County and Assize Courts, in an ejectment in which he himself was plaintiff and Anne Shaw defendant, to allow their decision on his action to be influenced by the verdict which the jury may return in the suit for trespass, &c. since brought against him by Anne Shaw; if so, can he explain what light can be thrown on the charge of altering the decrees of Her Majesty's Courts, by Colonel Lloyd's defence in an action for trespass, and specific performance; has his attention been called to the fact that it must prejudice Mrs. Shaw's chance of a fair trial in county Monaghan if the impression is allowed to continue that the verdict of the jury in the forthcoming trial, on a wholly different issue, will decide the view of the Government in

the matter of Colonel Lloyd's retention of office as Clerk of the Peace; has he seen the report in *The Freeman's Journal* of Friday, as to the mode in which the jury is being got together, it being stated that Colonel Lloyd, with Mr. Johnston, his Deputy Clerk of the Peace, attended before the Master of the Queen's Bench, accompanied by the agent of the County Monaghan Conservative Association, and struck from the panel "all Catholic magistrates and farmers, with some Presbyterians," while the plaintiff's solicitor challenged "all land agents or Orange farmers," and that "the list, after some hours' work, was reduced to twenty-four names, the majority of whom are Presbyterian farmers;" is it the fact that these twenty-four Presbyterian farmers, from whom the jury must be taken, may, in the meantime, be exposed to canvass and other influences; and, as the case has now been given a political or party complexion, can he make it apparent, with a view of securing an impartial trial for Mrs. Shaw on the issue of trespass, that the verdict of the jury will in no wise affect the determination of the Executive on the charge of tampering with legal records by an official of the Courts, which cannot be directly raised at the trial?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I have not made any inquiry into the allegations against Colonel Lloyd. I am advised that the result of the pending action may be affected by the conclusion as to which of the entries made at the hearing of the appeal is the correct version of what then occurred, and the credit to be attached to statements of Colonel Lloyd or his deputy as witnesses in the action may also be involved in the matter. On these grounds it appeared to me that any authority having control over the Clerk of the Peace should suspend inquiry till the action was determined. It is right I should point out that, inasmuch as Colonel Lloyd was appointed before 1877, the Government had no control over his retention in office or removal from it. That jurisdiction is vested in the Quarter Sessions with a power of appeal to the Queen's Bench.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Does that apply to the Deputy Clerk of the Peace?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I believe it does.

Viscount Grimston

SAVINGS BANKS RETURNS (ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND).

Mr. JAMES O'BRIEN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will be good enough to lay upon the Table Copies of Reports on Savings Banks in England and Scotland, corresponding with the Reports on Savings Banks in Ireland, asked for, by Question No. 27 of 1st March, by the honourable Member for Glasgow?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE Mr. MUNDELLA (who replied): A Return as to Savings Banks is now annually laid before the House, and a summary is given in the Statistical Abstract. There is no special Report on the savings of England and Scotland like that referred to in the Question last night which related to savings in Ireland.

IMPORTATION OF IRISH CATTLE—THE MONTHLY RETURNS.

Mr. DUCKHAM asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will, for the future, add to the Monthly Trade and Navigation Accounts a Return of the numbers of cattle, sheep, and swine received from Ireland, similar to the Return of importation of such animals from Foreign Countries; and, whether he will also add a Return of all kinds of the dead meat received from Ireland?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA): The Board of Trade would have no objection to include the information as to the numbers of cattle, sheep, and swine exported from Ireland in the Monthly Board of Trade Returns. With regard to dead meat there will be a difficulty, as there are no Returns required from merchants as to imports and exports generally between Ireland and Great Britain. But the matter will be considered at the next revival of the accounts. The Board of Trade have under consideration the question of further additions to the Monthly Returns, so as to make them more generally useful. Various statistics are now published in a scattered form—*e.g.*, emigration, cotton statistics, prices of wheat, &c., which might, and probably will, be included in these Returns.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT.

Mr. MULHOLLAND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ire-

land, Whether the Government will take into consideration the claims of purchasers under the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881 who desire to be placed in the same position as purchasers under the Land Purchase Act, 1885?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I may remind the hon. Member that when the Land Purchase Bill was passing through Committee an Amendment was moved with the same object as this Question, and was supported by the present Attorney General for Ireland, but opposed by the late Government. The proposal is one that requires a good deal of consideration, and is rather a matter for the Treasury than for the Irish Government.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—GAELIC IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

Mr. BEITH asked the Secretary for Scotland, If he is aware that in many districts of the northern counties of Scotland, where Gaelic is the only language spoken by the people, teachers are appointed to Board Schools who are entirely ignorant of the Gaelic language; that their duty is to communicate instruction in English, according to the standard of the Code, to children who are entirely ignorant of the English language; that the instruction so communicated is acquired by the children by rote only, and is of little practical value; and, if the Education Department have no further means in contemplation for remedying this evil than that specified in the Code of Regulations 1896, just issued, section 1, 19 B. 1 (b) and C. 2?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN: More has been done in this new Code for the Gaelic-speaking districts than the hon. Member points out. Infant children in Scotland may gain an extra shilling if a Gaelic pupil teacher is at work. Intelligence in class subjects is to be tested by answers in Gaelic. These changes the hon. Member refers to; but, besides, there is a special grant for pupil teachers, and Gaelic is recognized as a specific extra subject. All this together comes to a great deal. The appointment of teachers rests with School Boards; and, while the Department gives encouragement to the appointment of Gaelic teachers, it cannot interfere with the responsibility of these representative

Boards, who can point to good results obtained by English-speaking teachers, and who would have great difficulty in obtaining suitable Gaelic-speaking candidates for all vacancies.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT, 1882—PROVISIONAL OR PRIVATE BILLS.

MR. NORTHCOTE asked the President of the Board of Trade, What course the Government propose to adopt with regard to any Private Bills or Provisional Order Bills which propose to amend any of the clauses of the Electric Lighting Act, 1882?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. MUNDELLA): I am not prepared at this moment to state exactly what course will be taken with the one Bill and two Provisional Orders which this Session seek authority, among other things, to amend the Electric Lighting Act, 1882. I may say, however, that the Government could not permit any amendment of the general law to be effected by means of a Private Bill or a Provisional Order. The whole question is under the consideration of the Government, and will, if possible, be dealt with during the present Session.

IRELAND—ORANGE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE (CO. CAVAN).

MR. JOHNSTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that no men are employed by the Orange Emergency Committee in the county Cavan; and, from whom he had the information that two Emergency men had been arrested at Cornafane, in that county?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): It is possible that too wide an interpretation is generally given to the term "Emergency man." As a matter of fact, I find that the two men arrested on the occasion referred to were *employees* of the Land Corporation Society. Neither in the Question that was put to me, nor in the answer to which the present Question refers, was the word "Orange" introduced.

LUNACY (IRELAND).

MR. PULESTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the Queen's letter giving the Lord Chancellor jurisdiction in lunacy in Ireland has not yet been sent; and, whether he is aware of the serious

inconvenience arising from the fact that there has been no one in Ireland with jurisdiction since the change of Government took place?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I do not know why this Question was not addressed to a Representative of the Treasury. I am informed by that Department—through which the necessary Queen's Letter giving the Lord Chancellor jurisdiction in lunacy matters issues—that there has been some accidental delay in connection with it; but that it has now been submitted for the Queen's signature, and will be forwarded to Ireland as soon as the necessary formalities have been completed.

SCOTLAND — UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREW'S.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether the Government intend to fill up the vacant office of Principal of St. Mary's College, St. Andrew's?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (MR. TREVELYAN): The Royal Commission on the Scotch Universities recommend that there should be only one Principal of St. Andrew's University. In order to effect this change, the authority of Parliament is required, which can be obtained in the Scotch University Bill, which we hope shortly to introduce. Meanwhile, the Government do not propose to appoint a Principal Primarius Professorship of Divinity, but to wait till that office is separated from the Principalship of St. Mary's College.

NAVY—SPECIAL PROMOTIONS.

CAPTAIN VERNEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, The date of the Order No. 252, page 60, of the Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions:—

"Chief and other Gunners, Boatswains and Carpenters, of exemplary conduct, who may distinguish themselves by acts of gallantry and daring in the Service, shall be considered eligible to hold Commissions in Her Majesty's Fleet, in such other rank or position as the Admiralty may deem them, after undergoing an examination, worthy to receive and competent to fill;"

and, whether he will lay upon the Table of this House, a Return showing—the names of the Warrant Officers who have been promoted under this Order up to the 1st day of January, 1886; the other

Mr. Trevelyan

rank or positions for which they have received Commissions; a short summary of the acts of gallantry and daring by which they have distinguished themselves; and, whether these acts of gallantry and daring were performed afloat or on shore with a Naval Brigade?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HILBERT): The Order referred to by the hon. and gallant Member was established by Order in Council of April, 1853. No promotions appear to have been made under that Order. It may be mentioned that by Order in Council of July 9, 1864, chief gunners, chief boatswains, and chief carpenters were established to be commissioned officers; and although promotion to these positions is not made on a count of acts of gallantry only, the existence of the "chief" rank may have been one reason why promotion for gallantry under the Order of 1853 has remained a dead letter.

SCOTLAND—ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY —THE CHAIR OF PHYSIOLOGY.

Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether he was not mistaken in referring to the Chair of Physiology at Aberdeen as being at present vacant?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN): I have received a letter from Professor Stirling, stating that he does not propose formally to resign till the close of the present Session.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE IRELAND — OUTRAGE UPON RANDAL M'SWEENEY.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the account of an outrage committed on Saturday last near Killiney on a respectable farmer named Randal M'Sweeney, as given in *The Daily News* of March 1st, is correct; and, whether two men, afterwards arrested in connection with the outrage, were cheered by a large crowd on being escorted to gaol by the police?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The published account of the outrage is substantially correct, except that the wound is reported as not being of a dangerous character. Two men have been arrested and identified by the injured man. I

have made inquiry as to the incident referred to in the last paragraph of the Question, but have not yet received information.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (IRELAND—ILLITERATE VOTERS.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can have a Return furnished of the number of illiterate voters who recorded their votes in the various constituencies in Ireland which were contested at the recent General Election?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): A Return is being prepared for the House of Lords which gives the information referred to by the hon. and gallant Member; and if he will move for the same Return, there will, of course, be no objection to his having it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY gave Notice that he would ask to have added how the illiterate voters voted. He could say that almost all of them in the North of Ireland voted for the Orange candidates. ("Order!")

SLAVE TRADE IN THE RED SEA.

Mr. HANBURY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What is the number, and what the description of the vessels of Her Majesty's Navy, employed in suppressing the Slave Trade in the Red Sea and along the coasts of East Africa and Arabia?

Mr. DILLON asked, Whether it was a fact that those vessels were engaged in the grain trade?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HILBERT): By the latest Returns, two gun-boats and one sloop were employed in the Red Sea, and one corvette and two sloops on the East Coast of Africa, making a total of six vessels engaged in the suppression of the Slave Trade. In addition to these, one sloop and two gun-boats, with 373 officers and men, are similarly employed in the Persian Gulf. I have no information that the vessels in question are engaged in the conveyance of grain.

PUBLIC BUSINESS THE ARMY, NAVY, AND CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

VICOUNT FOLKESTONE for Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering that the Navy Estimates will not be distributed till Friday or Saturday next, he

could so re-arrange the Business of the House as to allow a reasonable time for their consideration?

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE (for Lord CHARLES BERESFORD) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the immense importance attached to the question of Naval Estimates, he will consent to the postponement of their discussion until the Estimates have been in the hands of Members for one week?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, he was sorry to find, on inquiry, that the Navy Estimates could not be prepared and circulated until after Sunday; and therefore he would postpone consideration of them till Monday week.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH asked what Business would be taken on Monday?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE said, the second reading of the Crofters Bill would be taken on Monday, and on Thursday probably the Civil Service Miscellaneous Votes.

MR. NORTHCOTE asked when the Army Estimates would be taken?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I cannot say at present.

LONDON CITY COMPANIES.

BARON DIMSDALE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, in their proposed measure respecting the London City Companies, to interfere with existing contracts between landlord and tenant under the Land Purchase Act?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS) (who replied) said, that no Bill on the subject had been drafted by the Government; and, therefore, to say anything about its provisions would be obviously premature.

NAVY—H.M.S. "BELLEROPHON."

SIR JOHN GORST asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he had any information to give the House with reference to the reports circulated to-day regarding Her Majesty's Ship *Bellerophon*?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT): I am glad to give the House what information I possess. It appears that Her Majesty's Ship *Bellerophon* arrived at Madeira on

January 26, and was expected to sail from there on January 28 at noon. The Commanding Officer stated that unless he met with very contrary winds during the first five days he would not go to St. Vincent, but would make his way direct to Barbados, as he thought that course would be more expeditious. He hoped, with luck, to arrive at Barbados about February 17. The *Bellerophon* did not call at St. Vincent; and it is assumed that she has met with head winds, and having burnt more coal than calculated on, she is economizing the same and proceeding under sail. The Hydrographer of the Admiralty thinks she might be 30 days in doing the distance. It is, therefore, the opinion of the Admiralty that there is no cause for anxiety. My noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty has telegraphed to Barbados, asking that the earliest information should be sent to him of the vessel's arrival there.

MOTION.

LABOUR STATISTICS.

RESOLUTION.

MR. BRADLAUGH, in rising to call attention to the method of collection of Labour Statistics in the United States and in the Dominion of Canada; and to move—

"That, in the opinion of this House, immediate steps should be taken to ensure in this Country the full and accurate collection and publishing of Labour Statistics,"

said, hon. Members must all agree that the subject was one happily not of a Party character, and he trusted the Government would feel themselves able to accept his Resolution. It was as much in the interests of the employers of labour as of those who sold their labour that the plan he proposed should be adopted. It was a satisfaction to him to move this Resolution in a Parliament in which Representatives of labour sat in a larger number than they had ever done before. In January, 1885, an industrial conference was held in Piccadilly Hall, at which a number of questions affecting the relations between labour and capital were discussed; and it was attended by manufacturers, by Peers of the Realm, and by workmen of different political views. An endeavour was made by the conference to inquire into the possibility

Viscount Folkestone

of bringing about a more equal division of the daily products of industry between capital and labour; and the hon. Member for Hastings (Sir Thomas Brassey), who was present as a Representative of capital, urged that it was desirable to liberate industry from the disadvantages caused by the conflict of interest between capital and labour. This conference was a sign of the times, because the old way of meeting the difficulty caused by the conflict of interests was to impose restrictions on labour. Those mistaken laws were persisted in till almost recent times, and they did no good to any human being. They often resulted in appeals to violence, because the labourers had no possibility of obtaining a decision by appeals to justice. But all these restrictive laws had been abolished, and he did not think there was the slightest chance of their being renewed. There were only now three ways in which disputes between capital and labour could be settled—by strikes, lock-out, and by arbitration and conciliation. The first two methods were barbarous appeals to the old arbitrament of force, which did no good to either side—the victor was never in a position to be congratulated, and the general result to working men was injury and lasting loss. The owner of capital could afford to wait; but the owner of labour—that labour lost—could never redeem it. All the Trade Unions of to-day were against strikes; their desire was to solve labour disputes by reasonable means and by arbitration; but arbitration and conciliation had not always been attended with the results desired, because there were no reliable statistics to which both employers and employed could appeal. If there were any, they were compiled in view of the disputes by trained compilers to support a theory on either side. The statistics should be prepared before the dispute had arisen, and he should suggest that they should be collected by the Board of Trade in the same way as the agricultural statistics were, to a great extent, at present collected. The law in Massachusetts for the tabulating of labour statistics had been found to be exceedingly useful. Massachusetts had for 16 years published statistics, and many other States of the American Union had followed that example, while the year before last the Federal Government at Washington

determined to establish a Federal Bureau in which those statistics should be collated and systematized. At Ontario, in Canada, a Labour Bureau had been founded, and he believed that one was being founded in another Province of the Dominion. He asked that Great Britain should not remain behind in this matter. These were the statistics which he would like to have collected—though it might be necessary that the whole collection should be a matter of growth rather than be attempted at once—the description and number of each character of the various industries of the United Kingdom, the number of persons and amount of capital employed in each, specifying when any of these industries were increasing or diminishing, and whether, and why, any special industry was limited to any particular locality, and the reason, if known, for such local limitation; the hazardous nature, or otherwise, of each class of industry, with the results to life, limb, general health and habits of life of each industry; giving particulars as to labourers' dwellings, and whether they were held from the employers, and on what conditions; showing the cases of exploitation by Limited Liability Companies or other Corporations, the amount of capital, and distinguishing the cases where the workers shared the profit, the individual wages paid in each industry, distinguishing men, women, boys, and girls, and specifying the highest and lowest average wage; also, whether the wages were paid weekly, or at a longer period, and where Companies' shops existed. With reference to the last matter, it was of the gravest importance, because there were places within the United Kingdom where the Truck Act was broken, sometimes in letter and always in spirit—Mr. STAVELLY HILL: No.—to the great demoralization of the employed. Mr. STAVELLY HILL: Name? He should be quite prepared to give names. He hoped he should never make statements to the House without the fullest certainty as to every matter of fact which he alleged. It did not heighten his case at the moment to state names—“Oh!” and “Hear, hear!”—if it did he should state them. What he said was, that beyond the possibility of contradiction—Mr. STAVELLY HILL: Oh!—except by a Member utterly ignorant of the working classes, there were many works

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, immediate steps should be taken to ensure in this Country the full and accurate collection and publication of Labour Statistics."—(Mr. Bradlaugh.)

MR. E. STANHOPE, in rising to move, as an Amendment to the Motion, to leave out all after "That," and insert—

"A Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means of collecting and publishing statistics as to Labour in the United Kingdom,"

said, he should not attempt to follow the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) in a good many of the topics which he addressed to the House. Some of the hon. Member's statements he had heard with considerable pleasure, although they were not strictly relevant to the Motion before the House. He heard, for instance, with great pleasure his statement with respect to the removal of restrictive laws affecting labour; because he had not forgotten, and the House would not have forgotten, that that was mainly due to the action of his right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary, who dealt with the laws as between employers and employed on a comprehensive principle founded on a broad basis. Since his right hon. Friend's legislation on the subject nothing had been heard about complaints in that direction. When he listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton he wondered whether that hon. Member had ever considered what was the proper function of the State in these matters. No doubt, the collection of statistics had always been recognized as one of the most proper functions for the State to undertake; first, because the State could do it better than anybody else; and, secondly, because, in many cases, the State alone could do it. But then they came to the question, Statistics of what? As he had said, many of the subjects introduced into the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton were not facts, but expressions of opinion—for instance, as to what occupations might be hazardous to the lives or morals of the people engaged in them. He (Mr. Stanhope) would prefer to deal not with opinions, but with facts; and as regarded facts, it did seem to him that some Department ought to be responsible for the collection of statistics of this nature. He might allude in par-

ticular to facts relating to the movement, the distribution, and to the remuneration of labour; and if those statistics were accurate and exhaustive, and if they were presented in an easily accessible form for use, and while they were still fresh, be believed they would be of very great value to the country. They would be of value not only to those desiring to study, either in the present or at any future time, the exact industrial condition of the country, but also to those desiring to embark capital in any particular trade or industry; and, last of all, they would be of great value to the people employed in such trades or industries. For example, they heard a great deal nowadays about the enormous aggregation of population in our large towns. No doubt, that had been a source of serious mischief lately; but one of the main causes of it had been the exaggerated expectations as to wages that had been held out. Nobody could dispute the fact that men had been brought up by scores from the country to the towns, because they had been misled by the nominal wages, and had not realized the fact that the employment they were likely to get would occupy only a portion of their time, and that their nominal wages could never be realized in a permanent form, and would be enormously below the real wages they had been accustomed to receive. But, within certain limits, he agreed to the fullest extent in the suggestion of the hon. Member that they should endeavour to collect labour statistics. In fact, he had never understood why the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade had not collected these already. If he were to make a suggestion in regard to the proposal, he would say, as they were entering upon a new description of statistics, they should take care not to over-weight the Department. The process at first should be a tentative and cautious one, and they should be sure of their materials. Let them not, by trying to do too much at once, risk the failure of the whole. Therefore, he would first advise that they should make use of existing materials. There had been inquiries held year after year, the results of which were entombed in voluminous and forgotten Blue Books, and no use whatever had been made of them. He was not going to blame the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade; but that

Department had not had under their control a sufficient staff for the work they had to do. There was, for example, an inquiry held a number of years ago into the condition of the agricultural population, and there were many Blue Books as the result of that inquiry; but nobody ever read them now, and they were not even alluded to in the recent debates on the subject of allotments. In the first place, then, the Statistical Department of the Board should make the fullest use possible of all the material they might have under their control. They had not had sufficient staff for doing more than they had hitherto done; but that did not affect the principle of the proposal. If the country was to be put to the expense of these Returns, of so exhaustive a character, they ought to be made full use of, and the results ought to be presented by the Board of Trade in a succinct form. He himself ventured to send to the papers a digest of statistics, collected some years ago, on the wages of the agricultural labourer; but that was work which ought to be done by some Statistical Department of the Government. Then, might he say, in the second place, that if they were going in for tabulating and systematizing these statistics they required to have the services of men thoroughly skilled in such matters. He quite agreed also that they ought to have more new facts, similar to those collected in the United States, than they had at present. He was sorry that the hon. Member, when he alluded in particular to the work being done in the United States and Canada, did not give any information as to the work those bureaux were doing in those countries; because it would have shown that this was not at all a simple matter, but, on the contrary, an exceedingly difficult and complicated one. The Reports of the bureaux were, of course, most interesting, but they were also exceedingly imperfect. They proceeded also upon wholly different lines in different cases. For instance, the Reports of the State of Connecticut stated quite frankly that they could not get at the facts, and so they collected opinions. One Report turned on the whole relations between capital and labour, and advised what legislation the State should undertake.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean the whole Reports

of the State of Connecticut, or only the Report for one year?

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he was unable to speak of all the Reports; he was only illustrating one point. In the Report presented by the State of Pennsylvania, again, the facts about labour were presented in a very excellent way, so far as it went; although, even in that Report, the statistics were very imperfect, and the difficulty of getting anything like accurate facts was admitted. There was, in fact, in the different States of America, great variety in the method of collecting the facts, and in setting forth the results obtained. In some of the States they tried to collect the facts by making applications to employers and to the employed. In some cases, the answers were voluntarily given; but, in other cases, pressure was used to compel one class or the other to give the information which the State required. Then there was a whole class of cases where the inquiries were made, at enormous expense, by special agents sent about the country, without whom, it was said, the State would not be able to get the facts. In his opinion, with that enormous variety of examples before them, it would be wise that the House should proceed tentatively; and he believed the best course the House could adopt would be to appoint a Select Committee for the purpose of investigating all these various Reports, and considering the means by which they could obtain the statistics they required. The Reports to which he had been alluding were very little known in this country. He doubted whether 12 Members of that House had ever read any of them; and the whole subject was such that he felt certain that it would be wise that, instead of trusting to a Department, they should inquire, by means of a Committee, what would be the best way of getting the labour statistics of this country. He must say here that he had been encouraged to hope that the hon. Member for Northampton would have agreed with his Amendment, as he certainly understood from communications that had passed between them.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that there was a proviso contained in the communication referred to that if certain words were withdrawn he (Mr. Bradlaugh) would agree with the Amendment; but those words were not withdrawn.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he had withdrawn them, and if the hon. Member would look at the Amendment he would see that it was exactly in accordance with that which the hon. Member agreed to. That being so, he was surprised that the hon. Member had opposed the Select Committee which he had stated he desired to have. However that might be, he was certain the House did not desire to proceed in the dark; that they would enter on a new field of inquiry with that caution which characterized all their proceedings in England; and that they would be inclined to agree with the views he had put forward, and with which the hon. Member for Northampton also expressed his willingness to accept—that there should be an inquiry by a Select Committee, rather than to the proposal of the hon. Member as at present before the House. The hon. Member said that his (Mr. Stanhope's) Amendment would involve delay. He did not believe that it would. There was no reason why the Committee should not sit at once, or that it should sit long. The results of its inquiry would be that the President of the Board of Trade would be armed with a Report which would enable him to come down to Parliament and ask for that additional provision, in the shape of money, which would undoubtedly be required for the purpose of carrying out the object which they all desired to attain. Some hon. Members had asked him why he had limited his proposal to the United Kingdom, and had not included the Colonies. His only reason for that was that he had been given to understand that steps had been taken in this country to obtain statistics relating to labour in the Colonies. If, however, there was any general desire on the part of the House that the Select Committee should also inquire as to labour statistics in the Colonies, he should be heartily glad to accede to any proposal that might be made to extend the labours of the Committee in that direction. He would now move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

MR. F. S. POWELL, in seconding the Amendment, said, that, as representing a considerable industrial constituency, he had listened with pleasurable surprise to the announcement of the hon. Gentleman who proposed the Motion (Mr. Bradlaugh), and he entirely

agreed in the object which the hon. Member had immediately before him. It was a hard case that the working men of this country should have to collect, as best they might, information relating to the price of labour, to the conditions of their occupation, and to the circumstances under which they lived; while the great capitalists had before them the Reports of Government Departments to guide them in the course of their industry. If there was one thing which commended itself to his mind more than another it was the declaration which had been made to the House that individual endeavour still lived. He hoped it would continue to live in this country, and that they might rely in every section of the community upon individual enterprise instead of upon the faltering hand of the State. When he found there was such a difficulty in preparing the Census, which was only made once in 10 years with the greatest care and at the greatest cost, he felt quite certain that if the Report was to be made yearly or monthly there would be very great difficulty in giving the working man that reliable information for his guidance to which he was fully entitled. Another difficulty was the prompt issue of the Report; for unless it was promptly issued it would confer no benefit. He did not think the hon. Member was quite aware of the information which had been already collected. The subject was far more complex than the hon. Member seemed to imagine, and that was confirmed by the Reports which had been presented from Consuls abroad, which contained particulars very carefully collected of great value; and he had been informed by a friend of his, a Consul abroad, that so complicated were the researches they had to make, that it was extremely difficult to arrive at a conclusion of a satisfactory character. He sincerely hoped that many other occasions might arise when there would be full accord between both sides of the House on the labour question. He confessed himself that he had always felt from his earliest days that the working man was entitled to as much consideration in the House with regard to that labour which was his capital as the wealthiest man was with regard to that financial fortune which was his capital and main resource. He claimed for hon. Members on the Opposition side of the

House that they had at heart the interest of working men as much as hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial Benches; and therefore regretted the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Bradlaugh) had rejected the Amendment of his right hon. Friend Mr. E. Stanhope.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words "a Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means of collecting and publishing statistics as to Labour in the United Kingdom,"—(Mr. E. Stanhope);

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. BRADLAUGH rose to explain that he saw the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Horncastle Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) after he had received the letter, and he told him he was unable to consent to the alteration. He had received no communication from the right hon. Gentleman since, and he, therefore, regarded the matter as settled.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, that a letter having been written expressing a condition, when that condition was fulfilled he had expected that the hon. Member would have supported it.

Mr. A. H. DYKEACLAND: I should hardly venture to detain the House if I did not believe that I could illustrate the importance of the subject brought before the House by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) from a somewhat different point of view from that of those hon. Members who have already spoken. I take it that the subject includes both the provision of additional information on labour and industrial matters, and the supplying of information which already exists in a much more available form than we have at present. Anyone who has been brought closely into contact with educational work among working men, as it has been my lot to be in connection with the Universities, must be well aware of the very great importance of this subject in the minds of many of our leading working men. Everything which may in any way lead to the prevention of strikes must be of the greatest value. It is the opinion of some of the best Trade Union leaders that such

information as is now demanded may tend in this direction. Our Trade Unionists and working men co-operators are interested in the matter, not only from the points of view already mentioned, but because they have large sums of money at their command, and the latter group of men especially are constantly considering the question of how these sums of money should be invested. It is of the greatest importance to them that they should have the very best information at their command relating to the condition of those of their own class better off than themselves, in order that they may not invest the many thousands of pounds they possess in a manner that will bring ruin upon them. When we hear that, in the course of the last few weeks, the Working Men Co-operative Societies in and around Manchester have invested £30,000 in the Manchester Ship Canal, every penny of which is working men's savings, saved by men the bulk of whom do not receive more than 35s. a-week wages, we have some idea of the importance of the sum of money they have at their command. Everything which assists the intelligent investment and management of the sums of money which Working Men's Associations possess must be of real use; for the great Working Men's Associations are a great protection and bulwark to this country. We hear a good deal of talk about funds raised for the relief of the unemployed; but I venture to say that the Unionists and Co-operative Societies have, in the course of the past year, been devoting funds for the relief of the unemployed out of their own wages which exceed in bulk all the funds raised within the last month or two for the relief of distress in all our large towns put together. The Unionists have saved thousands of pounds for the direct relief of the distressed and unemployed, and the co-operators have saved not less than £1,000,000, all of which either goes to the relief of the present distress or is laid by for the relief of their families in the future. The Government may well be asked to provide everything which can reasonably be provided in the way of industrial and labour statistics which may give working men and the community generally more information to guide them, both for the avoidance of labour disputes, and in connection with the investment of money. Everything

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MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND: I should hardly venture to detain the House if I did not believe that I could illustrate the importance of the subject brought before the House by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) from a somewhat different point of view from that of those hon. Members who have already spoken. I take it that the subject includes both the provision of additional information on labour and industrial matters, and the supplying of information which already exists in a much more available form than we have at present. Anyone who has been brought closely into contact with educational work among working men, as it has been my lot to be in connection with the Universities, must be well aware of the very great importance of this subject in the minds of many of our leading working men. Everything which may in any way lead to the prevention of strikes must be of the greatest value. It is the opinion of some of the best Trade Union leaders that such

information as is now demanded may tend in this direction. Our Trades Unionists and working men co-operators are interested in the matter, not only from the points of view already mentioned, but because they have large sums of money at their command, and the latter group of men especially are constantly considering the question of how these sums of money should be invested. It is of the greatest importance to them that they should have the very best information at their command relating to the condition of those of their own class better off than themselves, in order that they may not invest the many thousands of pounds they possess in a manner that will bring ruin upon them. When we hear that, in the course of the last few weeks, the Working Men Co-operative Societies in and around Manchester have invested £30,000 in the Manchester Ship Canal, every penny of which is working men's savings, saved by men the bulk of whom do not receive more than 35s. a-week wages, we have some idea of the importance of the sum of money they have at their command. Everything which assists the intelligent investment and management of the sums of money which Working Men's Associations possess must be of real use; for the great Working Men's Associations are a great protection and bulwark to this country. We hear a good deal of talk about funds raised for the relief of the unemployed; but I venture to say that the Unionists and Co-operative Societies have, in the course of the past year, been devoting funds for the relief of the unemployed out of their own wages which exceed in bulk all the funds raised within the last month or two for the relief of distress in all our large towns put together. The Unionists have saved thousands of pounds for the direct relief of the distressed and unemployed, and the co-operators have saved not less than £1,000,000, all of which either goes to the relief of the present distress or is laid by for the relief of their families in the future. The Government may well be asked to provide everything which can reasonably be provided in the way of industrial and labour statistics which may give working men and the community generally more information to guide them, both for the avoidance of labour disputes, and in connection with the investment of money. Everything

that tends in the direction either of irregularity of labour or of uncertainty is a curse, and is adding to the depression, and to the difficulty in which our industries are involved. If the information now demanded will give less uncertainty, will cause less irregularity, it must do good not only to the working classes, but to the whole nation. What we need is to improve the knowledge of the rank and file of working men in every possible way; and I think we may feel quite sure that all working men leaders who are worthy of the name will consider this an unmitigated advantage. Only those who are not worthy to be leaders will look upon this improved knowledge as in any sense other than an advantage. Something has been said as to the method to be employed to secure additional labour statistics, and as to whether we want facts or opinions. The process must be slow and gradual and secure. I may quote from a monthly publication of one of the best administered Trades Unions in England—that of the Iron Founders—to show what working men think on the subject. The secretaries consider this matter one of great importance; and they say that a Statistical Bureau should not be conducted for the purpose of agitating or discussing propositions for the amelioration of the condition of the working classes, but should confine itself to the collection and presentation of facts, and thus be free from any taint of partizanship. My friend, Professor Marshall, one of the ablest of the younger generation of economists in England, the successor of the late Professor Fawcett, writes to say that he feels the work a difficult one, which must be carried out by slow degrees. He points out that a few typical industries should be examined, and the figures subjected to a very severe ordeal. He points out the importance of great care in making any statements—for instance, about wages—showing that not only the rate of wages in each branch must be given, but also the proportion of workers who get each rate. And he says that, in the collection of statistics about wages, we should have to be very careful to have distinct columns showing “over-time” and “piece-work,” and deductions through “out of work.” He thinks that any statement voluntarily given either by employer or employed should be circulated in the form of draft Reports in

various districts, and that they should be carefully checked, from time to time, by something in the nature of a public Court of Inquiry held by the Representatives of the Bureau, who should, before reporters, hear evidence on both sides, and carefully weigh it. And he says that if the work is done in this careful way, so that the Representatives of the State Bureau can sum up the evidence given on both sides for lowering or raising any of the figures in the draft Reports, we should secure a real addition to the knowledge we possess on these matters. He adds what is most important, that the work will be slow, particularly at first. But a few trustworthy figures are worth more than an immense mass of those of which no one can quite approve. There is one other matter I should like to allude to—namely, the making much more available to the people at large the new information which may be obtained, and also that which the Government has provided. The right hon. Gentleman the late President of the Board of Trade (Mr. E. Stanhope) said we ought to make use of our existing materials. Now, if these statistics are prepared especially in the interest of the labouring classes, and if the material we already have is to be made use of, I venture to say that the State can do a great deal more than it has hitherto done in the way of making such information thoroughly available, especially for working people; and, in view of the importance of labour questions being approached in an intelligent spirit, the State may do much good in the way of interesting the working classes in its publications, and ought to make them as cheap as possible, and as easily obtainable as possible. I must say of the material published at the present time in Blue Books that though, considering its bulk, it is cheap—it is, nevertheless, too expensive for working men to purchase. I would venture to say that in most of our Blue Books there is a kernel somewhere to be found which might be published at a much cheaper rate than the whole work. For instance, if we take the Commission on Accidents in Mines, which the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) and his Colleagues have published, we shall find that it has already published a bulky volume for 6s. 8d., and that, in all probability, their Report will be contained

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in a volume of similar size and price. Well, it seems to me that this Report, which must be valuable to men working in mines, should be published with a *price* of the evidence. That could be done at a price of 6d. or 8d., so as to render it available to people who can only afford small sums when they buy books. So, again, the Housing of the Poor Commission Report, which contained most valuable information, ought to be published for 6d. In the same way the Technical Education Commission Report is published in five volumes; but the real pith of the matter is at the end of the first volume, and might have been published, with an analysis of what is to be found in the other volumes, for 5d. or 6d. Last year a valuable Report was issued about Inland Revenue, containing valuable information concerning direct taxation, that would be extremely useful to working men. These things, also, in the way I have pointed out, should be made purchasable. Then, in many of our small towns—aye, and in our big ones too—it is a difficult thing to know how to obtain these publications. The booksellers will not take much trouble about the matter, and many working men who would like to get them are baffled in their efforts to do so. I see no reason at all why, when working men might desire to purchase these publications—on the occasion of their locality being visited by a popular lecturer, or a leader of their class, or a political speaker—they should not simply go to the local post office, see a list of the publications, and say—"I desire a copy of that for 1s.; here is my 1s., and here is 2d. for postage, send my name up to London, and let me have the book back by post." Now, I hope it will not be presumptuous to suggest a new departure with a view to making really available to the mass of the people a great deal that is published which does not now get much beyond hon. Members of the House of Commons. A Central Committee, or small body of officials, ought to have all Government publications passed under their eye, and ought to settle which of them, or which parts of them, should be made available by their cheapness and handiness for popular use. I will venture to say that if that could be done, and the noble Lord the Postmaster General (Lord Wolverton, could see his way to having these lists I have mentioned kept at the post

offices, it would be an incalculable boon to working men, especially to those who find a difficulty in getting the books, which to us in this House are not so much things to be desired and things difficult to get as they are almost a burden. None but a young Member of this House would speak in anything like enthusiasm about the Blue Books, and perhaps even for me the period of satiation is nearer at hand than I may expect; but, so far as the people outside this House are concerned, they have good reason, I think, to complain that we who, during a General Election, are so remarkably attentive to them in the way of supplying them with statistics, when the election is over leave them alone altogether so far as these things are concerned. During a General Election the voter receives from one party a carefully-prepared leaflet, with blue and red columns on it, to instruct him in State finance. The facts and figures thus presented he carefully studies, and when he has learnt them confidently believes he has mastered the principles of finance. A few days afterwards he receives another leaflet; the columns that were red are now, perhaps, blue; some columns are longer, some shorter. His mind becomes a blank on the subject. Then the figures he receives to-day will not apply to-morrow or next month; and as his education is neglected for a space, he must have an erroneous and confused idea of the principles he believed at one time he had mastered. When another General Election occurs, and he is inundated once more with information for which he has been in no way prepared, confusion becomes worse confounded. If he can feel that the State is doing all it can to encourage him to inform himself on these subjects, to enable him to procure these Blue Books which contain, I venture to say, much of the best of the thoughts of our statesmen on both sides of politics—much more valuable material than is contained in many speeches delivered on Party platforms—he will feel that we are trying to deal with the valuable work of adult education, which is a work which ought more and more to occupy our attention. Of course, Blue Books will never become popular reading; but what is sought is not to popularize this information, but to put it more and more at the disposal of the hard-headed working

men who are to be found all over the country—men of hard heads, with bodies that will never wear frock-coats, but who are just as well fitted to understand Blue Books as any of us here. This is important, because the intelligent use of their capital by working men, and the method of approaching all labour questions, are matters which, in a country like this, become of greater and greater importance. There are many matters which have been brought before our constituents which we hope in the future will do much to improve this country. But we cannot legislate the poor into prosperity. We can open up to them many opportunities now denied them, and that we are engaged in doing, or are hoping to do, in various ways. We can free their paths from many obstacles that now stand in their way; but, after all, the intelligence of the people who, when the obstacles are removed, will make use of the opportunities afforded them is the vital matter. Everything that can be done by the State to advance this adult education by means of statistical information slowly and carefully obtained, and in rendering the information in the possession of the Government more available to the working classes in the future than it has been in the past, will be a matter by which the people will be benefited, and by which any Government who will attend to the question properly will deserve the gratitude of the country. The matter is one which I hope will receive the serious attention for many years to come of both this and future Governments.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA): I think every Member of the House must feel that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) has done an excellent service in bringing this question under the notice of the House, and amongst other circumstances of that good service in having elicited so excellent a maiden speech from the hon. Member who has just sat down. The hon. Member bases his Motion upon publications of the American Bureau of Statistics of Labour. He is quite right in his historical account of the origin of the American Bureau in 1869, and it is a fact that 14 or 15 other States are now following the example of Massachusetts and publishing annual Reports of the same nature.

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But when the hon. Member exhorted us not to be behind America in the publication of statistics, without detracting from the merits of those Bureaux, I may say that we are, in fact, a very long way in advance of America in regard of the real objects for which the Bureaux were established. I was in Boston in 1870, immediately after the Bureau was opened there, and I had the honour of being consulted several times by its founder, Mr. Wendell Phillips (who took great interest in the labour question) as to how it could be turned to the best account. The real fact was that everyone interested in the question of industrial employment, especially in Massachusetts, was aghast at the condition of the labouring community, the total neglect of their education, and of precautionary legislation in respect to the protection of infants, with respect to the fencing of machinery, with respect to mines, and all that legislation in the interest of the working classes, which we in this country had been forwarding for 30 or 40 years before, and which we had brought to a higher state of perfection than any other country in the world. I cannot do better, if the House will allow me, than give two or three illustrations. I will take the Report of the Massachusetts Bureau of 1874, in which there are very few statistics, but a great many facts as to education, the employment of children, sanitation, and the general condition of labour in Massachusetts. We will take them in the order in which they stand—first, as to education. I find it here set forth—

“One of the objects of this Bureau is to gather statistics relating to the education of children employed in manufacturing and mechanical establishments in Massachusetts.”

They say—

“From what we have been able to learn, the law in relation to the employment of children neither is, nor can be, enforced. Should the managers of mills co-operate heartily with the officers of the cities and towns, or of the State, the law could not well be enforced. The testimony of the school boards in some of the manufacturing places is, that often as much difficulty arises from parents as from mill-owners and managers.”

And they go on to say—

“There should be, and probably there is, some way to enforce the principle which Massachusetts believes to be her system of education, schooling for all classes; but, as yet, so far as

mill children are concerned, not only our law but our system, in a large degree, is a dead letter."

No much for education. I could get 50 quotations from the book as to the employment of children. Here I find—

"No children employed here unless they have the necessary legal schooling."

In regard to another factory I find—

"Mills in very good condition and well conducted. Several very small children at work, some only seven years old, both girls and boys."

That relates to the ages of the children—and numerous similar extracts could be given if it were necessary. Then, as to sanitation and the protection and fencing of machinery, I find such statements as these—

"Rooms low-studded, badly ventilated, and carding and weaving rooms very dark."

"Floors overhead low and unprotected. Some of the main belts come through the floor entirely unprotected, and are dangerous. Privies in spinning room in a filthy condition, floor wet and leaking with filth, can smell it all through the mill."

In fact, the object of this Bureau was, in the first instance, not so much to draw up statistics with regard to wages from year to year, as to inquire into the condition of the working classes generally, and also as to the ages of children employed, and the want of sanitation under which their labour was carried on. It was a sort of standing Commission to do the work which was very largely done in England by the Factory and Workshop, Education, Mines Regulation, Merchant Shipping, and other Acts, and all the legislation undertaken for the last 50 years in this country for the benefit of the working classes. The effect has been excellent on the condition of the working classes in the United States. The example of Massachusetts has been followed by the principal States; and at this moment there are 14 other States publishing their statistics annually, and the effect has been excellent so far as its influence on the condition of the working classes of the United States is concerned. But I wish the House to understand that it is a much easier thing to publish statistics separately for each State in America, where the largest number of persons employed in any single State up to the present is about 200,000, than to publish statistics annually dealing with the whole of the labouring classes in this

country, whose numbers amount, it is calculated, to something like 13,000,000. Now, I do not say that what has been done in the United States can be said to form a precise guide and model for us to adopt. With regard to the Motion, I may say the Government are of opinion that there would be a great advantage in providing such a Department as that now proposed. We have at our command the means of furnishing annually a complete set of labour statistics, which ought to be not only as good as can be procured by other countries, but the very best information the world can show. I do not agree with my right hon. Friend opposite on one point. I do not think the statistics should be confined entirely to the movement, remuneration, and distribution of labour. (Mr. E. STANHOPE: I did not say that.) I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that they should be confined entirely to the movement, remuneration, and distribution of labour. (Mr. E. STANHOPE: But I did not.) There are a number of other questions having a most important bearing on the social condition of the working classes which might be very useful to us, and which might be very well dealt with, such as comparisons with ourselves from year to year, and comparisons with foreign countries as to the commodities of those countries, the cost of food, and the amount of taxation bearing on the labouring classes in them. There are many facts bearing on the daily life of the working classes which might very well be brought within the scope and compass of such a volume as I suggest. My hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) has shown the advantage these statistics would have in their bearings on arbitration and the prevention of strikes. I am glad to think that the relations between capital and labour in this country are steadily growing better and more harmonious year by year. It is impossible to look back, as some of us can, 30 or 40 years and consider what were the relations between capital and labour then and what they are to-day, and not see that there is a complete revolution in that respect—in the harmony that exists between the employers and employed. It has been said throughout this debate that there is great difficulty on the part of workmen in obtaining statistics suitable for

their own trades. I would state to the House that the statistics which are published by the Trade Societies in this country are for value, completeness, and accuracy unrivalled. There is nothing to compare with them in any other country in the world. There is scarcely any Trade Society in the country that does not publish a monthly statement and an annual Report; and the minute accuracy of these Reports and the wonderful detail into which they enter, and the facts they give to those who are interested in them, are really surprising. Very few Members of this House, I am afraid, are acquainted with the extent to which these Societies are known throughout the world. Take the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. It has, I think, something like 50,681 members on its books. It has 430 branches, 307 of which are in England, 42 in Scotland, 14 in Ireland, 10 in Australia, 3 in New Zealand, 2 in Queensland, 7 in Canada, 1 in Malta, 1 in Bombay, 42 in the United States of America, and 1 in France. The Society gives a monthly account of the state of trade in every place in which it has a branch. It gives the condition of trade, the number of days the trade is working, and it is surprising the accuracy and fulness with which all the details relating to engineers are given in that Report. I believe that in 1884 the outlay of the Society was £172,841. A reference was made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Rotherham (Mr. A. H. D. Acland) to the amounts given in charitable subscriptions to the relief of the working classes. Let me point out to the House the amount that was expended in the way of self-help by this Amalgamated Society of Engineers in 1883. Under the head "Donations, contingent, sending members to situations, and beds to non-free members," the amount expended was £62,310; under the head "Sick benefit, stewards, and medical certificates," £29,074; "Superannuation," £30,519; "Funerals," £8,253; "Accidents," £2,100; "Grants to the Benevolent Fund," £3,297; "Grants to our own and other trades, loss of tools by fire, Parliamentary Committees, and insurance," £20,579. That Society distributed amongst its members, in 1878, in a time of exceptional distress, nearly £250,000. That, therefore, shows that there is no lack of statistical

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ability on the part of the working classes. Nothing surprised me so much, when I was engaged in bringing before the House in 1872, 1873, and 1874 the case of the factory operatives for a reduction of the hours of labour, as the wonderful statistics concerning the hours of labour, and all the articles of production and other facts of interest, which they placed before me. I believe I could, at this moment, obtain as good statistics from the operative cotton spinners and weavers of Lancashire, and from the weavers of Yorkshire—as good and as rapid statistics as I could obtain in a Department of the Board of Trade. We need not, I really think, in this matter trouble the House to appoint a Select Committee. If any advantage were to be gained by it, I would support the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman; but when I come to inquire in the Department as to what could be done and what ought to be done, as to what information we could give, I was told that there had already been a Departmental Committee, on which the Treasury and the Board of Trade had sat for some time and examined into statistics. A Report was made, and the Committee had agreed, two years ago, that some statistics of this character ought to be published—that they would be found embedded in Blue Books, and scattered throughout thousands of volumes, never yet collected and collated, and that all that was needed was the necessary staff of assistants to enable us to make an excellent collection of statistics. This is an extract from the Report made in 1883 by the Departmental Committee, on which the Treasury, and the Board of Trade, and the Customs were represented—

"We recommend that, in giving up the miscellaneous statistics of the United Kingdom, the Commercial Department of the Board of Trade, or a Central Statistical Department, should substitute a volume to be called by some such title as *The Miscellaneous Statistics of Trade*, such volume or part to include such particulars as to home consumption of British and Irish produce and manufactures, and as to prices, wages, freights, and other trade topics as may be judged expedient from time to time."

Now, Sir, with that Report before us, I can hardly see why we need to appoint a Committee to inquire further. If we did, it would inevitably involve a considerable loss of time, and the Committee would be at a loss what remedy to

prescribe. I very much doubt whether any Committee could either lay down precisely what ought to be the remedy, or prescribe the limits up to which such an annual review should go. That must depend very much upon the material at our command. Now, if we can agree to the production of such a volume as I hope we shall agree upon to-night, I should like it to do more than provide merely labour statistics and prices. We ought to give prominence to Colonial statistics—we ought to point out to the vast masses of our population the best fields for emigration. I may here say that the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) has entered into the project most warmly, and that we are of opinion that we ought to utilize our Diplomatic Consular Services in this matter much more effectually than we have hitherto done. Earl Granville, at the suggestion of Mr. Holyoake, 15 or 20 years ago, obtained some excellent Diplomatic Returns as to foreign trade, which were supplied from time to time. They were acceptable, not only to the working-classes, but to a great many of the people of this country. They were issued not periodically, but at intervals, just as they came to hand. There was no kind of order or plan about them. To get anything like statistics from these Returns and from the ordinary Blue Books would baffle even the most unwearied Member of this House. The three-year limit for the production of these Returns would be altogether unsuitable. What we want is to give not only statistics of hours of labour, kinds of production, fields for emigration, and information we can obtain from the Diplomatic and Consular Services, but we want to get some of the wonderful results of individual and co-operative effort amongst the working classes of the country. I received a deputation a few days ago, in which the operatives of Lancashire were represented. One or two of the representatives spoke of the wholesale trading in Manchester. The working men in Manchester, in the wholesale Co-operative Stores, turn over—that is to say, sell and distribute—something like £5,000,000 in value every year in the Co-operative Stores alone. Their co-operative banking last year amounted to £16,000,000; and, within a radius of 20 or 30 miles of Manchester, more than £20,000,000 were turned over by the Co-operative

Stores. Surely, this experiment, not only in distribution, but industrial co-operation, should be brought out in the volume. It is most important that the good work doing in a particular locality should come to the knowledge of working men generally—that it should be held up as an example to the industrial community. Take the case of Building Societies; take the case we saw stated in *The Times* this morning—that the children in Manchester contributed last year to the Penny Banks in Manchester more than £25,000. All these facts ought to be gathered together, and put in as cheap and simple and comprehensive a form as possible, so that they can be circulated through every Club and Mechanics' Institution and Free Library in the country. Now, Sir, I have said to the House that this will not be a very easy task; but what should we do in the first instance? I agree that we had better not be too ambitious—that what we do we should do well. We had better have fewer statistics, and have them sound and correct, than a great, bulky volume. What we can do—or what we think we can do—is this. We can gather up the statistics of the last 50 years, and get together in one volume something like an historical statement of comparison of the facts affecting labour, wages, and prices which are to be found in the Blue Books. [An hon. MEMBER: Agricultural labour also.] An hon. Member says of agricultural labour. Well, agricultural labour should be shown in the Return just as much as industrial labour. There ought to be no difference in the matter. It would be an exceedingly interesting thing to have put before us such statistical evidence as we have in the Library of this House in the Reports and proceedings of Royal Commissioners and other authorities during the past 50 years. Then, as I say, the House must bear in mind the nature of the work to be done. There are, as I have already pointed out, about 13,000,000 men, women, and children earning wages in the United Kingdom. The number of industries to be dealt with is not less than 3,000. Well, all this cannot be accomplished at once. It must be of growth. For one thing, the next Census should be an Industrial Census, a thing which has not hitherto been properly carried out.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, immediate steps should be taken to ensure in this Country the full and accurate collection and publication of Labour Statistics."—(Mr. Bradlaugh.)

MR. E. STANHOPE, in rising to move, as an Amendment to the Motion, to leave out all after "That," and insert—

"A Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means of collecting and publishing statistics as to Labour in the United Kingdom,"

said, he should not attempt to follow the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) in a good many of the topics which he addressed to the House. Some of the hon. Member's statements he had heard with considerable pleasure, although they were not strictly relevant to the Motion before the House. He heard, for instance, with great pleasure his statement with respect to the removal of restrictive laws affecting labour; because he had not forgotten, and the House would not have forgotten, that that was mainly due to the action of his right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary, who dealt with the laws as between employers and employed on a comprehensive principle founded on a broad basis. Since his right hon. Friend's legislation on the subject nothing had been heard about complaints in that direction. When he listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton he wondered whether that hon. Member had ever considered what was the proper function of the State in these matters. No doubt, the collection of statistics had always been recognized as one of the most proper functions for the State to undertake; first, because the State could do it better than anybody else; and, secondly, because, in many cases, the State alone could do it. But then they came to the question, Statistics of what? As he had said, many of the subjects introduced into the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton were not facts, but expressions of opinion—for instance, as to what occupations might be hazardous to the lives or morals of the people engaged in them. He (Mr. Stanhope) would prefer to deal not with opinions, but with facts; and as regarded facts, it did seem to him that some Department ought to be responsible for the collection of statistics of this nature. He might allude in par-

ticular to facts relating to the movement, the distribution, and to the remuneration of labour; and if those statistics were accurate and exhaustive, and if they were presented in an easily accessible form for use, and while they were still fresh, be believed they would be of very great value to the country. They would be of value not only to those desiring to study, either in the present or at any future time, the exact industrial condition of the country, but also to those desiring to embark capital in any particular trade or industry; and, last of all, they would be of great value to the people employed in such trades or industries. For example, they heard a great deal nowadays about the enormous aggregation of population in our large towns. No doubt, that had been a source of serious mischief lately; but one of the main causes of it had been the exaggerated expectations as to wages that had been held out. Nobody could dispute the fact that men had been brought up by scores from the country to the towns, because they had been misled by the nominal wages, and had not realized the fact that the employment they were likely to get would occupy only a portion of their time, and that their nominal wages could never be realized in a permanent form, and would be enormously below the real wages they had been accustomed to receive. But, within certain limits, he agreed to the fullest extent in the suggestion of the hon. Member that they should endeavour to collect labour statistics. In fact, he had never understood why the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade had not collected these already. If he were to make a suggestion in regard to the proposal, he would say, as they were entering upon a new description of statistics, they should take care not to over-weight the Department. The process at first should be a tentative and cautious one, and they should be sure of their materials. Let them not, by trying to do too much at once, risk the failure of the whole. Therefore, he would first advise that they should make use of existing materials. There had been inquiries held year after year, the results of which were entombed in voluminous and forgotten Blue Books, and no use whatever had been made of them. He was not going to blame the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade; but that

Department had not had under their control a sufficient staff for the work they had to do. There was, for example, an inquiry held a number of years ago into the condition of the agricultural population, and there were many Blue Books as the result of that inquiry; but nobody ever read them now, and they were not even alluded to in the recent debates on the subject of allotments. In the first place, then, the Statistical Department of the Board should make the fullest use possible of all the material they might have under their control. They had not had sufficient staff for doing more than they had hitherto done; but that did not affect the principle of the proposal. If the country was to be put to the expense of these Returns, of so exhaustive a character, they ought to be made full use of, and the results ought to be presented by the Board of Trade in a succinct form. He himself ventured to send to the papers a digest of statistics, collected some years ago, on the wages of the agricultural labourer; but that was work which ought to be done by some Statistical Department of the Government. Then, might he say, in the second place, that if they were going in for tabulating and systematizing these statistics they required to have the services of men thoroughly skilled in such matters. He quite agreed also that they ought to have more new facts, similar to those collected in the United States, than they had at present. He was sorry that the hon. Member, when he alluded in particular to the work being done in the United States and Canada, did not give any information as to the work those bureaux were doing in those countries; because it would have shown that this was not at all a simple matter, but, on the contrary, an exceedingly difficult and complicated one. The Reports of the bureaux were, of course, most interesting, but they were also exceedingly imperfect. They proceeded also upon wholly different lines in different cases. For instance, the Reports of the State of Connecticut stated quite frankly that they could not get at the facts, and so they collected opinions. One Report turned on the whole relations between capital and labour, and advised what legislation the State should undertake.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean the whole Reports

of the State of Connecticut, or only the Report for one year?

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he was unable to speak of all the Reports; he was only illustrating one point. In the Report presented by the State of Pennsylvania, again, the facts about labour were presented in a very excellent way, so far as it went; although, even in that Report, the statistics were very imperfect, and the difficulty of getting anything like accurate facts was admitted. There was, in fact, in the different States of America, great variety in the method of collecting the facts, and in setting forth the results obtained. In some of the States they tried to collect the facts by making applications to employers and to the employed. In some cases, the answers were voluntarily given; but, in other cases, pressure was used to compel one class or the other to give the information which the State required. Then there was a whole class of cases where the inquiries were made, at enormous expense, by special agents sent about the country, without whom, it was said, the State would not be able to get the facts. In his opinion, with that enormous variety of examples before them, it would be wise that the House should proceed tentatively; and he believed the best course the House could adopt would be to appoint a Select Committee for the purpose of investigating all these various Reports, and considering the means by which they could obtain the statistics they required. The Reports to which he had been alluding were very little known in this country. He doubted whether 12 Members of that House had ever read any of them; and the whole subject was such that he felt certain that it would be wise that, instead of trusting to a Department, they should inquire, by means of a Committee, what would be the best way of getting the labour statistics of this country. He must say here that he had been encouraged to hope that the hon. Member for Northampton would have agreed with his Amendment, as he certainly understood from communications that had passed between them.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that there was a proviso contained in the communication referred to that if certain words were withdrawn he (Mr. Bradlaugh) would agree with the Amendment; but those words were not withdrawn.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he had withdrawn them, and if the hon. Member would look at the Amendment he would see that it was exactly in accordance with that which the hon. Member agreed to. That being so, he was surprised that the hon. Member had opposed the Select Committee which he had stated he desired to have. However that might be, he was certain the House did not desire to proceed in the dark; that they would enter on a new field of inquiry with that caution which characterized all their proceedings in England; and that they would be inclined to agree with the views he had put forward, and with which the hon. Member for Northampton also expressed his willingness to accept—that there should be an inquiry by a Select Committee, rather than to the proposal of the hon. Member as at present before the House. The hon. Member said that his (Mr. Stanhope's) Amendment would involve delay. He did not believe that it would. There was no reason why the Committee should not sit at once, or that it should sit long. The results of its inquiry would be that the President of the Board of Trade would be armed with a Report which would enable him to come down to Parliament and ask for that additional provision, in the shape of money, which would undoubtedly be required for the purpose of carrying out the object which they all desired to attain. Some hon. Members had asked him why he had limited his proposal to the United Kingdom, and had not included the Colonies. His only reason for that was that he had been given to understand that steps had been taken in this country to obtain statistics relating to labour in the Colonies. If, however, there was any general desire on the part of the House that the Select Committee should also inquire as to labour statistics in the Colonies, he should be heartily glad to accede to any proposal that might be made to extend the labours of the Committee in that direction. He would now move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

MR. F. S. POWELL, in seconding the Amendment, said, that, as representing a considerable industrial constituency, he had listened with pleasurable surprise to the announcement of the hon. Gentleman who proposed the Motion (Mr. Bradlaugh), and he entirely

agreed in the object which the hon. Member had immediately before him. It was a hard case that the working men of this country should have to collect, as best they might, information relating to the price of labour, to the conditions of their occupation, and to the circumstances under which they lived; while the great capitalists had before them the Reports of Government Departments to guide them in the course of their industry. If there was one thing which commended itself to his mind more than another it was the declaration which had been made to the House that individual endeavour still lived. He hoped it would continue to live in this country, and that they might rely in every section of the community upon individual enterprise instead of upon the faltering hand of the State. When he found there was such a difficulty in preparing the Census, which was only made once in 10 years with the greatest care and at the greatest cost, he felt quite certain that if the Report was to be made yearly or monthly there would be very great difficulty in giving the working man that reliable information for his guidance to which he was fully entitled. Another difficulty was the prompt issue of the Report; for unless it was promptly issued it would confer no benefit. He did not think the hon. Member was quite aware of the information which had been already collected. The subject was far more complex than the hon. Member seemed to imagine, and that was confirmed by the Reports which had been presented from Consuls abroad, which contained particulars very carefully collected of great value; and he had been informed by a friend of his, a Consul abroad, that so complicated were the researches they had to make, that it was extremely difficult to arrive at a conclusion of a satisfactory character. He sincerely hoped that many other occasions might arise when there would be full accord between both sides of the House on the labour question. He confessed himself that he had always felt from his earliest days that the working man was entitled to as much consideration in the House with regard to that labour which was his capital as the wealthiest man was with regard to that financial fortune which was his capital and main resource. He claimed for hon. Members on the Opposition side of the

of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), you will impress the working classes of the country with the idea that you mean business and not mere talk.

MR. LANE: Sir, I have for many years been a close student of labour statistics, and I am one of those few Members to whom the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) referred as receiving regularly the Reports of the Washington Government, which include these statistics. I am surprised at Gentlemen who have spoken this evening showing such a deplorable ignorance on this great subject—ignorance with regard to documents published by Foreign Governments on the subject of labour, and in the interests of the trade, commerce, and manufactures of the United States. On one occasion, when I had the privilege, as I may call it, of having been summoned to give evidence before the Duke of Richmond's Commission, having brought with me to support my evidence some publications of the Statistical Bureau of the United States, I was very much surprised to see the complete ignorance on the part of Members of the Commission with regard to those publications. I was last year also a witness before the Select Committee of this House which inquired into the Irish Industries, before which it was necessary to produce some of these publications, and on that Committee, with the exception of a Gentleman not now in this House, who represented Dublin City, I did not find any Members conversant with the extent to which statistical information is supplied by the United States Government. So far, Sir, as I have been able to follow the debate of this evening—and I have done so very closely—I have not perceived that any hon. Member is aware of the fact that the Federal Government publishes these statistics, not only of the United States, but for foreign countries also. The hon. Member has, in my opinion, introduced one of the most important subjects that have come before this House for a long time, and he has, in the course of his remarks, referred to the statistics of the States of Illinois and Massachusetts. I must say that I was very glad to observe the spirit in which the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton was received by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the

Board of Trade; and certainly I was surprised at the unwarranted and unwarrantable attack made on the right hon. Gentleman by the hon. Member who preceded me; because it must be in the experience of Members who have sat in this House for a number of years that, whenever the right hon. Gentleman dealt with complicated questions of this kind, he showed, as he has done this evening, a thorough grasp of the subject. I think there are very few branches of this question of which the right hon. Gentleman did not show that he had a full and thorough appreciation. Sir, I think the House will make a very great mistake if it accepts the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench. I should not have ventured to stand up in this Committee, after what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella), were it not that I think it necessary to impress upon him the vital necessity of having, in any statistics which he may give us, information as to the labour statistics of foreign countries. That is a point which I think has not been touched upon by other speakers in the course of this debate; and if the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton is accepted in its present form, it does not bind the Department to furnish that information, because it does not include the words "foreign countries." Well, Sir, I would include foreign countries and the Colonies. This question of labour statistics is really not a labouring-man's question alone; it is a question which concerns the whole community. It is a question which immediately concerns the constituency of the hon. Member for Northampton, which is a great manufacturing constituency, and it also in directly concerns the constituency which I have the honour to represent (Cork County, East), which is not one of the manufacturing constituencies in Ireland; and were it not for that I should not have intervened in this debate, which, up to the present time, has been sustained by English Members only. We all know—it is a matter which has lately been brought very unpleasantly under our notice—that manufactures and trade in this country have come down to a very low point. It has been rushing to a low point for a very long time past—I may almost say it has reached its climax already, because I do

not see how it can go any lower without some accession to the forces which have brought it about, which at present are not discernible. Owing to the great depression of trade, there has, of course, been a fall in the prices of agricultural produce, which is necessarily concerned. This question has been already very forcibly brought under the notice of the House, and I think we should continue to give it our most serious consideration. We have at the present moment, by the grace of the new Government, a Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade. Now, Sir, I imagine that the work of that Commission would only be half done if it did not, by some means or other, endeavour to ascertain what is the cause of depression in several branches of English trade at home, and come to a conclusion as to what is operating against English trade and manufactures. The question of wages and the state of trade in countries which are competing with Great Britain in foreign markets, and closing our factories at home, I need not say is one of the very greatest importance. I think we should not be asked to come to conclusions upon one-sided evidence. If we are asked, as I expect we may possibly be asked, to decide what is wrong with the English manufacturing trades, and how that wrong state of affairs is to be remedied, we cannot do that without sufficient *data* as to the state of wages and the state of the markets of different countries; and, therefore, Sir, I ask the right hon. Gentleman, who has so willingly promised this information, that he will include in the Returns to be made information in reference, not alone to Great Britain and the Colonies, but to Germany, France, Belgium, and the United States. Of course, I include the Colonies already suggested; and I think, if we have information from these countries in addition to our own, that we shall have sufficient *data* upon which we may be able to come to a conclusion. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has said, and very properly said, that it will be very difficult to ascertain exactly information as to the state of labour in different countries and in different markets. I perfectly agree with the right hon. Gentleman in that opinion; but, Sir, the information is so vitally important to this country that we should not be deterred from seeking for it because it may

be difficult to obtain. Then, Sir, I would press on the attention of the right hon. Gentleman that, in getting information from foreign countries, it should be remembered by his agents that the times of commercial prosperity and depression are not always coincident in different countries, and, therefore, that the state of the labour market and the rate of wages paid vary. I think, also, that we should have information as to the hours of labour, the cost of living, and whether the labourers are paid by day or piece work, as well as upon other points bearing upon the subject. With regard to the means of obtaining this information, it has been suggested that it should be got together by the Board of Trade, and by the Consuls through the Foreign Office. When the information has been obtained through these Departments, I think it will be very easy for the right hon. Gentleman to put it into a shape that will be convenient as a *cade mecum* to all those who want information on this subject. In conclusion, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to be good enough to say that he will try to ascertain these *data* as to labour in foreign countries, as well as in Great Britain and the Colonies.

MR. E. STANHOPE: As Her Majesty's Government are prepared to undertake the very great responsibility of providing statistics, although I believe many hon. Gentlemen are not satisfied with the statistics they propose to give, I shall not put the House to the trouble of a division upon my Amendment.

MR. MUNDELLA: I have distinctly stated that we intend to utilize the members of the Consular Service in order to obtain statistics of the labour market abroad.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Main Question put.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, immediate steps should be taken to ensure in this Country the full and accurate collection and publication of Labour Statistics.

TOWN HOLDINGS.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

COLONEL NOLAN: I beg to move the appointment of a Committee—

“To inquire into the terms of occupation and the compensation for improvements possessed by the occupiers of town houses and holdings in Great Britain and Ireland.”

Mr. Lane

The object I have in view is the collection of information upon which useful legislation can be based. The House will remember that I introduced a Bill on this subject some time ago, and which was only rejected by eight votes, and when I moved for a Committee in the last Parliament my Motion was only rejected by one vote. The Government on that occasion then said that they did not like to give me a Committee solely for Ireland on a subject which was equally interesting to Great Britain. I think, however, that that difficulty has now been overcome, for the House will remember that when my hon. Friend the Member for North Mayo (Mr. Crilly) moved his Bill upon the subject, the other day, the whole Liberal Party rose as one man and agreed to the principle, and then the Government consented to the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the whole matter as regards both Great Britain and Ireland. I expect, therefore, to receive support for this Motion not only from below the Gangway on the Liberal side, but from the whole Liberal Party. As to the subject itself its importance cannot be exaggerated, and it can hardly be realized by people who are not familiar with the matter, how different we are circumstanced in respect of this question to people in Continental countries. If hon. Members read the Blue Books they will find ample information on the whole subject. They will find that in most Continental countries people live in freehold houses—certainly in Germany and Italy. The same principle prevails to a great extent also in France, and although there it is not universal it will be seen that we are in quite an exceptional position, and I contend that an inquiry into the subject is not only a matter of expediency, but of justice. That is to say, that when a tenant has improved his house he is entitled to compensation in respect to such improvements at the end of his tenancy. I therefore beg to move for the Committee, which I think will be very valuable to occupiers and tenants of houses in towns, and will not, I think, be detrimental to the proprietors.

Motion made, and Question proposed.

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the terms of compensation and the compensation for improvements possessed by

the occupiers of town houses and holdings in Great Britain and Ireland." (Ad. vel. Nolan.)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT Mr. CHILDERS: The Motion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman is certainly in accordance with the promise which was made by the Prime Minister on the Motion that a Bill on the subject should be read a second time. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister said that the Government would agree to the appointment of a Committee. The Government are prepared to adhere to that promise, and, therefore, they will support this Motion. I have only to say that it must be understood that the inquiry by the Committee must not travel beyond the precise terms of the Reference, and that it will be no part of the Committee's duty to consider the subject of leasehold enfranchisement, which was spoken of on the Bill referred to, but which is not included in the Reference to this Committee. That subject will have to be dealt with in a specific manner, and, therefore, in assenting to the appointment of this Committee, the Government only intend to assent to the precise matters which are mentioned in the Motion.

SIR R. ASSHEFON CROSS: It is very evident that the House is determined to obtain a great deal of information on a vast variety of subjects; but if we go on appointing Committees as rapidly as we have done during the last few days there will soon be very few Members left who are not serving on one Committee or another, and what will become of the Grand Committees, when the time arrives for them to be appointed, I cannot say. What has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman is not quite clear. This is a Motion—

"To inquire into the terms of compensation and the compensation for improvements possessed by the occupiers of town houses and holdings in Great Britain and Ireland."

which is clearly understood to mean one particular thing, but is not to be understood to be some other thing which will clearly come within the words of the Reference, and if they are allowed to stand as they are I do not see how the Committee or the Government can prevent the question of leasehold enfranchisement being inquired into. Whether it is right or whether it is wrong that leasehold enfranchisement should

be inquired into—if these are the terms upon which a Committee is to be granted, I think that the Government will find themselves in a difficulty if they are to stick to what the right hon. Gentleman has said. Then, what I want to know is who is to limit the scope of the inquiry? I think the right hon. Gentleman should give us some assurance that some Member of the Government will be put on the Committee to guide it into, and confine it to, those channels which the right hon. Gentleman has alluded to. Therefore, I hope that there will be some more discussion than has taken place, and that there will be some Member of the Government—the Home Secretary himself, or the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who would, perhaps, be the most suitable Member—placed upon the Committee. But, at any rate, I think the matter should have some further consideration by the Government before the Committee is granted.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT): I think it is only fair that the Government should be prepared to place upon this Committee a Member of the Government who will influence, as far as he can properly do so, the course of the inquiries. So far I can give the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) the assurance he asks for. I agree very much with the right hon. Gentleman, also, that we are granting our Committees too fast. We are only at the commencement of the Session, and if we go on at this rate we shall not have any Members left. If, however, there is a limited number of Members in the House there is another body which is still more limited in numbers, and that is the Government. It may be, therefore, that if we attempt to put a Member of the Government on all of those Committees the Members of the Government will be exhausted first. In regard to what the right hon. Gentleman has said, I think that this Reference is mainly a Reference dealing with compensation for improvements, and that is the subject which will be dealt with.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I think that the right hon. Gentleman has not answered the question which my right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) raised. The point of the debate the other

day was this—that the tenants of town houses in Ireland should have the same advantages as the tenants of land, and should receive compensation for their improvements. Now, the essence of the leasehold system under which many houses in English towns are held is that there shall be no compensation for improvements, because the land was let on building leases, and the tenant is supposed to receive all the advantages necessary in the low rent which he paid. Such being the case, it is hardly fair to refer the question of tenancies in towns to a Committee which will consider compensation for improvements, but not the relation between building leasees and ground landlords. That appears to me to be like the play of *Hamlet* with *Hamlet* left out. I cannot see that what has been said by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) is in accord with what has fallen from the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers), and I hope, therefore, that we shall have some further explanation.

MR. MARK STEWART said, the terms of the Reference were not clear. He understood that the occupation of town holdings was meant; but, to an ordinary mind, the occupation of "town holdings" meant something more than "town houses and appurtenances."

MR. CHILDERS: What I said was, that under this Reference it would not be possible for the Committee to examine such a proposal as the compulsory conversion of leaseholds into freeholds against the wish of the landlord. The Committee will not be able to enter into that matter.

MR. MAGNIAC: I am sorry I cannot quite follow the right hon. Gentleman's explanation. I understand him to say that the Committee would not be able to examine into the question of the proper amount of compensation a tenant should be able to get from his landlord for his improvements. [Mr. Childers: I said nothing of the sort.] Well, it appears to me to be impossible to fix what amount of compensation a tenant should be entitled to unless you examine into the actual terms of the tenancy. I must say that this Reference is drawn in the very widest terms. There is nothing in it which will not allow the Committee to consider anything, and I think that in granting this Committee we should see that we are not creating new precedents

Sir R. Assheton Cross

of a dangerous character. It is impossible to forget that this Committee was brought about by a Bill which contained one of the widest clauses ever brought before this House; and here we have a Reference to a Committee without any restriction whatever of the language of that measure. It really appears to me that this matter is to be thrown down to a Committee to be worried on a foregone conclusion, and I think that in this matter the Government is not acting fairly to the House. There was no Member of the Government who spoke on the Bill the other day, including the Prime Minister, who did not magnify the principles of it, and none of them expressed, except in the widest terms, the extent to which it would go. I do think that if the Government intend to grant the Committee they should have taken the matter up themselves, and that they should have made themselves responsible to the House and the country for it. I make no complaint against the hon. and gallant Member who has moved the Resolution. The subject is his own, and he has always treated it in a mild and business-like manner. I have been surprised, however, that such dangerous principles should come from so mild an hon. Gentleman. The mildness of the hon. and gallant Gentleman's language has had its advantages as far as he is concerned; but, at the same time, I do think that it is the duty of the Government to pay a little more regard to that poor and almost forgotten science called political economy, and the interests of the country, than they have on this occasion.

MR. SEXTON: The Government, after considerable consideration, have entered into a deliberate arrangement on this subject; and it appears to me that the speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down (Mr. Magniac) would have been more relevant if he had delivered it last Wednesday. I do not know, however, that it is the duty of an hon. Member, when the Government has entered into a solemn arrangement, to come down to this House and try to get them to upset it. If only the mind of the hon. Member, with his antique ideas of political economy, were consulted, there would probably be no Committee at all. I am sure that the Government will arrange the composition of the Committee so that nothing very revolutionary

will be likely to come from it; and I submit respectfully that unless these two questions are left in the terms of Reference—namely, the terms of occupation and compensation for improvements, there will be nothing left to inquire into. They are the essential elements. Take them away and there is nothing left; and I, therefore, appeal to the Government to carry out their previous undertaking.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—*Mr. Lisboacher*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 3rd March, 1886.

MINUTES.)—*Supply*—considered in Committee—*Resolutions* (March 1) reported.

PUBLIC BILLS.—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—*Poor Law Funds* (122), *Drowned Persons* (Discovery and Interment) (123), *Parliamentary Franchise* (124), *Copyright Works of Fine Art* (125), *Actions for Debt (Limitation)* (126), *Conveyancing (Scotland) Act, 1874, Amendment* (127).

Second Reading—*Labourers' (Ireland) Acts Amendment* (10), *Unclaimed Deposits* (77), *Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1872, Amendment* (108), *Coal Mines* (92).

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 10.]

(*Mr. Mayne, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Shawky*.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. MAYNE, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it did not contain anything which could, in common fairness, be described as of a really contentious character. It was drawn to meet and overcome certain difficulties, chiefly technical, that had developed themselves in the working of the Labourers' (Ireland) Act of 1845, which Act, although passed in that year, might be said to have only come into practical operation since the passing of the

amending Act of 1885. The Act of 1883 was really a great measure—great in the principles that it established, and great in the concessions which it made in the interests of the Irish agricultural labourers; but, however, like many other great measures which proceeded largely upon new lines, small points were apparently omitted from it, which might appear insignificant, but which, in the hands of ingenuous persons, had proved very serious bars to the proper working of the measure. The very first operative section of the Act of 1883 enacted that a representation signed by 12 ratepayers of a sanitary district might be presented to a sanitary authority, which authority was the Board of Guardians; and if the representation alleged a sanitary defect in the district, it should be accompanied by a certificate or a report from the sanitary officer of the district upon that representation. It was then competent to the Guardians to take steps to have a scheme adopted by themselves and approved by the Local Government Board; but the Act failed altogether to make it the duty of the sanitary officer to give such certificate, or make a report; and, accordingly, they were face to face with this difficulty in certain Unions in Ireland, that, unfortunately, there were certain Boards of Guardians, the majority of whose members were hostile to the operation of the Act, and the sanitary officer taking his cue from what he saw to be the feeling of the majority of his Board, neglected, more or less wilfully, to make any report whatever; and in that way the representation made by the 12 ratepayers was strangled at the outset, the House would therefore see that thus an official had the power of preventing the operation of the Act altogether in the district to which he was attached. Now, they proposed, in this amending Bill, to meet that difficulty by enacting that the representation signed by the 12 ratepayers, should be presented to the Board of Guardians either with, or without, a report from the sanitary officer; that it would then become the duty of the Board to require their officer to inspect the district, and report to them as to the necessity for the proposed improvement scheme as suggested by the ratepayers. The Bill further proposed that in case the sanitary officer's report should be unfavourable to the proposed improve-

ment scheme, an appeal should lie from the 12 ratepayers who had signed the original representation, or from any other 12 ratepayers in the district, to the Local Government Board, who, on having this appeal lodged with them, should send a Sanitary Inspector of their own to inspect the district, and report to them as to the necessity for the proposed improvement scheme. In case the Inspector reported in favour of the scheme, the Bill provided that his report should take the place of the unfavourable report of the local sanitary officer; and that, with this exception, the proceeding should go on as if no hitch whatever had occurred. He thought the House would consider that that was a reasonable way to meet what was a very real and substantial grievance. Another portion of the Bill which might be considered contentious was that portion in which they wished, under the Act of 1883, to give the Local Government Board power to amend Provisional Orders already made. The necessity for this had arisen in this way—When the Act of 1883 was passed, and before its few shortcomings became known, many Boards of Guardians in Ireland and in some Unions where the operation of the Act was very urgently needed, rushed at once into the preparation of schemes, and had them approved by the Local Government Board in the regular way authorized by the Act. When the proceedings were brought so far, they found that the areas of chargeability were so circumscribed, that the serious cost of the improvement schemes would prove such heavy burdens on the ratepayers of these small areas, that they preferred letting the schemes stand in abeyance, and taking their chance of relief from the Legislature. In that way, there were some excellent schemes fully matured, ready to be put into operation to-morrow in certain parts of Ireland, if the area of chargeability could be so extended as to make the necessary rating more oppressive. They now proposed, by means of the Bill, to meet that difficulty, by giving the Local Government Board powers, which they might exercise within one year, and within one year only, from the passing of the Bill, to alter the area of chargeability in such way as they might deem desirable. He did not think any hon. Member would question the advisability of that

Mr. Mayne

which was probably the only way of getting over a difficulty that must be overcome, because the present arrangements involved an absolute breakdown of the Act. There was another portion of the Bill which some hon. Members might consider contentious. He was very sorry for the necessity of having to notice it, but it had become absolutely necessary. It was found that in some Unions, after the question of these improvement schemes and the erection of labourers' cottages had been fought out in every fashion that was legitimate at the Poor Law Boards and elsewhere, when the question was finally decided in favour of the adoption of the scheme, then an effectual bar was put to the further progress of it by the owners of the local quarries in the districts affected by the scheme refusing to allow their quarries to be used for the obtaining of stone or sand, or the other necessary material. The Board of Guardians, finding that the cartage of such materials from long distances greatly increased the cost of erecting cottages, dropped their schemes rather than they would burden the construction of the cottages with such an enormous expense; and, in that way, schemes which had been approved by the Local Government Board were standing still, awaiting help from the Legislature to meet that difficulty. In order to provide that help the promoters of the Bill had copied into it, almost verbatim, the sections of the Grand Jury Acts which enabled road contractors to enter quarries in the district in which their contract lay, and to draw therefrom the materials necessary for its execution, subject, of course, to reasonable restrictions, which hon. Members would find were also included in this measure. The only other point upon which he thought hon. Members would be disposed to raise any question, was the proposition that, before a labourer's cottage was ready for occupation, the Board of Guardians should be empowered to permit the labourer to occupy the half-acre of land intended to be attached to the cottage. At present, the expectant tenant had to wait until the cottage was completed, and meanwhile the ground lay waste, supplying seeds of weeds for the whole townland. The only other provisions of the Bill were technical alterations, which might be more conveniently explained in Committee. He

thought the House would agree with him, in repeating what he had before observed—that the measure contained nothing that was seriously contentious, and that it was a reasonable and moderate attempt to meet the difficulties which, though apparently small in themselves, had proved very serious, and which must be met, if the Act of 1883 was to be the success which the Legislature intended it to be. He appealed with strong confidence to that new House, that they would complete the work of the late Parliament by passing this measure, and thus securing that in no part of Ireland should any unfortunate man, whose labour was necessary to the soil, be any longer condemned to dwell in a miserable hovel, in which his own life was shortened, and, probably, the health of his wife and family sacrificed. In conclusion, he begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
“That the Bill be now read a second time.”—*Mr. Mayne.*

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. JOHN MONIEY : The hon. Member who has moved the second reading of this Bill has described very clearly the matters which the Bill embodies. He, no doubt, was fully justified in speaking of the Act of 1883 as a measure proceeding on new lines, and involving very important principles. I find great difficulty, however, in discovering what are the principles, or what is the principle, underlying this measure, and the hon. Member probably will not contend that it is animated by any very important leading principles. On the contrary, the Bill is rather intended to cover a number of individual instances in which the Acts of 1883 and 1885 have been found to work less effectually than the framers intended. I do, however, find two approaches to general principles in the Bill. The first is, no doubt, to give a quickening impulse to the Acts of 1883 and 1885 by relaxing the checks which Parliament imposed on the proceedings of the sanitary authorities; next, by relieving the sanitary authorities from local and Imperial taxation on the land acquired by them under the Act—that, I am sure, hon. Members will see is a very important relaxation—and, lastly, by extending the area of chargeability. The

second approach to a general principle is that the Bill gives new compulsory powers of taking land, which at present can only be taken by consent of the owner, as well as digging for gravel and stone, in cases where at present they can only be taken by the Grand Jury. The Bill goes even further in the same direction, by giving absolutely new powers to take these against the will of the owner. These are remarks, from a general point of view, to which the Bill is open. I would point out to the hon. Member that a Select Committee sat upon the Act of 1883 in the summer and autumn of 1884, and that this Committee, having heard a great number of experts of great competence and influence, did not recommend the proposals which he has embodied in his Bill. That, of course, would not be a conclusive objection to the Bill or any of its clauses; but it is a *prima facie* reason for exercising considerable vigilance in scrutinizing the proposals now before us. Apart from the discussion of the details of the proposal to give greater facilities to carry out the Acts already passed—about those details I will say a word presently—I would wish to point out to the House that the working of the Act, so far from showing that there are undue obstacles and impediments interposed to impede the acquisition of land, shows that the processes that the Acts contemplate have been extremely rapid and successful, and some timid persons may think that they have been so rapid as almost to be alarming. I would like to describe very briefly what have been the proceedings under the Act of 1883, which the hon. Member has rather disparaged. The number of Unions which made applications under the Act of 1883 was 70; the number of schemes proposed, 734; the number of houses, 6,837; and the estimated cost of the schemes, as submitted, £635,716. Now, we will come to the schemes sanctioned under the Act. The number of schemes sanctioned was 462; the number of houses contained in those schemes, 3,401; the estimated cost, £356,120; and the loans actually sanctioned, £220,000, and the residue of the loans were now pending. The reason, as may be justly asked by hon. Members, why there is so wide a difference between the schemes proposed and the schemes actually sanctioned, I

believe may be summarized as being threefold. First, the withdrawal of the scheme by the Guardians, in consequence of adverse reports by the Inspectors of the Local Government Board; secondly, the refusal of the schemes by the Local Government Board for discretionary reasons; and, lastly, no doubt, the general expectation that the legislation of 1883 would be amended—these three considerations explain the withdrawals. Let us now go to the working of the Act of 1885. The Returns of the new schemes under that Act present the following figures:—The number of Unions that put the Act in force is 84; the number of schemes is not given, but the number sanctioned is given at 554; but it is estimated that the actual number will be probably between 600 and 700; the number of houses, 9,035; and the estimated cost, £847,211.

MR. SEXTON: Are these in addition to the former figures of 1883?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Yes; I understand that is so.

MR. MACARTNEY: Down to what date?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: They come down to a couple of months ago, and they are in addition to the schemes under the Act of 1883. There is, therefore, no ground for alleging that the working of the Acts of 1883 and 1885 has been very tardy, or backward. Next, as justifying my position that we must move with the greatest circumspection, I would point out the very important fact as to the rents, that the rents charged for these cottages, so far as built, vary from 8d. to 1s. per week; and in one Union only—I believe near Dublin—the rent amounts to 1s. 6d. a-week. Manifestly, these rents are not sufficient to pay off the interest and sinking fund of the capital sums borrowed, and the loss which will arise must fall either upon the Union, or on the Treasury, should the Union unfortunately become insolvent. In many Unions the rates, as hon. Members must know, are already as high as can well be paid, and many ratepayers in the poorer districts are themselves as much in need of help as those for whose benefit the Act is passed, and to whom help was given. The conclusion to be drawn from these facts is that, for the present, at all events, we must exercise great caution in relaxing the checks which Parliament in 1883 and

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1885 imposed, and we must scrutinize the hon. Member's proposals with some degree of vigilance. For example, Clause 9 is one of very great importance; it is a very great extension of the principles which Parliament sanctioned in the two previous Bills. I am not, at present, however, going to discuss that clause. I have very little objection to the spirit and purpose of it; on the contrary, I think it is very likely that legislation in the future, not in Ireland only, but in Great Britain, will move more and more in that direction. Clause 11 raises a principle which I am afraid I cannot very willingly assent to. The principle of allowing Boards of Guardians to meddle with the payment of the Grand Jury cess, and still more to meddle with an Imperial tax, is one which I do not believe that the hon. Member will be able very readily to persuade the House to sanction. The clause on which the hon. Member himself lays most stress is the 8th — that for extending the area of charge. That clause will have a very serious effect upon mortgages already entered into. If we extended the area of charge, the term of every mortgage that has been drawn will have to be amended, and the mortgages reconstructed. That is not, perhaps, a very formidable objection; but it is a point that the hon. Member will have to consider. In relation to the same clause, I will remind the hon. Member that, under the Act of 1853, Boards of Guardians proposed the area of charge and the Local Government Board determined it; but, under the Amending Act of 1885, the Boards of Guardians fix the area of charge, and in most of the schemes already made, as I am informed, an area of charge less than the whole Union has been deliberately selected. It will be, therefore, I submit, manifestly unjust to re-open the question now, and not to give any *locus standi* to the outside ratepayers who may wish to oppose the change. It may well have happened that such ratepayers abstained from opposing the schemes because the charge was limited to a certain area. However, those, and other points, no doubt, can be dealt with in Committee, if the Bill should ever reach that stage. My general conclusion upon the Bill is that, at the present time, it can scarcely be said to be urgently called for; particularly at a time when Boards of Guar-

dians ought to try, and ought to be urged by the Legislature to try, rather to contract their obligations and expenditure than to commit themselves to wider obligations. It is not, I think, necessary not absolutely necessary — for carrying out the intentions of Parliament; because I think I have shown, by figures, that those intentions are already being carried out in a very tolerably satisfactory manner; and, thirdly, I will remark that the reasonableness of all the proposed amendments of the Acts is not quite apparent. They will require a great deal of consideration. The upshot of what I have to say is that, while the Government will not oppose the second reading of the Bill, we are not prepared to promise any facilities for its further discussion, and we do not pledge ourselves to support all the clauses which the hon. Member has included in his measure.

MR. SHEEHY said, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, on behalf of the Government, did not intend to oppose the Motion for the second reading; but he regretted to hear him say that he could not give facilities for the further progress of the Bill on ascertaining more of the facts relating to it. The right hon. Gentleman had indicated that some of the clauses of the Bill were somewhat contentious; but, if they were more closely inquired into, they would be found to contain very little about which there would be any contention. In fact, he (Mr. Sheehy) thought that the right hon. Gentleman would find that the Acts of 1853 and 1885 had not worked so satisfactorily as he supposed, and that the numerous small amendments provided for by this measure were absolutely necessary to bring them into general operation and make them work smoothly. The promoters of the present Bill did not desire to introduce any new principle which would give rise to a difference of opinion between Parties in the House. All they wished to provide was that the Acts of 1853 and 1885 should not be open to obstructions to which they were at present exposed at the hands of the enemies of the Acts, and which they had placed in the way of the poor people in Ireland, for whose benefit the Acts were intended. There were two sources from which those obstructions came. One of the obstructions

they were exposed to arose from the landlord class, who were the *ex officio* members of the Boards of Poor Law Guardians. [*Cries of "No, no!"*] He could assure the House that it was so, and that, if not for the obstruction of these gentlemen, there would be much less necessity for any Bill of this kind, neither would he and other hon. Members from Ireland be there in their places to say so. The other cause of obstruction was the delay of officials and the obstacles put in the way of Unions by the Local Government Board. The obstruction of *ex officio* Guardians was not apparent in all Unions, because, in some Unions, the elected members had a preponderance of power; but in some of the Western Unions of Connaught, the *ex officio* members still ruled the roast, and, as a consequence, they endeavoured to postpone and procrastinate the working of the Acts, the result being that, while they were fully in operation in Munster, and to a large extent in operation in Leinster, they were practically a dead letter in Connaught. The *ex officio* members, in short, had obstructed the Acts wherever they had the power to do so. When the Act of 1883 was introduced, the labourers of Ireland looked anxiously and hopefully to its results. It was found, however, that that Act was practically unworkable, and the labourers had to wait until the Act was amended, in 1885, before they got any benefits from it. Even under the latter Act very little had been done. Though a great many schemes were proposed and sanctioned under the two Acts, still very few houses were built, while the schemes still remained in abeyance. There were hundreds of half-acre plots through the country belonging to the Guardians which were now waste, and which might be given to the labourers, pending the building of the houses. So far with the poor Irish labourer it was hope deferred. The labourers were still waiting and waiting, and hoping and hoping; but, up to the present time, their condition had not been materially improved, because of the defects in the Acts, and the obstruction to which he had referred. Apart altogether from the opposition of the landlords in Unions where they were sufficiently powerful to put obstacles in the way, a great deal of delay was caused by the circumlocution of the Local Government Board. In

many cases Unions had agreed to schemes, after bestowing great care and labour on them, as far back as last December; but they were not yet sanctioned, because the Inspector of the Local Government Board had not come down to make the requisite inquiries and report. The most important clause of the Bill, in his opinion, was that which enabled the Boards of Guardians to let the half-acre plot to the labourer while his house was being built for him. That would give work to the labourers, at the present moment, in fencing the plots; and it would enable the labourer, for whom the plot was intended, to till the ground. He was very glad that the Government had consented to the second reading of the Bill; and he hoped that when it was taken in Committee, the Government would see that the measure was more urgently called for than the Chief Secretary for Ireland imagined, and that there was no ground for the apprehensions he entertained in regard to certain of the clauses. He thought it would be found that the contentions referred to were not essential, and were only philosophical contentions.

MR. MULHOLLAND said, that as an Ulster Member, who had had frequent opportunities of studying the Labourers' Question in Ireland, he thought he did not require to make any apology to the House for prolonging the discussion on this subject. Indeed, he thought hon. Members sitting on both sides would be glad of hearing a full and thorough discussion on the question, in view of the larger question of the same kind which they would soon have to deal with in England. With regard to the Bill before the House, he did not propose to enter into some of its details; but, speaking for himself—and, he thought, he might also say for hon. Members of the loyal North of Ireland Party who sat near him—he might say that they were prepared to support any clauses in the Bill which would have the effect of giving increased facilities to the labourers of Ireland to take advantage of, and secure the benefits of, the Acts of 1883 and 1885. But he thought that the Bill before the House was not, by any means, a satisfactory or complete measure, and that what they required was, that a Bill of this character should be based on a full inquiry into the whole operation of the La-

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bourers' Acts. For his own part, he considered that when those Acts were amended, they ought to be amended in a thorough manner, and their provisions ought to be extended so as to include classes of the community in Ireland who, at present, were excluded from the benefits of such legislation, such as fishermen, who spent a great deal of their time on shore, and also weavers and other deserving classes of the labouring population, of whom much the same thing might be said. In the course of his canvass at the time of the General Election, he had had an opportunity of ascertaining the opinion of all classes in regard to this subject, and more especially those of the labourers themselves; and he was in a position to inform the House that there was a considerable amount of disappointment and discontent among labourers of all kinds that the Acts had not been brought more extensively into operation. They considered—he would not say with what justice—that the Acts, and especially the Act of 1885, had conferred certain legal rights on them to acquire a cottage and half-an-acre of land at a certain rent, and that the Poor Law Guardians were preventing them acquiring the advantages thus given to them. It appeared to him that the Acts were working in two very different ways in two different parts of Ireland. In some districts, and chiefly, if not entirely, the Northern districts—the more prosperous parts of Ireland—where the Poor Law Guardians consisted chiefly of farmers who occupied farms of moderate size, they looked on these Acts in a very different light from that in which they regarded the Land Act. He thought that Parliament, having passed these Acts—and their justice and necessity had been admitted by both sides—it was only right that the Acts should be really utilized. He therefore cordially agreed with the promoters of the present Bill that some change should be made, and an alteration and improvement effected in the administrative machinery of the Acts. The only question was as to how that should be done, and he suggested that some independent Government Inspector or Commissioner should be appointed to take the initiative in all these matters, and bring them before the Guardians, with the view of getting them to carry

out the Acts. In the North of Ireland the compulsion should be effectually applied. As to the other parts of Ireland, with which hon. Members below the Gangway were connected, and in which the National League, he was sorry to say, held sway, the condition of things was different indeed. [Mr. SEXTON: The Act works there.] In other parts of Ireland he found cottages were being built on a somewhat extensive scale. "Hear, hear!" Hon. Members cheered what he said, and no doubt considered that they were entitled to take credit for liberality in taking advantage of the Act. But, in their parts of Ireland, the chief burden of the rates was not borne by hon. Members and the class they represented. [An hon. MEMBER: Who bears it?] Hon. Members who were acquainted with local affairs in Ireland were, doubtless, aware that when the holdings were rated at under £1 a-year, the whole of the rates were paid by the landlords. Now, this was the case in parts of Ireland where the National League held its sway; and, therefore, the Poor Law Guardians, in putting this Act into force, and this burden on the rates, were putting no burden on themselves, or on the classes whom the National League principally represented. He ventured, on those grounds, to suggest that before any new amending Act was passed there should be an authoritative and searching inquiry into the whole working of the Acts, and that this inquiry should include such questions as the cost of the cottages, the rents charged for the same, and the burdens which fell on the rates. In some parts of Ireland, he regretted very much to have to say, the Acts had been utilized for political purposes, as he had seen numerous resolutions passed by the branches of the National League, recommending that cottages should be built only for those labourers who were members of the League. He found also that persons chosen to build these cottages were selected from those belonging to the National League. It seemed to him [Mr. Mulholland] that these things should be carefully considered, and, moreover, that they ought to be considered in reference to the state of Ireland, and to the amount of intimidation exercised by the Society to which he had referred. ["Oh, oh!"] He would

not enter further into that matter now, but would simply add that, for his own part, he was prepared to support many parts of the Bill before the House, but there were other parts which he considered to be very objectionable; and, looking at the Bill as a whole, he must say that he regarded it as by far too incomplete a measure to be accepted as a final settlement of this important question.

Mr. O'HEA said, he thought the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had given a very valuable contribution to the debate, and he (Mr. O'Hea) thought it a very happy, as well as a very healthy, sign to find a Member of the Ulster Party stating that he considered that the legislation for the Irish labourers was to his mind not complete. When the Bill got into Committee, he hoped the hon. Member would have a full and ample opportunity of giving them the benefit of his large views and liberality of sentiment. He, for one, would certainly be very glad if the measure could be extended so as to give a share of its benefits to the classes referred to by the hon. Gentleman, who were well worthy and deserving of attention being shown them, more especially the fishermen along the coasts. When the Acts were originally passed they were intended to refer only to agricultural labourers; but it was not too late to introduce fishermen and other classes in the present Bill. He had carefully followed the observations of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and, although the right hon. Gentleman had led the House to believe that the Acts had been made to work with expedition and despatch, he thought the figures the right hon. Gentleman had quoted recoiled on himself, and showed that the Acts had been almost wholly inoperative, and that they had not, in any way, been a success. He had himself been professionally concerned in the working of the Act of 1885, and he could say emphatically that it was a most cumbersome measure, full of vexatious delays and difficulties. Under the Act of 1883, the number of cottages provided for was 6,700, which would not represent a population of more than 40,000. The Act of 1885, again, had been only a small improvement, because the number of houses provided for was only some 9,000; and, putting down six as the number of the

occupants of each house, the entire number benefited would not be much more than 50,000. The entire number, therefore, was less than 100,000—a rate which would necessitate a labourer waiting five years before he could get any benefit from this legislation, and which showed that the operation of the Acts had been incomplete, and much less than the requirements of the people or the intentions of the Legislature. The Bill now proposed was in the direction of a much-needed improvement; and he hoped that the House would practically recognize the fact. It would, he was convinced, produce a marked and decided improvement in the condition of the people of Ireland; and, therefore, he hoped it would be passed into law, and so make it possible for the people, instead of living in hovels, to have comfortable roofs over their heads.

Mr. SEXTON said, the differences of opinion in politics should not prevent hon. Members from recognizing the merits of their opponents, and he gladly bore testimony to the character of the speech made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Derry (Mr. Mulholland). It was a fluent and remarkable speech, and the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Major Saunderson), sometimes called the Leader of his Party, would now have to look to his laurels and to deal with the fact that he had a powerful rival near his throne. However, fluency was not all that was requisite in order to make a successful Parliamentary speech; and when he admitted that the hon. Member for North Derry had made a fluent speech, he (Mr. Sexton) thought his praise must end there. It would have been desirable if, before he rose to speak, the hon. Gentleman had made up his mind as to what result he meant to leave on the mind of the House; for, after the most careful study of the speech of the hon. Member, he (Mr. Sexton) was entirely at a loss to understand what was the state of the hon. Gentleman's mind on the subject. The hon. Member complained that the Bill was not a complete measure. Well, it was certainly not a complete measure; but in allowing it to remain an incomplete measure his hon. Friend the Member for Tipperary (Mr. Mayne) had a view to his chances of passing it through the House; and when the hon. Member for North Derry said it was incomplete,

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he (Mr. Sexton) would have thought that he would have endeavoured to induce the Chief Secretary for Ireland not merely to assent to the second reading, but to reconsider the statement as to his giving further facilities. He thought the hon. Member, to be consistent, would have urged the Government to hasten the measure, and afford him the opportunity of completing it. But the hon. Member rode off on a side issue. The Ulster Tory Members, speaking generally, admitted admirable principles; but when you came to ask them to put those admirable principles into operation—to come in on the broad track of reform—they at once performed an operation well known in Ireland—they went “up a boreen”—they found, at a critical moment, a convenient siding, and then disappeared from view. The hon. Gentleman was, in some sense, in sympathy with modern views; but his methods were rather antique, and when asked how to get rid of the incompleteness his only suggestion was—“It wants thorough inquiry,” the usual convenient form of shelving a disagreeable subject. Surely, the hon. Member could not forget that the question had been for a long time before a Committee of the House in 1881. He (Mr. Sexton) was a Member of that Committee, and he could assure him that the inquiry was very full and searching. The object now was to amend the Act of 1885, and the character of the defects of that Act was certainly not of such a kind as to necessitate another like inquiry. Was it a proof of the sincerity of the hon. Member that he would again postpone the settlement of this question for another year, leaving so many deserving people landless and homeless? The sympathy of the hon. Member appeared to be very great, so far as his mind was concerned; but it did not appear in the least to agitate his heart. He entirely agreed with the hon. Gentleman that there were other classes besides the agricultural labourers who needed help in this matter. The fishermen of the coasts had suffered more, perhaps, than any other class from the parsimony of British legislation, and he thought they should be brought under the influence of some similar legislation. He (Mr. Sexton) himself, when the original Act were in Committee, had made a similar proposition; and when the Member for

North Derry saw his way to taking any practical action to assist the fishermen he would find for him more active support than, perhaps, he could get from his hon. and gallant Friend and Leader the Member for North Armagh. Another point was this—as to the composition and action of Boards of Guardians in Ireland. Those Boards consisted of about one-half landlords and magistrates, and he would ask the attention of Irish Tory Members to this. The hon. Member Mr. Mulholland, had urged that Poor Law Guardians in the North of Ireland should be compelled to put the Act in force. That was rather a strong step to take, and he (Mr. Sexton) did not know how the hon. Gentleman's Colleagues would like it; but, anyhow, it would be interesting to know whether he and they thought that landlords in Ireland, acting as Poor Law Guardians, ought to be compelled to put the Act in force. If the hon. Member meant that, he (Mr. Sexton), quite agreed with him, though he would be a little bit surprised, for it was surely a little inconsistent on the part of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member admitted that in certain parts of Ireland—in the North—the Act had not worked, and he would compel the Guardians to act. Let the House mark the inconsistency. In the same breath the hon. Member complained that, in other parts of Ireland, where the Act did work, the National League used intimidation; in fact, he complained of the National League doing what he himself urged ought to be done. Besides, the landlords had half the seats at the Boards.

MR. MULHOLLAND: No; not on the Boards of Guardians I referred to.

MR. SEXTON: Surely the hon. Gentleman could not be ignorant of the fact that the landlords held half the seats at the Boards of every Union in Ireland. Every Union had two elements, the elected Guardians there sent by the rate-payers, and the other half was composed of magistrates—*ex officio* Guardians.

MR. MULHOLLAND: They are not always present—I mean Members who sit as a rule.

MR. SEXTON: Quite so. Of course, the landlords, in that regard, as in everything else, neglected their duty. They stayed away from the Board, except when there was a job to be done. But they possessed one-half the seats at

the Boards; and if they did not choose to attend, he was sorry to say it was not in his power to compel them. Another absurd statement made was that Boards of Guardians were intimidated by the National League into erecting cottages where they "held sway," as the hon. Member expressed it, because the farmers paid less of the rates than in other parts. He took issue with the hon. Gentleman on that point, and contended that the contrary was the fact. The holdings in Ulster were usually small, and in Munster and Leinster extensive; and in the latter case they were certain to pay a larger proportion of the rates than where they were small. As to the phrase used "Where the National League held sway," it was held that the Irish National Party and the National League were synonymous. Well, all he could say was, that the part of Ireland "where the National League holds sway," as tested by the return of Irish Members, was all Ireland, except three counties, and even in those they had had effected an inroad, and would doubtless get a further advance. On the whole, he must say that while the hon. Member appeared to have a platonic affection for Tory Democracy, and was disposed to speak quite sympathetically of the labourers, his affection did not seem to have advanced a bit beyond the platonic stage. He asked the hon. Member, if he really wanted to show that he was interested in the poor of Ireland, whether, instead of contradicting himself in every third sentence, instead of saying the measure was incomplete and then shelving it, instead of saying the Guardians should be compelled to act, and, at the same time, blaming the National League for doing that, instead of making such speeches, the hon. Gentleman should consider how he could best and most effectually help to bring to a satisfactory settlement this important question? As to the Income Tax, there was not very much in that point, and he would be prepared to strike it out. He hoped that facilities would still be given by the Government for the Committee stage; and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that if that were done, he would find a readiness on the part of Irish Members to accept any reasonable modification that might be suggested, and which would be justified by argument. He would ask the attention of

hon. Gentlemen to a letter which he had received from a labourer in Ballymena Union, pointing out that a committee had there been appointed to consider the erection of labourers' cottages, and one member of the committee resigned in consequence of the way in which the proceedings had been conducted.

MR. MACARTNEY: Was he an *ex officio*, or an elected Guardian?

MR. SEXTON: It did not matter. If he was elected it was a credit to him; and if an *ex officio* he acted so honourably that he could scarcely be an Ulster landlord. The whole question of Local Government would soon be discussed and dealt with. This was not the time to deal with it, and in view of that fact he would stop short of a proposition to make the Guardians take action; for if they were to be compelled, the power to do so would fall to an official Bureau devoid of representative capacity, and he was not inclined to give power to such a body. The true way to settle this matter would be to make the elective system supreme on these Boards. Last year he had endeavoured to induce the Treasury to give the Guardians, for the purposes of the Labourers' Act, the same terms that the late Government held out to tenants under the Land Act—that was, to give them £100 for £4 a-year. He was quite sure that if the Government would do that, the Guardians might then be compelled to take vigorous action. In conclusion, he would urge upon the House to give practical effect to the sympathy expressed on all sides for the labouring classes.

COLONEL WARING said, that he did not intend to enter into this discussion had he not been challenged to do so by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton) who had just sat down. He thought that his hon. Friend and brother Officer the Member for North Derry (Mr. Mulholland) did, no doubt, owe an apology to the hon. Members below the Gangway for infringing their patents; but it was the intention of himself (Colonel Waring), and those who sat near him, to infringe a good many of the patents those hon. Members had hitherto exclusively looked upon as their own. He had been told that the obstruction that had been given to the operation of the Labourers' Act was by the landlords, as represented by *ex officio* Guardians. Well, he knew a little about the action of the Boards of

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Guardians in the North of Ireland, inasmuch as he had been a member of one of them for many years, and had latterly been vice-chairman; and, from the knowledge thus gained, he could say that the obstruction to the operation of the Act of 1885 had come not from the *ex officio* Guardians, but from the elected Guardians. References had been made to the action of the Ballymena Board of Guardians in regard to the provision of labourers' dwellings. Well, in the Ballymena Union the National League did not hold sway, and he did not think it ever would; but the greatest opponents of these Acts were the elected Guardians, while the most vigorous supporter was Mr. Patrick, who might not be an Irish landlord, but was what hon. Members below the Gangway disliked still more—a highly respected officer of the Orange Association. The hon. Member for Sligo had twitted the Irish Conservative Members with having merely a platonic sympathy for the Irish labourers; but he (Colonel Waring) did not think that the sympathy of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway extended much farther. They talked about the interests of the labourers; but before any warm attention was paid to the claims of labourers they had to produce a piece of paper, showing that they were members of the National League. Not only did he (Colonel Waring) feel sympathy for the Irish labourers, but he thought that sympathy should not be confined to the agricultural labourers alone, but should be extended to the fishermen. Indeed, hon. Gentlemen opposite were not unwilling to go so far; but they did not hear of their sympathy being extended to the weavers. They belonged to districts to which the sway of the hon. Gentlemen he referred to had not extended, and were, indeed, the most formidable opponents to its extension; and, therefore, they were not to have the benefit of these Acts. His hon. Friend Mr. Mulholland had never said, as was imputed to him by the hon. Member for Sligo, that Guardians were being intimidated by the National League into putting these Acts into operation. What his hon. Friend said was that agricultural labourers were intimidated into becoming members of the National League in order that they might obtain the benefit of the Act. He (Colonel

Waring) was desirous to promote any legislation which was for the interest of the community generally, and not of the one class who happened to be the present occupants of land. They were a very important class; but there were other classes above and below and around them whose interests had to be fully considered; and he did not think that anyone, except actually existing occupiers, had gained one atom by the recent legislation for Ireland. If he and his Colleagues occasionally expressed an intention to go a certain distance with those hon. Members, it was, at the same time, but natural that they should hesitate to go along that high road which, as they were told on the highest authority, led to destruction. While, therefore, he was ready to facilitate the passage of the Bill through Committee, and hoped the Government would give the requisite facilities for that purpose, he trusted that something might be done to extend the benefits of its provisions to classes who had not yet been reached by previous legislation on this subject.

Mr. DILLON said, he thought that after the speech just made the discussion might close, for there really did not appear to be any difference of opinion. There were statements made concerning the Labourers' Act which he desired to contradict as a matter of public duty. It had been alleged, for instance, that in the South of Ireland, where it was admitted on all sides that the Acts had been put in force, to a considerable extent, with the approval of the Irish Members, the labourers who desired to put the Act in motion were desired to produce their cards of membership of the National League. He utterly denied that any such system had either their approval or connivance. On the contrary, they utterly discountenanced any such proceeding, although attempts were made by an Association, the Freemasons, who carried on an organized system of "Boycotting" in regard to those who did not belong to their organization. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland only yesterday stated that, according to reports that had been sent to him, an attempt was made to induce the members of the Tipperary Board of Guardians, every man of whom belonged to the National League, to show some favour of that

kind, and the attempt was resented as an insult to their Board. The hon. and gallant Member for North Down (Colonel Waring) said, after referring to the action of the Ballymena Board of Guardians, that there was a particular body for which Nationalists entertained even a greater dislike than the landlords of Ireland. Now, although the Irish Catholics had suffered much from the Orange Body, they had not a greater dislike to that Body than they had to the landlords. He (Mr. Dillon) challenged the Orange Members for Belfast to deny that the Catholics voted for them, and helped in the return of the hon. Gentlemen who sat for South Belfast and East Belfast. ["No, no!"] Well, he challenged either of those hon. Members to stand up and deny that the Catholic Nationalists had voted for them at the poll. No; the Nationalists did not hate them, except when they were doing evil; they were ready to support them in every honest effort they made to defend the rights of the Irish people. The hon. and gallant Member also said that the obstruction to the Labourers' Act was mainly given by elected Guardians. Well, if that was true, it was a very strong argument for introducing the National League into Ulster. Wherever the National League existed, the Act was, according to the hon. and gallant Member, put in force; and wherever it did not the contrary was the case. In the portion of the North of Ireland where most complaints were made of the obstruction, there were large numbers of the landlord party in the Unions, both as elected and *ex officio* Guardians. There seemed to be a determined effort to make an extraordinary misrepresentation to that House. It had been insinuated that the Irish Members desired that the benefits of the Act should be confined to one class of labourers only. The Irish so-called "Loyal Party"—for it might be a matter of argument which was the real "Loyal Party"—had suddenly woke up to a great amount of zeal in advocating the extending of the benefits of the Act to all classes of labourers. Well, his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had sat on a Committee, and endeavoured, day after day, to have those benefits extended to these very classes of labourers and fishermen, and weavers

and workers of every class. That fact was perfectly well known to those acquainted with the history of the measure, and the hon. Members above the Gangway appeared to be entirely ignorant of the efforts of the Irish Party on behalf of the labourers of Ireland. For several years the "Loyal Party" never took any interest in the subject; but, now that many of their seats were in imminent danger, they became deeply interested in the cases of the glebe purchasers, because they knew that there were 300 or 400 of them scattered over the divisions of Tyrone, whose votes would be badly wanted by the Orange Party at the next Election.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON said, that hon. Members below the Gangway were fond of arrogating to themselves the right of initiating all remedial legislation for Ireland; and when they found that Members above the Gangway also had a duty to perform in regard to legislation and the improvement of the condition of the people of Ireland, hon. Members were good enough to laugh and sneer derisively at any proposal in that direction. It was undoubtedly true that there were a great many labourers in Ulster, and a considerable number of them voted for the Conservative candidates who now had seats in the House of Commons. But he would remind the hon. Member (Mr. Dillon) that a great number of hon. Members who now represented part of the Ulster population—a considerable number—did not sit in the House of Commons before, and had no opportunity in the past of taking action in the direction they were now inclined to go. Also, he might observe that, on the opening of Parliament, Members below the Gangway had an enormous advantage over himself and his Friends, in that they had all their preparations ready beforehand, and all their Bills prepared. The preparations were made before the Elections took place; and before the Elections it was settled who was to represent certain constituencies, and when he did so what measures he would propose. But Members of the Conservative Party had not the advantage of knowing for certain the result of the election before it took place. They had the disagreeable necessity of applying to the wishes of the electors whom they desired to represent.

Mr. Dillon

They did not ascertain from two or three gentlemen, sitting in Dublin, who was to represent certain constituencies in the North. That, of course, gave Members below the Gangway an advantage; but perhaps, in the future, Conservatives would meet them in a similar manner. The hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon) objected to certain statements made in the House, and probably alluded to Questions asked, especially one he (Major Sanderson) asked of the Chief Secretary for Ireland as to the action of the National League. The hon. Member denied, as far as he could understand his speech, that the National League in Ireland had taken the action indicated in that Question. Now the Question asked had reference to a letter written by a Roman Catholic clergyman in Tipperary, to which he (Major Sanderson) called the attention of Her Majesty's Government. In his letter the Roman Catholic clergyman said there were two men, one named Timothy O'Brien—probably a relative of some hon. Member below the Gangway—and another who was called Fitzgerald; and he pointed out that Timothy O'Brien was a member of the National League, and Fitzgerald was not; therefore the Guardians were to vote for O'Brien. The Chairman of the Board said it was a dangerous letter, for it might get into the Press, and if it did it was almost certain to get into the House of Commons; and he (Major Sanderson) took precious good care it did. Since then there had been another letter from the reverend gentleman, giving an explanation of a peculiar circumstance that cropped up. It appeared that the Rev. Mr. Hennessey signed for both parties, and the Board could not make out the object of the reverend gentleman; but his explanation was that Fitzgerald humbugged him, and represented that he was a member of the League; but afterwards, finding he was not a member, Mr. Hennessey signed for O'Brien, and hoped he would get the cottage. So much in reference to that Board.

Mr. DILLON: The statement of the hon. Member for North Down that I contradicted was that it was necessary to have a card in order to get a cottage.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON said, that he had another case which he wished to call attention to, that was reported in

The Leinster Leader, February 27th. At a meeting of the Athy branch of the National League, the hon. secretary announced that he had received a letter from Mary Doyle, complaining that, though she had sent in a representation to the Athy Guardians for a labourer's cottage, she saw no reference to it in the advertisement of the scheme published in *The Leader*. The secretary went on to say that he wished to remark, with regard to the state of the labourers in that county, though they seemed to think they could obtain cottages without going through the open door of the League, it was important they should know that the branch would only recommend as tenants of the cottages to the Guardians such as were members of the League. That showed in these two places, and no doubt in hundreds of others, what was the action of the League. What he wanted to point out was that it was quite clear that in hundreds of places in Ireland an Act passed by the House of Commons for the purpose of alleviating the condition of the Irish labourer was made use of by the organization which was under the immediate direction of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway as a political lever on their part to subjugate the will of the Irish people. [*Cries of "Oh, oh!"*] If that was not the case, and if hon. Members objected to the action of the National League, why did they not get up and condemn it in public and in the House of Commons?

Mr. DILLON: That is exactly what I have done over and over again.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON asked why they did not do so when they went over to Ireland? He quite admitted that hon. Members below the Gangway speaking in Ireland and speaking in the House of Commons were quite different animals. "Oh, oh!" and "Shame!" He would withdraw the word "animals," and say they had a quite different method of speaking and mode of oratory. Why did they not in Ireland say that no difference at all should be made between one Irishman and another in granting the advantages of this Act? With regard to the Amendments proposed in them by the hon. Member Mr. Mayne, he had to say that he would decidedly support its second reading. What was more, he was quite ready to join in the

appeal to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that facility should be given without too much delay for its further discussion and consideration. He knew something about the labouring population, and he was not a new convert to legislation having for its object the protection and alleviation of the condition of the Irish people. He had always supported the Land Bill, and did not regret having done so; and he had always been in favour of advancing, as much as it was possible to do so, the condition of the Irish labourer, for, in his opinion, he was badly clothed, badly paid, as well as being badly fed. It would be an intense satisfaction to him if, by any action on his part, he could assist in helping him. He was, therefore, ready to support any Bill which was brought in to ameliorate the labourer's condition, and to make him what he believed he could be made—a law-abiding citizen. He would not criticize the subject further; but he would say that if the right hon. Gentleman opposite would give them an early opportunity of discussing the Bill he should be ready to take part in the discussion that might arise, and to suggest any improvement that might be desirable.

MR. JOSEPH NOLAN said, he deeply regretted that the hon. and gallant Member who had last addressed the House was not now in his place. He (Mr. Nolan) wished to say that the hon. and gallant Member would remain in his mind as the Gentleman who had the good taste to make a personal attack upon him the very first night he took his seat in the House; and therefore he was not surprised to find that the hon. and gallant Member had had the very questionable taste of referring to Timothy O'Brien as being possibly a relative of some of his (Mr. Nolan's) Colleagues below the Gangway. Knowing the Gentlemen who bore the name of O'Brien in the House and his Colleagues, he thought he could take it upon himself to say that, although he believed that the person in question had not the slightest connection, whether by relationship or otherwise, to any of those Gentlemen, there was not one of them who would think of repudiating any such connection with any honest man, such as he presumed Timothy O'Brien to be. That, however, did not lessen

the animus of the remark made by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh. Another intelligent allusion which the hon. and gallant Member made to himself and Colleagues was that they were animals. Now, they did not at all intend to deny the charge, nor did they at all intend to say that they did not belong to that class of animals that had got a little backbone in them, which the hon. and gallant Gentleman would perhaps find out. The hon. and gallant Member also spoke of himself (Mr. Nolan) and his Colleagues as arrogating to themselves the right of initiating reforms for the Irish people. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman or his Colleagues would only take upon themselves the duty of introducing the reforms necessary in the North of Ireland, he would find that they would obtain every support from the Irish Party. One statement the hon. and gallant Member made was, that there was a great deal of intolerance displayed in Munster, Leinster, and Connaught, by the members of the National League. It was an old saying that people who lived in glass houses should not throw stones; and he would undertake to prove to any hon. Member in the House, no matter to what Party he might belong, that intolerance in its rankest forms was practised by hon. Gentlemen who claimed to represent Ulster in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that, although he has been allowed, during the earlier part of his speech, to answer some charges which he regarded as personal, he is not now discussing the second reading of the Bill, which is the Question before the House, but is indulging in personal recriminations which have nothing whatever to do with the Bill now before the House.

MR. JOSEPH NOLAN begged to bow to the ruling of Mr. Speaker; but he thought that, having listened to those charges made by the hon. and gallant Gentleman above the Gangway, he should have been permitted to say what could be said on the other side, and he was sorry to find that he was mistaken.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! order! The hon. Gentleman is not entitled to speak of my ruling in that manner. I have said that the charges are matters of personality; and I hold these questions are

irrelevant to the Question, which is the proposal that the Bill now before the House be read a second time.

Mr. JOSEPH NOLAN said, he begged respectfully to submit to the ruling of the Chair; and he would not carry the discussion further in the direction in which he had been proceeding, but deal with the merits of the Bill before the House. He was glad to find that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had announced that he would not oppose the second reading of the Bill; but he was sorry to find that he was not prepared to grant any facility for its further discussion. One objection to the Bill was based on economy. He would respectfully submit to the right hon. Gentleman that there would be greater economy in providing for the support of a numerous class outside the workhouse rather than inside. A great many labourers were at times forced to take refuge in the workhouse under existing conditions; and if the Bill were carried into law these people would be able to maintain themselves outside. There was nothing which militated against working people's success so much as the want of proper habitations. He hoped, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to see his way to withdraw his objection to allowing time for going into Committee.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, he rose principally for the purpose of joining in the appeal of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Armagh (Major Sanderson) for an opportunity for further discussion of the Bill in Committee. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not now in the House; but he hoped that some of his Colleagues would inform him of the appeal that was made. He did not wish to enter into any of the painful elements that had been introduced into the discussion; and whilst he was quite prepared to acknowledge the sincerity of hon. Members below the Gangway in bringing forward that Bill, he, at the same time, in return must ask for similar credit for himself and those near him, in their efforts to realize those objects which it was intended by legislation they should possess. Neither did he wish to refer at any length to the discussion that had already taken place;

but he certainly did not understand his hon. Friend the Member for North Derry (Mr. Mulholland desired to take the course attributed to him. He believed his hon. Friend would be quite prepared to consider this measure in Committee, and give it the fullest and most favourable hearing. To a great extent, he (Mr. Macartney) agreed in the defects indicated in the previous Acts. The machinery of the Acts might be greatly improved, though he was not prepared to accept every detail of the Bill, nor did he think it desirable to subject the Bill to a lengthened examination by a Select Committee. For his own part, he believed that those measures, which were designed to give to the labourers of Ireland what, in so many instances, they were so much in need of—proper house accommodation, necessary sanitary arrangements, and an allotment of ground at a reasonable rent—would not really attain their ends until the right of putting in motion the machinery of the Bill was given to those who were outside the ratepayers of Ireland. He was very much inclined to give to labourers themselves powers to put in motion the representations that were made, under proper administrations, and subject, of course, to the ratepayers having the right of appeal to the Local Government Board for the purpose of protecting their own interests. There were also one or two other matters that required consideration; but he would not enter into them upon the present occasion, as the time was rapidly passing. Beyond that it was unnecessary to enter into details, seeing there was a general concurrence of opinion above and below the Gangway. The hon. Member who moved the second reading (Mr. Mayne) in a very moderate speech admitted there was a certain amount of contentious matter in the Bill; and, of course, he was not prepared to give an unqualified assent to all; but, after an opportunity of communicating with his friends in Ireland engaged in administering the Act of 1855, they would be able to give full consideration to the Bill, and, he hoped, a large measure of support. The clauses extending the power of compulsory purchase required the closest attention; and on that and other points he reserved to himself complete liberty of action in Committee. He did not wish to say, at the present moment,

that he was going to limit himself to an absolute refusal to consider these matters; but he wished to retain to himself complete freedom of action in Committee upon the Bill. The main object of his rising was to make a strong appeal to Her Majesty's Government to give facilities for the future discussion of a measure which, he believed, would conduce to the benefit not only of the class to which it was specially designed, but of all classes in Ireland.

MR. DAWSON said, that the labourers' dwellings throughout Ireland stood sadly in need of considerable improvement. He would therefore appeal to the Government to give the utmost facilities in their power for discussing the details of the Bill, and in bringing it to a successful conclusion, for there was much in it that was deserving of support. In regard to the South of Ireland, he believed, from personal knowledge, that the opposition to the Act of last year by Boards of Guardians came as much from the elective Guardians, and in some cases more, than from the *ex officio* Guardians. Of course, one Board of Guardians differed from another; but he thought it was an erroneous idea to believe that the *ex officio* Guardians had any desire to interfere with the agricultural labourers. He also agreed in the advisability of extending the benefit of the Act to other than purely agricultural labourers, as he believed that those who gained their livelihood by fishing were as well entitled to receive the benefit of the Act as those who were engaged in agricultural pursuits.

MR. DEASY said, he believed that further discussion would be utter waste of time; therefore he would not follow the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Dawson) upon the question as to how the Act had been worked by Boards of Guardians in the South of Ireland. Had he any desire to do so, he thought he could show by statistics that the Act had been obstructed by a class of people different to those who represented the ratepayers of Ireland; but he would not do so, as he did not wish to introduce any contentious matter. What he desired to do was to contradict the statement made in the House by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Major Saunderson), that the National League availed themselves of the Labourers' Act to annoy the landlords.

Mr. Macartney

MAJOR SAUNDERSON: I did not say anything of the kind.

MR. DEASY said, that it was said that the National League would not allow the benefit of that Act to any labourer not a member of the National League; and a similar statement was made, some time ago, at Ochester in the presence of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, by the gentleman who was known as Chairman of the Defence Association of the South of Ireland, Mr. Smith-Barry, who said that the National League used the Labourers' Act for political purposes in the Cork Union and in other Unions in that county. One of his (Major Saunderson's) greatest friends, Captain Bainbridge, one of the Orange candidates at the recent Election, stated that if Mr. Smith-Barry made such an assertion in regard to the Cork Board of Guardians, it was a lie, and that had the effect of drawing from Mr. Smith-Barry a letter, in which he withdrew the imputation. It was merely for the purpose of bringing that matter under the attention of the House, and of showing how groundless were the charges made against the National League organization by its opponents, that he had risen to make these few remarks.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said, he quite agreed with his hon. Friend (Mr. Deasy) in the statement that any further discussion on the principle of the Bill would be waste of time, and he could assure the House he had no intention of further discussing the principle of the Bill. He had merely risen for the purpose of enforcing one point of his hon. Friend's speech as to the misrepresentations of the action of the National League constantly indulged in by Gentlemen holding the views of those above the Gangway; and he would not enlarge further upon that were it not that the charge which was made was a serious matter—namely, that with reference to the alleged action of the National League in intimidating Boards of Guardians to give the cottages to members of the National League only. He wished, with the permission of the House, to call attention to a statement made by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh himself, which, when proved to be untrue, the hon. and gallant Member did not withdraw. The statement was made on the occasion of a deputation to Lord Salisbury by the Loyal and Patriotic

Union, which statement was a specific statement to the effect that the New-bridge National League, which consisted, he said, to a great extent of members of the Board of Guardians, had passed a resolution declaring that the Board of Guardians should not give labourers' cottages to any persons who were not members of the National League. One of his (Mr. Redmond's) hon. Friends and Colleagues, the Representative of Kildare, at once communicated with that branch of the League and with the Board of Guardians. He elicited from the National League a statement that no such resolution was ever proposed or passed; and he elicited from the Board of Guardians, at a meeting at which a well-known Conservative landlord of the county was in the chair, the statement that, so far as they knew, nothing of the kind had occurred, and that in their opinions the hon. and gallant Gentleman ought to withdraw the charge. It was further established that only one member of the Board of Guardians was a member of the National League. In point of fact, the statement of the hon. and gallant Member was proved to be without one tittle of foundation. The hon. Member for Kildare communicated with the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and pointed out to him that the statement was erroneous, and asked him to be manly and fair enough to imitate the action of Mr. Smith-Barry, and withdraw; but the hon. and gallant Member wrote to say he could not withdraw the charge, because, forsooth, he had seen a statement to its effect in the columns of *The Daily Express*. [Laughter.] This might seem to many hon. Members a very trivial matter; but it really was not a matter of little importance when statements of this kind were made on English platforms to English people, and when they were believed by the people. He trusted that what had now been said upon this subject would be sufficient to put the point at rest, and sufficient to cause the English people to receive similar statements with caution and reserve.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON said, he wished to ask the permission of the House to make a personal explanation. It was perfectly true that he had made the statement to Lord Salisbury that certain facts had taken place, and when he received the communication from the hon. Member for Kildare he refused to

withdraw it, because, as he had informed the hon. Member, it was a statement on which was founded a leading article in *The Daily Express*. ["Oh, oh!" and laughter.] Hon. Members below the Gangway probably did not read *The Daily Express*; but he did, and he could not see what other course any public man could take but to found his opinions upon what appeared in the Press, and which had been uncontradicted.

MR. JOHN REDMOND pointed out that the hon. and gallant Member did not withdraw the statement, which was proved to be incorrect.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

UNCLAIMED DEPOSITS BILL.

(Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dr. Clark, Mr. Watt.)

[BILL 77.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said: This is a very simple measure. It consists mainly of a single clause, the object of which is to require banking and trading Companies and Associations to keep a register of the unclaimed stock, the unclaimed shares, debentures, and deposits which they may hold, and that the register shall be open to the inspection of all persons interested, during reasonable hours, on payment of a reasonable fee. The House will see that I do not propose, on the one hand, to interfere with the business of individuals at all; nor, on the other hand, do I propose any interference with those Departments of the Government which are concerned with unclaimed stock. There are three Departments of the Government to which the principles of this Bill would apply, and to which, to some extent, they are already applied; and perhaps the House will permit me, in illustration of the plan I propose, to refer briefly to those Departments. The first and most important of these is the Chancery Fund. The fund standing in the Court of Chancery is subject to special regulations made by the Lord Chancellor; and, under these regulations, a list of unclaimed sums is practically published once in every three years. I regret to say that the infor-

mation so conveyed to the public is not perhaps so full and exhaustive as it might be, and the consequence is that, in some cases, a number of persons make a profitable living out of the mystery which still surrounds these great unclaimed funds. There is, no doubt, considerable room for improvement in the system; but I do not mean to include it in the scope of this Bill. I merely cite what is already done as a precedent and a justification for what I propose to do with regard to private Companies. Another Department of the Government which is also concerned in the principle of this Bill is the National Debt. The provisions regarding the National Debt are exactly those I propose in the present case. By the National Debt Act of 1870, all stock on which dividend has been unclaimed for 10 years is transferred in the books of the Bank of England to the National Debt Commissioners, and immediately afterwards a list is made of the stocks so transferred, which is open to the inspection of the public. That is exactly what I propose to do in regard to private Companies. The third Government Department which is concerned in this proposal, and with which I do not propose to interfere, is the Post Office. There is, no doubt, a considerable amount of money in unclaimed Post Office orders. How the Post Office deals with these I have not been able to find out, for I understand no publication of them is made; but I have been informed by a Post Office official that part of the money, at all events, is used in paying the premiums of insurance policies of the Office. That, no doubt, is an admirable purpose to apply it to; but I have been unable to find out whether the Government make any attempt to hand over these funds to the real owners. I still, however, would like to do so. As I have already said, I shall not propose to meddle with any Government Business; but I confine myself entirely to the case of private associations holding funds under various denominations, the owners of which are not at the moment known. There are two considerations which I venture to urge in support of the principle of the Bill. The first is that there is unquestionably a certain amount of money standing, particularly in banking Companies, but also in trading and other Companies of every kind, the ownership of which has ceased for

the moment, the real owners not knowing that the funds are there. I do not for a moment suggest that there is any very enormous amount of money so unclaimed, but some there must be; and so long as no provision is made for the real owners finding out that the money is there, so long must there be a certain amount of injustice. And, what is more important, there will also be a disproportionate feeling in the public mind that this injustice exists. Since this Bill was introduced I have had a considerable amount of correspondence with persons interested in it; and the correspondence goes to convince me that, whatever may be the amount of money which would be affected by the Bill, the amount of feeling which would be affected by it is very considerable indeed. But, in the second place—and I think this is the more important consideration—the amount of mystery and ignorance surrounding this subject is such as to give a profitable livelihood to a class of adventurers who should have no encouragement. These persons find it so profitable to prey upon the cupidity and ignorance of the public in this matter that, in order to do it the more effectively, they can afford to advertise themselves extensively in very expensive newspapers all over the country. One advertisement, which I see almost every day, headed “Enormous fortunes,” is now appearing in the newspapers of the country; and in it is stated that £97,500,000 is now lying unclaimed in the Court of Chancery waiting for owners. And then there is given what professes to be a list of persons interested in these enormous sums—a list of which, I suppose, contains every conceivable name—and the people bearing these names are invited to apply to the advertisers for further information. What further information they can give I do not know; but I know from inquiry at the office of the Paymaster General that instead of £97,000,000 lying unclaimed in Chancery, as they announce, there is not more than £1,000,000, the real ownership of which is not known. One of the great and good results of the proposed measure would be that the adventurers who are now preying in this way on the ignorance of the people will have their proceedings brought, to some extent at all events, to an end. A remarkable story found its way into the newspapers a week ago, to the effect that a labourer

Mr. Edmund Robertson

of the name of Robson, whose place of abode was given as Hexham, had succeeded, through one of these agencies, in getting out of the Chancery Fund a fortune of £250,000. That is a very old and familiar paragraph—a sort of family friend of newspapers. I believe that it appeared 20 or 30 years ago, probably earlier; and why the newspapers did not recognize its age I cannot really imagine. I should like to recount a slight personal experience of my own. Some time ago I was in the United States of America, and there my professional aid was several times solicited on behalf of claims to what is well known as the Lawrence Townley estate. That estate, as it exists in the imagination of the American people, consists of £100,000,000, part of which is represented by land in England, and part by gold lying in the Bank. The estate has been lying vacant for 100 years, and there are very few people in the United States who do not suppose that, somehow or other, they have a claim on it. The claimants, indeed, are so numerous that, in order to relieve the burden of fighting their claims, they have formed a Limited Liability Company, which has been in existence for a good many years. The Company has Directors, and, of course, it has lawyers; but, although it has more than once levied assessments, as yet I have not been able to find that it has paid any dividend. These are examples of the myths which arise from facts being kept secret which I wish to be disclosed. I have been told that one of the effects of this Bill will be to disclose unclaimed stocks, which have been allowed to remain unclaimed, because they have belonged to traders who have passed through the Bankruptcy Court. I do not know whether that is so or not; but if it is so, that is an additional reason why the system I propose should be adopted by the House. The Bill, I am glad to say, is unopposed. I have not heard any imputation upon the soundness of the principle it contains; but I may say that the Home Secretary had occasion to discuss the question during his recent contest in Edinburgh, and, to my great surprise, I find he speaks of the principle as being not a very sound one, but as partaking of the character of grandmotherly legislation. I am as much, if not more, opposed to grandmotherly legislation as the right hon. Gentleman; but all I propose to

do is to extend a little further one of the clauses of the Companies Act of 1862, and make the register, which it is the duty of the Companies to keep, include the shares, debentures, and deposits whose owners have not turned up for a certain number of years, and how that can be open to the objection of grandmotherly legislation I am entirely at a loss to conceive. It may be that the proposal the right hon. Gentleman discussed in Edinburgh was of a different nature from that which I have been explaining. My Bill requires Companies to do for their unclaimed debts that which Government does for their unclaimed debts, and which Companies themselves have had to do with reference to their ordinary share capital under the Act of Parliament by which they are constituted. I trust the Bill, of which I now move the second reading, will receive the approval of the House.

Mr. J. WILSON *Edinburgh, Central*, in seconding the Motion, said, he thought the end aimed at was extremely laudable, and that the machinery by which the Bill proposed to carry out its object was extremely simple. He agreed with the hon. Member in saying that the amount of unclaimed deposits supposed to be lying in the banks was very much exaggerated in the public mind; but he thought that as it might, it appeared to him right and proper that the amount should be known, and a periodical publication in the manner indicated would greatly alleviate anxiety, and give information when required. He hoped that the House would assent to the second reading of the Bill without further discussion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson*.)

Mr. GREGORY said, he thought the penalties imposed by the Bill were enormous. Therefore the House would do well to pause before assenting to the second reading of the Bill, which, in his opinion, if brought into practical operation, instead of decreasing, would increase the opportunities for levying black-mail.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE Mr. C. T. D. A. LAND said, he could not speak with much authority regarding the Bill; but there were defects in the operative clauses which were apparently of a very serious nature,

and with regard to which, at any rate, the Government were anxious to have some time to answer what course they ought to pursue. In the fourth line of the 2nd clause unclaimed stock, shares, debentures, and deposits, were spoken of; but no reference was made to dividends. A man might have a right to dividends, and he did not see how they could include the four classes of property enumerated in the Bill, and omit all reference to dividends. Then, again, there was the objection which had been referred to, that it was provided that the register was to be open to the inspection of all persons, and that that inspection was not to be limited to persons interested in any way. That seemed to him to present a very serious objection; because this unlimited opening of the registers would open the door to every sort of adventurers, who might desire to use the information for ulterior objects of their own. However, he felt he could not speak with sufficient authority on the subject to assume the responsibility, on behalf of the Government, of resisting the Bill. If, however, the second reading was agreed to, he must ask that any further proceedings might be deferred until such time as the Government could consider what course they would take.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he thought there was much force in what had fallen from the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) in considering that the Bill was open to considerable objection, and that the very objects the hon. Member had in view would be imperilled if it passed; whilst it would inflict a hardship on Companies, in rendering them liable to heavy penalties without notice. The Bill gave persons who had no connection whatever with a Company the right of inspection of the proposed register at a nominal fee, which he thought was too low. Again, the penalty of £2 a-day was very high. If the Directors of a Company were unaware of this Bill, and omitted to keep such a separate register, the Company would find itself liable to a very heavy fine for an offence of which it was quite unconscious. He did not like to do anything that would seem ungracious in the matter, and if it were the feeling of the House to pass the second reading he would not object; but he hoped if the second reading was

passed that ample time would be given to consider the Bill further, and that he should receive some assurance from the hon. Member that he would reconsider those points in Committee.

MR. H. W. WEST said, he was of opinion that the Bill should not be allowed to pass a second reading, and regretted that none of the Law Officers of the Government were present to give their views regarding it. If carried into law, its provisions would lead to a set of adventurers going the round, and finding out the names in which unclaimed dividends or stocks stood, and the number of advertisements for claimants would be increased rather than diminished.

MR. CROMPTON, in supporting the second reading, said, reference had been made to the hardship of Companies having to keep these registers declaring the property which was in their hands and which did not belong to them; but it was a much greater hardship that the persons entitled to such property should be without the means of discovering it. Not only that, but if it would be a very arduous task for Companies to keep a register of such shares—they must have a large amount of property in their hands without an owner. There ought to be some way by which these Companies should be bound to make public the amount of property they had in their hands, and the owners of which could not be found; and the Bill dealt, to a certain extent, with that great difficulty. He should like to see the Bill go a great deal further. It seemed to him that if a Railway Company was not able to find out to whom dividends should be paid that ought to be published yearly in the accounts of the Railway Company. If the Bill was read a second time, he would, in Committee, introduce a clause providing that wherever the person to whom dividends were due could not be found there should be a year-by-year register, in which these unclaimed dividends should appear. All reason was in favour of some such scheme as that, though there might be some alterations in Committee. He was obliged to his hon. Friend who had introduced the Bill for having brought forward a great public grievance. He hoped the House would accept it; in his idea it had only one defect, that it did not go far enough.

Mr. C. T. D. Acland

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 107; Noes 88: Majority 19.—Div. List, No. 15.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for Tuesday next.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT 1872
AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 109.]

(Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. T. P. O'Connor.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to protect the lives of workmen in coal mines, and also to enable them to guard their own interests by having officials who should be independent altogether of the control of the mine-owner. The first proposal in the Bill had reference to the check-weigher, and provided that in future the check-weigher should be appointed by a majority of the workmen, and should really be the independent representative of the workmen. In the 18th section of the Act it was provided that the person appointed as check-weigher must be in the employment of the owner of the mine. What was wanted by this Bill was that the check-weigher should be altogether independent of the influence which the mine-owner would bring to bear on a person in such a position. He proposed that the appointment by the men should be only after a meeting, duly convened after the usual notice had been exhibited at the place where such notices were generally placed. In certain cases, he was given to understand, it would be inconvenient to have such a regulation, as most of the meetings were convened by word of mouth; but, in regard to a small matter of that kind, he should be glad to accept any modification that might appear good to the House. Next, he wished to secure that the mines should be inspected monthly. At present the inspection of mines was certainly not what it ought to be; for they were practically seldom inspected until after some terrible accident had occurred. The Inspectors had the right to carry on such a system of inspection as should secure reasonable precautions against accidents and loss of life; but, as a matter of fact, the inspection of mines was not, as he had said, by any means what

it should be; and everyone concerned with mining must feel that some such provision was necessary in order to meet the reasonable expectations of the men. The proposal in the Bill was not precisely that made by the miners themselves. As he was aware, the Miners' Conference in Birmingham, assembled in Council on January last, recommended that the inspection should be made every three months. Of course, it was very plain that if they insisted on the inspection of every mine in the country every month they would have materially to increase the staff of Inspectors, which would involve a considerable expense. The question of expense, however, ought to be no bar to a salutary change; and it might be easy to devise an arrangement, according to which only those mines specially reported to require frequent inspection would be inspected once a month. Many experienced miners said that there ought to be no practical difficulty in the inspection of each mine once a month; and the only difficulty, therefore, appeared to be that of expense in the appointment of additional Inspectors; and as to that, it would be better to expend a large amount in order to prevent calamities such as occurred from time to time, involving what was considered to be a preventible loss of life. Then he wished to secure the assent of the House to a modification of the Act of 1872, with regard to what was known as dangerous working places—*as, for instance, a place where there was likely to be an interruption of ventilation and an accumulation of gas through a fall of the roof.* By the Act it was provided that in places where there was dangerous accumulation of gas no lamp or light should be used other than a locked safety lamp. He wished to provide that in what was known as fiery mines no light other than the locked safety lamp should be used in any working where it might appear that a temporary derangement of the means of ventilation might occur, and that such working should be deemed a dangerous working place. The next proposal was that the men should not be treated in a way that at present smacked very much of the old tally system. In many mines in the far north there was an established practice, on the part of employers, of keeping in their own hands a sum equal to a miner's week's wages, which

the men called "lying" money; and if the men needed money they were obliged to ask for advances, which were made at a considerable interest. The men were bled in a very unfair manner by the making of these so-called advances while money was owing to them; and the Bill proposed to put a stop to the withholding of the wages that were due, and that where advances were made no money should be charged for such advances. By the next clause he proposed that the Weights and Measures Act of 1878 should apply to all mines, and to repeal the Saving Clause, which had hitherto permitted the use of "the measures and gauges ordinarily used in such mines." This was necessary to assure the men from many a loss, which at present they had to complain of, by reason of the irregularity of the standard of measurement. The last clause in the Bill was that which proposed that firemen should be examined and certificated by Inspectors. The duties of firemen in regard to the lives of hundreds of thousands of men employed in mines could hardly be overestimated in respect of their responsibility, or the immense danger that might occur by their negligence or want of qualification; and, therefore, he proposed that every fireman should be recognized as qualified, and be certificated by an Inspector. This might not be a comprehensive measure, but it dealt with points on which legislation was urgently needed, and he hoped it would receive the assent of the House. He moved the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

MR. TOMLINSON, in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, he did not deny that there were matters in the Bill with which it was desirable Parliament should deal, and that there were matters in the Act which eminently called for modification. He doubted, however, whether the hon. Member (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*) was sufficiently versed in the subject; and it was hardly possible, he thought, for one Member to combine in himself the qualifications necessary for dealing with every subject; but, above and beyond that, there was now before the House a Bill by the late Home Secretary (*Sir R.*

Assheton Cross), who was peculiarly able to deal with this subject, which, if it did not contain all the matters which the Bill of the hon. Member did, could easily be amended in that direction, if it was thought desirable. His great objection to the Bill was as to the manner in which it was framed. It professed to be a Bill amending the *Mines Regulation Act*. It dealt with several subjects that formed the subject-matter of that Act; but it did not deal with them by way of specific Amendments, and laid down new regulations without explaining how far they were intended to amend the present Act, or how far they were to be new provisions in addition to them. The force of that observation would appear on a consideration of Clause 2, dealing with the appointment of check-weighers. He was not prepared to say that they could possibly leave the matter as it stood now; but that was a subject which was dealt with in the Bill of the late Home Secretary. The hon. Member proposed that the check-weighers should be appointed by a majority of all the workmen; but there were at every mine a number of men who were not paid according to the output, and under the Bill these men might attend the meetings and vote, although they were not in any way affected by the check-weigher's duties. He was certain a clause of this kind would give rise to all sorts of difficulties. He suggested that any such provision should be by way of amendment of the Act, as was proposed in the Bill of his right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary. His next objection to the Bill was to the proposal to examine the mines at least once a month. He could hardly imagine anything more fatal to a proper inspection of mines than a rigid rule of that kind. Such a proposal was not the way to secure satisfactory inspection; and he thought hon. Members who represented the miners were perfectly conscious of that. It was not at all true that Inspectors only inspected mines after accidents had taken place. What he would suggest was this—that if an Inspector was worth anything he ought to know what mines required to be watched with strictness and what mines could be dealt with more leniently. He believed the proposed periodical inspection would do more harm than good, because it must necessarily diminish the responsi-

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bility of mining managers; and as to the practice of holding wages back during what the hon. Member called "lying time," it certainly did not exist in Lancashire. The proper mode of securing efficient inspection was to secure thoroughly competent Inspectors, who should be left to carry out the inspection, subject to proper rules framed at the Home Office. He did not think it was necessary to deal with the question of ventilation, because the matter was already adequately safeguarded; and the point intended to be guarded against by this Bill was really provided for by the Act. He also objected to the provision that no firemen should be appointed without a certificate of qualification. The last clause of the Bill showed that its author was not familiar with the subject. He doubted the value of the extension of the system of certificates to persons holding minor offices. He asked the House to reject the Bill, on the ground that it was not a carefully-framed measure calculated to carry out the objects aimed at.

COLONEL BLUNDELL, in seconding the Motion for the rejection of the Bill, said, the object in view was safety; but he believed the measure would have an exactly opposite effect, because it substituted for the responsibility of the manager, who was resident on the spot and was constantly there, the responsibility of the Inspector making a fitful inspection once a month. He thought, however, the number of Inspectors ought to be increased, because many of them had districts which were too large. The coal mines of this country were a terminable annuity, and an annuity which was terminating at an ever-increasing rate; and it was very important that the Inspectors should have a complete knowledge of their districts, so that they might know what coal was wasted, and thereby lost to the nation. Therefore, he thought there should be an inspection of all mines once a year; but the proposal to have them inspected once a month would make mining in this country perfectly unsafe. He hoped when the Mining Commission reported working with naked lights would not be allowed in any mine of a kind that could be regarded as fiery. The proposal that firemen should pass an examination was unnecessary—that should lie with the manager. He considered that the Bill

ought not to be passed, because such clauses as were beneficial were contained in the measure which was going to be brought forward by the late Home Secretary, and what remained ought not to be touched till the Royal Commission upon Mines had made its Report.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—*Mr. Tomlinson*.

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. J. WILSON (*Houghton-le-Spring*) said, that as one of the Members representing the opposite side to the hon. Member who had moved the rejection of the measure he thought he might say a few words, and add something, not, perhaps, of so eloquent a nature as those who had preceded him, but of a practical nature at least to the discussion. He belonged to a class (the miners) which had received very large benefits from the Mines Regulation Act of 1872. They recognized the worth of that Act, and had felt its benefits. Still, at the same time, being acquainted with its working, they were able from their position to realize the defects in it. The necessity for the amendment of that Act was, he thought, very apparent. They considered that the number of accidents still taking place in their mines—accidents not arising so much from explosions, but arising from the every-day occurrences due to unskillful and neglectful operations—was too large. The hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) had given a number of statistics of the accidents which had taken place in their mines for 10 years ending 1884; and he found from that Return that the total number of men who had been killed by these accidents was no less than 11,165. The percentage was as follows:—41 per cent of these deaths resulted from falls—every-day occurrences; 23 per cent were caused by explosions; and 36 per cent were miscellaneous accidents. He thought that was an appalling fact taking place in their midst, and one sufficient of itself to induce hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House to devote their minds to the amendment of this Act in order to secure the safer working of the mines. He was very much obliged, as a miner, to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Donegal (Mr.

Arthur O'Connor) who had introduced this Bill. He was only sorry that his learning and aptitude to take hold of the general working of the Mines Regulation Act was not backed by the advantage—which, he admitted, might have been somewhat hardly acquired—of having worked for two or three years in a mine himself, in order that he might have been better acquainted with the technicalities of the subject. But he felt sure of this—that the miners of the country and their cause, through his advocacy and the advocacy of all those who had taken up the subject, would be far better known and appreciated than they had been, and that they would not be looked upon as a sort of “bugbear,” as they now sometimes were by men who were ignorant of them. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would forgive him, however, if he ventured to point out one or two facts in order to show that the Bill did not go as far as the miners would like it to go. He was at one with him in the distance which the Bill went in relation of check-weighmen. What it sought to give them was perfectly just. All they asked was that the man who weighed the materials the production of which formed the miners’ living should be their servant; that they should have the providing of him and the judging of him. As it was at present, this man must be amenable to the firm, and might be discharged, as men had over and over again been discharged, for very frivolous causes. He ventured to think that if the hon. Gentleman who moved the rejection of the Bill (Mr. Tomlinson) were to become a member of the Union of which he was a member, and would take part in that Union, and give them the benefit of his learning, he would find he was quite outside with regard to the way and the manner in which he looked at this point.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, that he did not object to the principle of that portion of the Bill. He only maintained that the form in which it was dealt with in the Bill of the late Home Secretary was better, and that that form had better be adhered to.

Mr. J. WILSON said, he had not the slightest doubt that if a man took a child under his care he would consider that that child was the best. He had no hesitation in saying that he thought the proposal before them was the better of

the two. But the Bill did not go far enough in that direction. He held that a law which governed a man in his work ought not, legally, at any rate, to govern him when away from that work. The House would scarcely credit it that in this country, which was noted for law and justice, a check-weighman had been turned away from his work, and the miners deprived of the services of a man whom they trusted, simply because he went where he had no right to go—namely, into the manager’s garden, and took away two apples. He was not at one with the hon. Member in his proposal for the inspection of mines once a month. He had worked in the pits. The last work he did in the pit was as a pit Inspector, and he could assure the House that it took a week to carefully examine that mine as it should be done. Therefore, he thought that a period of a month was rather too short a lapse of time between one inspection and another. But he agreed with the general principle of the proposal. He should wish now to add a few items which he would like to see incorporated into any measure that was brought forward. He would like the Bill to prohibit entirely the employment of all women either in or about mines. He had no doubt that civilized and sensitive ears—those of men touched with humanity, who were not acquainted with the working of mines—would be astounded when he said that there was in one county alone—that of Lancashire—working about the mines, doing work fit only for the muscular and strong hands of men, no less than 1,172 women. He believed that it was a woman’s place to do much more delicate work than that. As a workman speaking on behalf of workmen, he said that no Act would be complete which did not prohibit entirely the employment of female labour in this obnoxious work. The charge of taxing the earnings of the men he was glad to say did not apply to Durham and Northumberland. He thought it only fair to say that he did not know a single instance of this kind happening in those parts; but if it were done he thought that any Bill which was passed should prohibit the practice, especially remembering that the owner usually had a week’s money lying on his hands. Another thing which was important was this. They wanted in any new Mines Act that might

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be passed the appointment of a Minister of Mines. If he was not detaining the House with his maiden speech—as he was passing through the baptism of oratory which all of them would have to in this new Parliament—he would like to say this, that the mines of this country were becoming very gigantic enterprises; and with all deference to Home Secretaries, past, present, or future, he held that the man who had the charge and inspection of mines should be one who did not need instruction from miners, but who was technically instructed himself. With regard to providing further against the risks peculiar to mining operations, he believed that there were mines in the country where it was not safe to use gunpowder. There had been cases where explosions had been traced clearly to the shot fired; and he, therefore, thought the time had arrived when the science of the country should be devoted perhaps a little less to the arts of warfare, and more to the peaceful application of its resources to the safety of life, and to providing some means whereby the production of the coal which was so necessary to life should be as safe as possible. If the second reading of the Bill was passed, he had no doubt that in Committee the amendments he had suggested would be incorporated; and if the Government took upon themselves to bring in a measure, he hoped they would see that the propositions brought forward by the miners were reasonable, and such as ought to be accepted.

Mr. SETON-KARR said, he had not had the advantage of working in a mine, like the hon. Member Mr. J. Wilson, nor did he claim to have an intimate knowledge of this subject; but his constituency contained a good number of colliers, and having taken the trouble to ascertain their views, he had come to the conclusion that they had many solid grievances which ought to be redressed, and which the Bill would do something to remedy. With regard to check-weighers, miners undoubtedly suffered a great deal, and he agreed with the effort being made to introduce fresh arrangements in regard to them. As to the other clauses of the Bill, the hon. Member who introduced the measure (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had himself admitted that they were somewhat crude, and did not meet the necessities of the case. Monthly inspection would cause

considerable expense, and therefore he suggested that the inspection should be quarterly, except in the case of dangerous mines. He agreed with the hon. Member for Durham (Mr. J. Wilson) as to the inadvisability of employing women at all in mines. There was one point which had been entirely omitted in the discussion which was of serious interest to the miners, and that was that the relatives and those connected with the colliers killed in accidents in the mines should be allowed to appear before the Coroner and make statements, in order that the proper verdicts might be arrived at. He conceived it was quite open to hon. Members of the House to support the principle of the Bill, even while they wished to introduce Amendments; and it was in that spirit that he desired to support the second reading. He trusted the hon. Member for Durham (Mr. J. Wilson) and the other hon. Members who represented mining constituencies, would believe that there were many of the occupants of the Opposition Benches who were as desirous as any of advocating the claims of men who were following such a dangerous and hazardous occupation as that of a coal miner.

Mr. PICKARD said, as far as he understood the Bill, it commanded his approval and support. In the past there had been much difficulty in appointing and keeping check-weighers, who were frequently removed from their posts through endeavouring to do their duty by the men. For most trivial causes they had been taken before magistrates and dealt with summarily. Some owners gave perfect liberty of meeting to their colliers; others did all they could to prevent meetings. In one case it was desired to call a meeting at the pit's mouth—a practice to which many proprietors and managers did not object, but which others did all they could to prevent. The check-weigher, not being at liberty to call the men together verbally, stuck one notice on his back and another on his breast, stating that the meeting was to be held. This was considered an instance in which the weighman had "otherwise misconducted himself," and he had to leave and seek work elsewhere. What the men wanted was to be in a position to get the men they wanted to do their work as check-weighers at the pit bank, so that the manager might not have the power to

prevent them selecting whom they liked for the pit bank, whether they were *employés* of the said colliery or not. A case was tried at Chesterfield in which the men contended for this right. The question was fully raised, but the result was that the men lost the day. The miners wanted to be represented by a man who would see that justice was done to all concerned by looking after the weight, and preventing undue deductions from the men's wages. The deductions which the masters' weighers might make from the totals of the men's gettings were a very serious matter, and there were collieries in which the deductions had amounted to 7,000 tons a-year. In some cases the men had very little power indeed to protect themselves against wrongful deductions. Then, in regard to inspection, he was one of those who thought there ought to be more inspection than they had at the present time; but there could not be more with the present number of Inspectors. In Yorkshire there were only three Inspectors for 422 mines, and it was impossible for them to properly visit these mines if they were ceaselessly occupied night and day, and had clerical duties to perform and inquiries to attend; but he was glad to be able to add that the work that was done was very well done, and there was nothing to complain of. But there ought to be more Inspectors, and they ought to be able to pay surprise visits, without sending notice to managers or anyone else. He did not believe that inspection could be worth much when it was known when it was to take place, and at stated times. The inspections should take place without either the owners or the managers of mines knowing when they were about to be held. The instructions that were issued by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), when he was at the Home Office in 1872, had produced the best results. The clause of this Bill relating to dangerous places was, he believed, unnecessary, because the case was provided for by the Act of 1872. The system of withholding wages and lending money on interest did not prevail in Yorkshire, and he should have liked to have heard where it was done. He approved of the Weights and Measures Clause. The utmost difficulty was found in getting Inspectors of Weights and Measures to go

Mr. Pickard

to collieries to inspect the machines and test them. At present, most of the Inspectors of Weights and Measures stated that they had no power to go to the machines on the pit banks and examine and test them under the Act of 1872; but this was a mistake—that Act did give them power in that necessary direction. He knew from correspondence with the Board of Trade that the Inspectors of Weights and Measures had such powers under the Act of 1872. There were, however, only a few mine owners who willingly submitted their weighing machinery to inspection; and he thought he might mention in that hall—he begged pardon, in that Assembly—the name of Mr. Superintendent Hall, of Wakefield, who did his duty without being asked or compelled to do so. It often happened when gas abounded in mines that it was not reported, and when explosions took place the hidden dangers from the gaseous mines were never brought to light. There were certain mines which were well known to be dangerous mines, where one would not be allowed to carry a small naked light. He considered that in all mines there should be employed day by day duly qualified and competent overmen and firemen to examine them; and the overman or fireman, whether of a mine, or of a given district in a mine, should be a man competent to write out his own report and sign it, and so be responsible to the manager of the mine for it. The miners also wanted a change in the certificated manager, so that he might be free of some agent placed above him—some controlling power who required the manager to manage the mine in accordance with his wishes and instructions. The certificated manager of a mine ought to be made responsible for what was carried out in it. Then the under manager should have a second class certificate, and be held responsible for what took place under his direction; but the second class certificated manager not to be considered the certified manager of the mine. In some mines it was usual to use extreme caution, especially in regard to small lights, which were not allowed unprotected in those mines; yet it was very curious that while those naked lights were not permitted in such mines, shots were often fired which caused a flame of 30 yards in length. They required blasting in all such mines

prohibited, and if anyone violated the Act of Parliament a common informer should be allowed to take up the case, as under the present Act the workmen could not initiate any prosecution, whilst the colliery owner and manager could do so without the sanction or intervention of the Home Secretary. The mine owner could proceed against any miner whom he liked, and the miners ought to be put upon the same footing as their employers in this respect. Again, the miners wanted power to enter the Coroner's Court, and not be subject to the permission of the Coroner. The Coroner very often insulted the miners when they attended their Courts. Their duty was to attend the Coroners' Courts, and so help, in giving evidence, to bring about a knowledge of the true cause of death, which was a public duty. In conclusion, he would say that he agreed with many portions of the Bill now under discussion, but it did not go far enough in the directions he had indicated. He trusted that the Government would take up the whole question, with the intention of dealing with it at as early a day as possible. That being so, he hoped that there would be no division on the Bill, and that the hon. Member (Mr. Tomlinson) would not persist with his Amendment.

SIR R. ANSHETON CROSS said, he had introduced a Bill of his own relating to the same subject, but he did not look with the smallest jealousy on the Bill now under consideration. On the contrary, he looked upon the hon. Member Mr. Arthur O'Connor who brought it forward as a fellow-worker in the same cause, and he should be glad to co-operate with him in order to secure the safety of those who were engaged in this dangerous occupation in the working of the mines. They had heard two speeches from hon. Gentlemen who had been engaged in mines, and with whom he sympathized very much. In regard to the use of blasting powder, especially in dangerous mines, that was a question which interested him extremely when he was at the Home Office, and he made a great many inquiries about it. But he found at that time that the opinion of the Inspectors and of the men themselves was very much divided on the point. In consequence of that division of opinion, he had applied to the Royal Society for the opinion of

scientific experts, and a Commission appointed by it had been considering the subject for the last six or seven years. They promised him before he left Office that the Report should be shortly placed in his hands; and he engaged when he had an opportunity of studying it to carry out its object as soon as possible. The matter had now passed into other hands; but when the Report was presented, on that point and also as regarded an improved mode of lighting mines, he promised the Government his hearty support of any measure framed in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission. He hoped there would not be any measure of a drastic kind until the Report was presented, which might be this week or next. The Government might say if they were going to introduce a Bill that the other Bills ought to be withdrawn. He was of a different opinion. When the Government Bill was introduced there might be a good deal of discussion upon it, and when there was a question with which they could deal shortly and simply it would be very dangerous to put off a settlement. The inconvenience of having a great many Bills on the same subject during the same Session was as nothing compared with the loss which might follow if the chance of settling some important point was missed. He sympathized with all that had been said about check-work, and he also had some provision in his Bill for dealing with the matter. He entirely agreed with those who held that inspection ought to be frequent, and that the Inspector ought to come without notice, so that the owner should not be able to make any alteration in consequence of expecting the Inspector's immediate arrival. But he did not think there should be a monthly inspection. The country would not consent to have such an army of Inspectors as would then be required, and the work would not be done so effectually. Only a month before he left Office he tried to induce the Inspectors to have more inspections. He knew the miners were very anxious that the managers should have certificates, and that was a point well worthy of discussion in Committee. He should be very glad to see precautions taken to secure the services of proper and efficient men to carry out the important duties of firemen. He hoped the Government would allow this Bill

to be read a second time. [Mr. BROADHURST dissented.] What the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) meant by that shake of the head, he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) did not know; but for his own part he should certainly vote for the second reading; and he hoped the Government would do so also, for they could have no reason to oppose it, unless they had a Bill of their own of a larger scope, and, if so, he hoped the House would hear of it this afternoon. Besides, all knew how crowded the Order Book became later in the Session, and they ought to take advantage of the present time, and not lose this bird which they had in their hands for two in the bush. He hoped he would not be out of Order in suggesting that they should read this Bill a second time before a quarter to 6, when discussion must cease, and then allow his own Bill (the Coal Mines Bill), which stood on the Orders, and which also dealt with another branch of the subject, and one which he considered very important, to be read a second time.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE said, he thought it was unfortunate that the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had not made the Bill apply to metallic mines as well as coal mines; but he (Sir Joseph Pease) had no doubt it was competent so to amend the Bill in Committee that that omission would be remedied. He sometimes thought that people did not sufficiently reflect what the figures with respect to accidents in mines meant. The Bill was intended to help that which many of them interested in mines were very anxious to secure—the protection of the miners in the pursuance of an arduous and almost necessarily dangerous calling. The hon. Member for Durham (Mr. J. Wilson) had referred to a number of fatal accidents in coal mines. It was his (Sir Joseph Pease's) lot once to be present at one of those colliery accidents, and any sight more appalling it was impossible to conceive. When you stood at the pit's top and saw body after body handed over to the poor mourners, and witnessed the wounded handed over to the doctors, it was one of the most distressing scenes that could possibly be imagined. Those were the accidents which it was their duty most carefully to guard against. The Bill before the

Sir R. Assheton Cross

House went some way in that direction, and it was the duty of the House to help forward that object in every way. As regarded the check-weighmen, he thought the House would certainly sympathize with the desire of the miners that the check-weighers should be absolutely their servants. It was not the miners' interest to have a bad check-weighman. Their interest was to choose an honest man. He had some experience in these matters, and he must say that the instances in which complaints had been made against check-weighmen were very rare. He maintained that it was the duty of the miners to choose for that office the most honest man they could find; and if it happened afterwards that he did not give satisfaction, they ought to be able to remove him and put another man in his place who would do his duty honestly. If the hon. Member who brought in the Bill had a little more practical knowledge of the subject he would not have suggested once-a-month inspection. A great deal had been said about inspection; but he thought it would be a mistake to relieve the mine owners themselves of all responsibility in this matter. While there should be full inspection and every effort made to insure the safety of the miners, he held that nothing could be more dangerous than to leave everything to the Inspector. There were many hundreds—he might say thousands—of men who were able to be their own Inspectors; but in saying that he did not mean that they should do away with the Government inspection, which was, of course, a very good thing, and he (Sir Joseph Pease) was in favour of it provided it did not go too far and relieve the miners of all responsibility. As an illustration of how the miners might be relied on to exercise their own judgment with regard to the safety of the mine in which they might happen to be employed, the hon. Baronet cited the case of a number of miners declining to go down into a pit on the ground of its dangerous condition. On that occasion the men were proved to be perfectly right. It was that sense of responsibility that he wished to retain. With respect to payment of wages, he considered that, as a matter of fact, all wages were due at the end of the day on which the labour was done, and any other system of payment was a matter

of mutual arrangement. Then, as to Coroners' Courts, he strongly urged that the representative of the deceased miners should be allowed to be present at the inquiry. Evidence of a very important character affecting the lives and limbs of the miners was often elicited at these inquiries. As regards the Report of the Royal Commission to which the late Home Secretary Sir R. Asheton Cross had referred, he (Sir Joseph Pease) trusted that they would not have to wait for the Government measure, which might not be produced for years. The best thing for the House to do would, in his opinion, be to accept the present Bill, and remedy in Committee any imperfections that might now disfigure it.

MR. FENWICK said, he was glad to see, on both sides of the House, such a desire to amend the Mines Regulations Act of 1872. For his own part, he might be allowed to express his personal thanks to those hon. Members present who had taken part in the passing of the Act of 1872; and he would beg also to express his thanks for the class to whom he had the honour to belong—namely, the mining class of the community—especially for two very important provisions that were inserted in that measure. The first provision was that referring to the age at which children were permitted to be employed in mines. For his own part, he began to work in the mine at the age of nine years, and only left it when it was the will of the constituency that he should be returned as their Representative at St. Stephen's. The other provision to which he alluded was that which gave to the miners the power to examine and inspect the mines for themselves, so that they might be assured, as far as it was possible to be assured, that due regard was had to the safety of life and limb by the management. However, as time rolled on, it was found that the Act, though excellent in many points, was yet defective in others, and he was glad to think that even the late Home Secretary Sir R. Asheton Cross had acknowledged that the Act contained many anomalies which he was endeavouring to remove by a Bill of his own. The object which he Mr. Fenwick had in view in rising was—seeing that there was a generally expressed desire to amend the Act of 1872—to urge that the Government should

give the House some information as to their views, and the attitude they intended to assume, not only towards the measure now before the House, but in regard to the Bill of the late Home Secretary. That right hon. Gentleman now admitted that it would be a wise thing if the Government would give the House the assurance that the Act of 1872 should now be amended. What he (Mr. Fenwick) wanted to know was, whether or not the Government were prepared to take the two Bills as the basis of a comprehensive measure? He was confident, if the matter could be fairly and properly talked over, the Government might produce a measure that would satisfy both sides of the House, and give general satisfaction to the mining community.

SIR HUSSEY VIVIAN said, he was not one to talk out the Bill, for he entirely approved of it as a whole, and the sooner the existing defects were remedied the better. He thought it would be impossible to inspect mines monthly, as it would require quite an army of Inspectors to perform the duty. He considered that it was out of the question to lay down a hard-and-fast line that an inspection should take place once a month. Then, the use of powder was an extremely difficult question, on which there were many opinions, and the working miners themselves were as much at variance in their opinions on this question as other people. He referred, in proof of his assertion, to a deputation of miners from his own county, the members of which were opposed to the abolition of the use of powder, and he argued from this that a good deal of information was required to be collected upon this point before any satisfactory legislation thereon could take place. He hoped that the Report of the Royal Commission, when it came to be issued, would give some information on this subject which would be of a valuable character. As to the question of certifying firemen, he looked upon it as much more important that firemen should be practical men rather than scientific men; but this was a point which he thought might be dealt with without any great difficulty. As to the employment of women in mines, he entirely concurred with the principle of the provision for their non-employment. He believed he was correct in saying that in Wales

women were not employed in mines at all—at least, if there were any, he had never seen them; and he thoroughly agreed that they ought not to be so employed. From long experience in the House, he advised that a second reading of the measure should be taken, no matter what the promises of the Government might be. He had known many good measures lost through their being postponed with the view of the Government taking the question up and legislating upon the matter in a fuller and more satisfactory manner than could be done in a private Member's Bill. The intentions of the Government, no doubt, were very good; but when the pressure of Business came upon them, and time was growing short, the promised measure was too often abandoned of necessity, and a remedial measure, which, though perhaps not perfect, would have been very useful, was lost. He did not wish to see such a result here, and he, therefore, hoped the Government would accede to a second reading.

MR. BURT said, the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had raised a very useful discussion on this Bill, and he was glad that he had introduced it. He (Mr. Burt) said that, however, rather because he thought it indicated that they might expect the hon. Member's support in any measure affecting the interest of the working miners than because he regarded this as an adequate or satisfactory measure. The Bill itself, he (Mr. Burt) could not vote for as indicating anything like a settlement of the mining question. It simply touched the rim of a very large, wide, and complex subject. It was very well known that the late Government intended to deal with the general subject of inspection of mines, and he had no doubt that his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) would be able to say whether the present Government intended to introduce a measure with the same object. He had had a Question which he was going to put to the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers); but he had seen the right hon. Gentleman privately with regard to what the Government meant to do. A Royal Commission, of which he (Mr. Burt) had the honour to be a Member, had been sitting for a very considerable

time. He was sorry that they had not up to the present been able to report; but the Commission had inquired more steadily and completely into all questions relating to mining than these had ever before been inquired into, and the Commission would report in a very short time. In fact, it was no secret that a considerable portion of the Report was already in print. He trusted, therefore, that the Government would take this opportunity of stating what they meant to do on the subject; and if they were prepared to deal with it in a thorough way, and in a way which only a Government could deal with a large public measure of this kind, he would advise his hon. Friend (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) to be satisfied with the discussion he had raised, and to take the opportunity of introducing any Amendments that might be wished into the Bill of the Government. He entirely approved of the clause in the Bill before them relating to check-weighmen. The only objection the working miners had to the present Act was that they were not allowed absolute liberty of choice. Their choice was limited to men in the employ of the same firm. The miners objected to that restriction, and wanted to have absolute liberty to select any person whatever to fill the position of check-weighman. He would not detain the House any further, as he was anxious to hear the views of the Government.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. BROADHURST) said, the only reason why the Government had not expressed their views on this question at an earlier stage of the proceedings was their desire to hear a very full expression of opinion upon the subject by those hon. Members who were most capable of giving an opinion, and were mostly interested in this class of legislation. With respect to the Bill of the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), he need not assure him, nor need he assure the House, of the deep and earnest sympathy which the Government felt for the working miners of Great Britain. At the same time, there were parts of the Bill which did not appear to commend themselves without reserve to the Government. With regard to the clause which had reference to the Weights and Measures Act applying to the machinery used in the

Sir Hussey Vivian

weighing of coal, he believed he was speaking correctly when he said there was no necessity whatever for the extension of this clause; that the present law already applied to all weights and measures, whether in mines or in factories, that had to do with the decision of the amount of wages for any particular labour performed either by workmen or work-women. Then, with regard to the fixed periods of visits for Mine Inspectors, he thought his hon. Friend (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had probably not been a workman in the sense in which his hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Fenwick) and he himself had been a workman for the greater part of his life. What workmen always viewed with the greatest amount of pleasure was the visits of the manager or foreman who would keep regularity, because when they got rid of him they knew they were perfectly free to indulge relaxation until the recurrence of the next visit. Gentlemen who were the most objectionable were the foremen or managers of irregular habits, one upon whose visits they could never depend for a moment, and the consequence was they were in a constant state of labour and uncertainty.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he did not propose by his Bill that the visits of the Inspector should be at fixed times, or that notice should be sent to the mine owners.

Mr. BROADHURST said, he noticed that; but he thought that was an instruction always given to Inspectors without any express instruction in an Act of Parliament. Indeed, a man who would want information of the necessity of not announcing his visit would be a man absolutely unfit for the discharge of such important duties. With regard to the question of check-weighmen, he thought he was speaking the mind of the Government when he said that the Government quite saw the necessity of some relaxation in regard to this subject. The check-weighman was a person as clearly in the employment of the miners themselves as the miners were clearly in the employment of the mine owner; and, therefore, working miners should have considerable liberty in the field for selecting this very important person. In respect of the question of the policy of the Government in regard to the Bill under discussion, he had to say that the Government viewed with

considerable favour the wise attempts to amend the Mines Regulation Act in this and some other directions; and he, therefore, wished to assure the hon. Member Mr. Arthur O'Connor that he must not regard them in any way as opponents to his Bill. There was an important feature in the demands of the miners which the hon. Gentleman had altogether overlooked, and that was the question of the presence of the relatives at Coroners' inquests, and the demand of the right and power to put questions as to the cause of death. That was what many of his hon. Friends in mining districts regarded as one of the things that was of the utmost importance.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that his hon. Friend Mr. Arthur O'Connor was quite willing to accept Amendments dealing with these points.

Mr. BROADHURST said, he was not challenging the hon. Member's objection to have it inserted, but was pointing out its great importance. With regard to the Royal Commission, he had the authority of the Government to say that the Report would be issued within a week, and that one of the first works of the Home Office would be to prepare a measure in the light of that Commission, having regard to other demands made from other directions, and, in the meantime, would wish that a Bill of this description, if it should pass its second reading, which they would certainly not oppose this afternoon, that the Committee stage should be placed at such a date that would give them opportunities between now and then of preparing and submitting their proposals to the House. If the hon. Gentleman Mr. Arthur O'Connor would accept that view, he should be very glad indeed, on behalf of the Government, not to proceed further in the debate. He might also state that the Government would take precisely the same course with regard to the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman opposite Sir R. Ashton (Cross).

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the promoters of the Bill were willing to accept the intimation just made, and would postpone the Committee stage of the Bill for a month.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed for Wednesday 31st March*.

COAL MINES BILL.—[BILL 92.]
(*Sir Richard Cross, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Forwood.*)

SECOND READING.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir R. Assheton Cross.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. CHILDERS) said, he would object to the Motion, except on the same terms as the other Bill.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he could not consent to any such terms.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed for Monday next."—(*Sir R. Assheton Cross.*)

MR. CHILDERS, in objecting to the Motion, said, the Committee stage ought to be put off till that day month.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he proposed to put it down for Monday till he knew what the Government meant to do.

MR. CHILDERS said, he had no objection to that; but when it came up on Monday he would move that the Committee stage be put off for a month.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he would object to that unless they could come to some arrangement, and hoped to be able to convince the Government that they had done wrong in putting off the Committee stage on the other Bill for a month.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill committed for Monday next.

MOTIONS.

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Kenrick, Bill to amend an Act of the Session of the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter ninety-one, intituled "An Act to authorise the application of Funds of Municipal Corporations and other governing bodies in certain cases," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Kenrick, Mr. Edward Clarke, Major Dickson, Mr. Picton, and Mr. Woodhead.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 122.]

DROWNED PERSONS (DISCOVERY AND INTERMENT) BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Hughes, Bill to amend the Law in respect to the discovery and inter-

ment of persons drowned, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Hughes, Mr. Boord, Mr. Baggallay, Mr. Norris, and Colonel Duncan.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 123.]

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Moulton, Bill to amend the Laws respecting the Parliamentary Franchise in the United Kingdom, and the conduct of Elections, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Moulton, Mr. A. Acland, and Mr. Dillwyn.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 124.]

COPYRIGHT (WORKS OF FINE ART) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hastings, Bill to amend and consolidate the Law of Copyright in Works of Fine Art and in Photographs, and for repressing the commission of fraud in the production and sale of such works, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hastings, Mr. Gregory, and Mr. Agnew.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 125.]

ACTIONS FOR DEBT (LIMITATION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hobhouse, Bill for further limiting the time for the recovery of simple contract Debts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. A. Acland, Mr. Glyn, and Mr. Lecaita.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 126.]

CONVEYANCING (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1874,

AMENDMENT.

On Motion of Dr. Cameron, Bill to amend "The Conveyancing (Scotland) Act, 1874," ordered to be brought in by Dr. Cameron, Mr. Craig Sellar, Mr. Donald Crawford, and Mr. Lyell.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 127.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 4th March, 1886.

MINUTES.] — SAT FIRST IN PARLIAMENT—
The Earl of Stradbroke, after the death of his father.

PUBLIC BILLS.—First Reading.—Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis) * (27).

Committee.—Report.—Marriages Validity (11).

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

MARRIAGES VALIDITY BILL.—(No. 11.)

(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERBESHELL) said, that a question had been raised as to whether this measure should be made retrospective or not; and a suggestion had been made by a noble Earl for the insertion of a Proviso declaring legitimate the children of a marriage in respect to which any question arose and a second marriage was contracted; and in consequence of that the Committee stage of the Bill had been postponed. He had, however, since made inquiries on the subject, and he found that there was no precedent for introducing such a Proviso. Beyond that, having consulted the right rev. Prelate who had introduced the Bill upon the subject, he had arrived at the conclusion that it was not advisable to create a precedent in the direction suggested, especially as he was informed that there was reason to believe there were no cases in which the legitimacy of such children had been questioned. Therefore, it was not necessary to introduce such a clause as that which had been indicated.

House in Committee.

Bill reported without amendment; and to be read 3^d To-morrow.

CHARITABLE TRUSTS (ALLOTMENTS EXTENSION ACT, 1842.)

MOTION FOR A RETURN.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW moved for—

"A Return of all charitable trusts in England and Wales the trustees of which are trustees within the meaning of the first and fourth clauses of the Allotments Extension Act, 1842."

He did not press the Motion in the exact words in which he had placed it on the Paper, but hoped that the Lord President would be able to grant the substance of his Motion, and add a column to the Return showing the acreage held by these Trustees.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Earl SPENCER) said, that there would be no practical difficulty in granting the Returns asked for, only they would be given in a different form. As to the addition of the acreage, he had not yet been able to communicate with the Charity Commissioners, and he was unwilling to promise such a Return, because it would be difficult and costly to obtain the information. He had inadvertently fallen into an error the other day with reference to the date at which

the Returns would be made. Instead of being made in June, they were not usually made until September. The special Returns moved for by the noble Earl would probably be presented before November.

In reply to Viscount CRANBROOK,

EARL SPENCER said, that the Return moved for would be supplemental to the ordinary Agricultural Returns.

Return of all charities known to the Charity Commissioners, the income of which is shown to be distributable in articles in kind or in money, in the "General Digest of Endowed Charities" laid before Parliament on the motion of Lord Robert Montagu between the years 1865 and 1876, as supplemented by the information subsequently acquired by the Charity Commissioners; and distinguishing those charities the income of which may be otherwise applied in pursuance of schemes established by the Charity Commissioners. Ordered to be laid before the House.—*The Earl of Onslow.*)

SMOKE NUISANCE ABATEMENT METRO- POLIS BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Acts for abating the nuisance arising from the smoke of furnaces and fireplaces within the Metropolis—Was presented by the Lord Stratheden and Campbell read 1st. (No. 27.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 4th March, 1886.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEES—Irish Industries, appointed. River Lea, nominated. SUPPLY—considered in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Vote 1—R.F. PRIVATE BILL—by Order—Second Reading—Dundalk (422). PUBLIC BILLS—Resolution in Committee—Ordered—First Reading—Burial Grounds* (111). Ordered—First Reading—Tithe Rent-Charge Recovery* (112). Bankruptcy (Agricultural Labourers' Wages)* (113). First Reading—Freshwater Fisheries (Eels)* (114). Second Reading—Compensation for Damages (115). Withdrawn—Burial Law Amendment* (45).

QUESTIONS.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS — CHRIST'S HOSPITAL SCHEMES.

MR. W. H. JAMES asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, How many schemes for the government of Christ's Hospital have been under the notice of the Charity Commissioners since the passing of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869; whether the progress of the existing scheme will be in any way suspended by the investigations of the Committee appointed to inquire into the working of the Endowed Schools Act; and, if he can state any approximate time when the scheme is likely to be brought under the notice of Parliament?

MR. HOWARD SPENSLEY also asked the right hon. Gentleman, Whether, considering that schemes for the re-organisation of Christ's Hospital have been under consideration by the Charity Commissioners for more than ten years, he can in any way facilitate a final consideration, to be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR): Sir, two schemes have been framed by the Governors of Christ's Hospital, one in 1870, the other in 1876. In 1880, the Charity Commissioners published their first scheme, which met with great opposition. In 1885, they published a revised scheme, which, after going through the prescribed stages, was signed by them last week, and will reach the Education Department in a few days. If approved, an appeal may be made to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, or a Petition may ask that it should be laid before Parliament. In either case, it would not reach this House till the end of June or the beginning of July. Some schemes now before the Education Department are kept back until the Select Committee have made their inquiry. As I have not yet seen the schemes, I cannot now say whether this course will be followed in regard to it.

MR. BROADHURST, UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

MR. GENT-DAVIS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a letter published in *The Brighton*

Gazette, dated 11th February, to the following effect:—

"To the Editor:

"Sir,—That Henry Broadhurst should now be Under Secretary of State for the Home Department seems almost the irony of fate. About fourteen years ago he was a ringleader in a great strike of the building and other trades, and under the strict surveillance of the police:

"It could hardly be expected that he should give the necessary orders to prevent riot last Monday, but, in default of not getting such order, the police allowed the plunder and riot to go on;"

and, will he ascertain if this be true; and, if not, will he take steps to direct a prosecution for a gross and scandalous libel?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that, if his Question is according to the letter of the Standing Orders, and if it had not been that you, Sir, have allowed it to be put upon the Paper, I would have ventured to have said that it is certainly not in accordance with the spirit of the Rules which govern our proceedings. The hon. Member has taken advantage of an anonymous letter written to a Provincial journal; and, under cover of a professed desire that the editor of a Conservative newspaper, serving the Party to which he himself belongs, should be prosecuted under my directions, he shelters himself behind that anonymous letter to make an attack on my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, which, if the hon. Member had had the courage of his opinions, he would have made directly. The hon. Member knows, or, if he does not, any Member sitting opposite, who has had Parliamentary experience, would tell him, that the Under Secretary of State has nothing to do with, and never gives orders to, the police on those occasions. I hope, therefore, that the House will resent this indirect and un-Parliamentary attack on one of its Members undercover, as I have said, of an anonymous letter, and I decline to take any further notice of the hon. Member's Question.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. BROADHURST): May I crave the indulgence of the House for one or two moments with regard to this Question? I should have been pleased to answer it, if the hon. Gentleman had addressed it to me direct. I now beg

to say that there was no strike in the building trade at the time referred to; but there was a lock-out—that is, a strike by the employers against the workmen. At that time, the workmen asked me to take charge of their case, which I did, and the difference was very speedily settled to the mutual satisfaction and interests of both parties to the dispute. With regard to the innuendo about the police, I can assure the hon. Gentleman that there was nothing at all of the kind. I do not suppose the police knew of the existence of the dispute, or anyone else not directly interested in it, as during the dispute there was no police case, nor any cause for the interference of those charged with the duty of the maintenance of peace and order. That is the last time that I have been personally responsible in any trade dispute between workmen and employers. I should like to add one word more, and that is that the hon. Member will find that the work of advertising obscure country newspapers will not bring him any very desirable Parliamentary distinction.

MR. GENT-DAVIS: Sir, might I, with your permission, resent the insinuation— *Cries of "No!"*

MR. SPEAKER: Sir George Campbell.

SCOTLAND—ERRORS IN STATISTICAL RETURNS—RETURN OF MUNICIPAL BURGH, 1885.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether his attention has been called to the palpably erroneous character of some of the statistical Returns relating to Scotland presented to this House; for instance, to the Return of Scotch Municipal Burghs, No. 260 II. dated November 1885, in which Kirkcaldy is made to have a population of only 13,320 and 4,218 municipal electors, or nearly one elector to every four inhabitants; and Dysart, a population of 10,877, with 484 municipal electors, or one elector to upwards of twenty-two inhabitants; whether the Crown agent is the only person responsible for such Returns; and, if he will take steps to establish an efficient agency to furnish correct Returns for Scotland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR who replied said: The Return in question related to municipal burghs in England, Wales, and Scot-

land—what was asked having been their population and number of inhabited houses according to the Census of 1881, together with the number of persons on the burghs roll, distinguishing men from women. The terms "municipal burghs" and "burghs rolls" are inapplicable to Scotland, and great difficulty was experienced in dealing with that part of the Return which related to population, both for this reason and also because the Census of 1881 does not specify the number of persons entitled to the municipal franchise. After a correspondence between the Home Office and the Crown Agent, it was decided that the number of municipal electors only should be given—these being taken from the population of the Parliamentary burghs, as shown by the Census, so that in cases such as Kirkcaldy and Dysart, where the Parliamentary and municipal boundaries are not identical, the Return cannot be said to be reliable, and the statistics necessary for making it so do not exist. May I be allowed to suggest to my hon. Friend and to other Scotch Members moving for a Return, that it would be convenient before doing so to submit the draft terms of the proposed Returns to some Scotch official, so that it may be adapted to make the Return accurate. Thereby much inconvenience and such anomalies as exist in the present case would be saved. But, under the circumstances, there is certainly no blame attached to the Crown Agent under the late or present Government.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked if the right hon. and learned Gentleman was aware that every almanac and railway guide published in Scotland gave the population of the municipal burghs and the municipal and Parliamentary voters; and, whether, in future, the Municipal Returns were to be prepared in his Office or in that of the Secretary for Scotland?

MR. J. B. BALFOUR, in reply, said, that would be a matter for amicable arrangement. He objected to the quotation of unauthentic and irresponsible railway guides.

POST OFFICE—TELEGRAPH CLERKS—SUNDAY WORK.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If it is a fact that postal telegraph clerks and messengers receive extra pay in London

for work upon Sunday, but that those employed on similar duty in the Provinces receive no such additional payment; and, if the Postmaster General will take steps to remove a distinction which causes dissatisfaction among a deserving body of public servants?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HENRY H. FOWLER): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the arrangements in London differ from those in the country. The question of pay for Sunday work in the Provinces was carefully considered at the date of the reorganization of 1881, and the scale of weekly wages was fixed so as to cover two hours' work on Sundays. Applications have been received by three successive Postmasters General for further pay on Sundays and refused by each. My noble Friend the Postmaster General concurs in the decision arrived at by his Predecessors and feels it his duty to decline to re-open the question. In reply to the further Question of which the hon. Member has given me private Notice, I beg to state that some delay has arisen in the payment of extra duty during the Christmas season, owing to the claims having been incorrectly made out. An inquiry was necessary before they were passed; but every effort was made to avoid unnecessary delay. There has not yet been time to settle the allowances for St. Valentine's Day.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) —THE KINGSTON ESTATES.

MR. LEWIS, who said he was not responsible for the Question, but as it was on the Notice Paper in his name, he had no objection to put it, asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to an article in *The Daily Express* of the 25th February, in which the following passage occurs:—

"When the agent of the Kingston Estate appointed a day to meet them, the tenants, and receive the arrears, the priests incited them to stand and resist to the end. At that time many of the tenants were ready and willing to pay. But they were told not to do so, and so they went away and had an orgy. One man, arrested for drunkenness, had on his person a bank deposit receipt and other valuables to the amount of two hundred and twenty pounds. The rent he was asked to pay amounted to three pounds ten."

whether he has made inquiries as to the

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facts of this case; and, whether the facts were substantially as represented?

MR. O'KELLY: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I should like to ask him, Whether it is not true that all these Kingston estate tenants were refused any reduction at all of their rents; and, whether the priest, so far from advising the people not to pay, used his whole influence to effect a settlement?

MR. LALOR: Might I also ask the right hon. Gentleman who is responsible for this Question?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): As to the last Question, I must reply that I really cannot say. In reply to the hon. Member for Roscommon (MR. O'Kelly), I may say that I think I have heard the statements which he has made, but on other authority. I cannot say of my own knowledge whether they are, or are not, well founded. With reference to the Question on the paper, I have received a Report which shows that, with the exception of the particular amount of rent due by the man arrested—which was £9, and not £3 10s.—the facts are substantially as stated.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)— "BOYCOTTING" AT CLONMEL.

COLONEL WARING asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a shopkeeper and farmer named Edward Tobin, living in the centre of the town of Clonmel, had been boycotted; whether the town band had not annoyed him by halting in front of his premises and playing the "Rogue's March" and other offensive tunes; whether it is intended to indict certain of Tobin's neighbours at the next assizes for picketing his house; whether his securities in a road contract were objected to though of well-known solvency; whether they have since been subjected to obstruction in their lawful business; and, whether Tobin's offence consisted in taking charge of a vacant farm?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): Sir, it appears that Tobin has been "Boycotted" since August 30 last, the cause being that he managed two vacant farms. Two persons were prosecuted under the Conspiracy Act at the last Winter Assizes, for preventing persons from entering his shop. The

Grand Jury ignored the bill against one; the case against the other was adjourned. I am informed that the band ceases to play when passing Tobin's house; and that, though his securities were objected to, they were eventually approved, and the police are not aware that they have since been subjected to material annoyance.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Mr. KENRICK asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will consent to Parliamentary Publications and Papers being supplied to Public Libraries free of charge?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER): The question of supplying Parliamentary publications and papers to public libraries free of charge was very carefully considered by the late Government, and it was decided that it was not advisable to make the grants. In November last, the Comptroller of the Stationery Office was authorized to insert in the new contract for the sale of Government publications, which will come into force on January 1, 1887, a proviso that the contractor shall sell such publications to the accredited agents of free public libraries at the trade prices, a reduction of at least 25 per cent from the published prices. I have some sympathy with the object of the Question, and am now in communication with the Comptroller of the Stationery Office to see whether there are any further advantages that it will be possible to allow to free libraries, and whether certain papers cannot be given gratuitously.

THE EDUCATION ACTS COMMISSION.

Mr. MILVAIN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the operations of the Royal Commission to inquire into the working of the Education Acts extend to Scotland; and, if not, if there is any objection to its operations being so extended?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TAYLOR): who replied said: With regard to this matter, a subject in which the hon. Member for East Kentfrewshire Mr. Finlayson is likewise interested, I understand that it is not proposed to extend the Order of Reference to the Royal Commission to the Scottish Education Acts. The Scotch

Education Department has received no expression of opinion from Scotland which would lead them to think that there is any general wish to that effect.

Sir JAMES FERGUSON, on behalf of the hon. Member for Wigtownshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell), gave Notice that on the Civil Service Estimates he would call attention to this subject, and move a reduction of the Vote.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—KILKENNY COUNTY.

Mr. CHANCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there held the Commission of the Peace for the county Kilkenny, on the 1st March 1883, seventy-seven landlords, ten land agents, six military men, two county and one government officials, and five gentlemen of other occupations; whether he is aware that considerable dissatisfaction exists as to the personnel of the local magistracy; and, whether it is intended to take any steps to end the practical exclusion from the Commission of the Peace of all persons save landlords, land agents, and Government officials?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): Dissatisfaction has, from time to time, been expressed with the personnel of the local magistracy in certain districts. The matter does not rest with the Executive Government; the selection of gentlemen for this office is not, in ordinary cases, made by the Lord Chancellor; the usual course being for the Lieutenant of a County to submit names for the Commission to the Lord Chancellor, who, if he sees no objection, appoints them. But the late Lord Chancellor (Sir Edward Sullivan) undertook to do more, and to inquire into allegations that the Lieutenant of a County had unreasonably declined to recommend a fit and proper person for the office, where the appointment of a magistrate was required. The present Lord Chancellor informs me that he will adopt the same course, and it will thus be open to representative bodies, if they fail to get the Lieutenant of a County to recommend any gentleman for the Commission, whom they desire, for good and sufficient reasons, to be appointed, to bring the case directly before the Lord Chancellor.

Mr. CHANCE: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the first paragraph of my Question.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Well, Sir, if I have not answered it, it is because I have not the information at my disposal.

IRELAND—ILLEGAL USE OF FIRE-ARMS—CASE OF JOSEPH DELANEY, BORRIS, CO. CARLOW.

MR. CHANCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Joseph Delaney, ex-policeman, Civil Bill Officer and Bailiff to Mr. Arthur M'Murragh Kavanagh, on the evening of the 27th November last, fired three revolver shots into the streets of Borris, to the great danger of the passers by; whether the said Joseph Delaney is a person of intemperate habits, and subject to fits of temporary insanity; whether on the 21st January last, an application was made to the magistrates at petty sessions in Borris for the revocation of the arms licence of the said Joseph Delaney, and was refused by the said magistrates; whether steps will be taken to ascertain the fitness of the said Joseph Delaney to have a licence under the Arms Act; and, whether, if evidence of the above facts be laid before the proper official, the matter will be promptly dealt with?

MR. MACARTNEY: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I would ask whether, on the evening in question, stones were not thrown and windows broken in the house where Delaney was?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY): My answer will answer the Question of the hon. Member opposite. It appears that, on the night in question, two of Delaney's windows were broken with stones; and he fired two revolver shots at random from his window, without doing any harm. The police are not aware that Delaney is a man of intemperate habits, though he was some time ago. He is not subject to fits of insanity. He is a Civil Bill officer, ex-policeman, and care-taker of evicted farms. As long as he acts in that capacity he requires fire arms, and the magistrates have declined to revoke his licence. I have, however, information from which I think he requires to be cautioned as to the use of fire arms.

LONDON SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION EXPENSES.

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK asked the Vice President of the Com-

mittee of Council on Education, Whether he will direct the returning officer for the Metropolis to afford an abstract of account explanatory of the details of the expenses of the London School Board Elections in November 1885, to each of the sections to which by him they are apportioned; and, whether he will put a stop to the present system, which results in the ratepayers being kept in compulsory ignorance as to the manner of the expenditure of many thousands of pounds?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (SIR LYON PLAYFAIR): The Education Department has power, under the Act of 1873, to obtain and tax accounts of school boards throughout the country when appeal is made; but that power does not extend to London. The Returning Officer, who is the Recorder of London, has to ascertain and determine the amount to be paid; and is not bound by Statute or by the Order in Council to make returns of the expenses. I have, however, seen Sir Thomas Chambers, the Recorder, who voluntarily offers to send the accounts of the last election to the Education Department, which will send them to the School Board; and, by Section 87 of the Act of 1870, they can be inspected and examined by any ratepayer. In answer to the last part of the Question, I have to say this course will be pursued in future elections by a condition in the Order of Council regulating the election, so that the hon. Member will perceive that the second part of his Question will be attained. Under these circumstances, I hope the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) will delay the Motion for the Return of which he has given Notice.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Certainly.

NEW ZEALAND—THE TREATY OF WAITANGI.

SIR JOHN GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, As to the following passage in a Letter from the Colonial Office, dated 13th August, 1884, addressed to certain Maori chiefs who had presented a Memorial to Her Majesty, complaining of the alleged violations of the Treaty of Waitangi:—

"You will receive a further communication from Her Majesty's Government with regard to your Memorial as soon as the statement from the New Zealand Government has been received and considered;"

when the statement from the New Zealand Government was received; and, when the further communication from Her Majesty's Government, promised in the above Letter, will be made?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN: I believe the passage referred to in the Question is correctly cited from the letter therein mentioned. Lord Derby, after receiving a statement from the New Zealand Government, with reference to the Maori Chiefs' Memorial, did, on June 23, 1885, communicate further with the Governor of New Zealand, and requested him to make a communication to Tawhiao and other Chiefs in the terms of the despatch printed at page 43 of Parliamentary Paper 4,192. A copy of the despatch was given to the Maori Chiefs. This answers the last part of the Question. On January 25 last, the Colonial Office received from the Governor of New Zealand an answer to that despatch, dated December 16, 1885, enclosing a translation of a letter from Tawhiao to the Governor. If the hon. and learned Member desires to move for a copy of these Papers, they can be presented. No further communication from Her Majesty's Government, beyond that which I have already mentioned, has been addressed to the Maori Chiefs.

SIR JOHN GORST gave Notice that he would move for the Papers referred to.

LIGHTHOUSES IRELAND — ATTENDANCE OF KEEPERS AT DIVINE SERVICE ON SUNDAYS, AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

MR. JOHNSTON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, as is done in Scotland by the Commissioners of the Northern Lights, he will have provision made for the attendance at Divine Service, on Sundays, of lighthouse keepers on isolated rocks off the Irish Coast; and also for the education of their children, by increasing the number of relieving stations, or otherwise providing for the instruction of numbers of boys and girls growing up without elementary education?

THE PRESIDENT MR. MURFEE: This is a matter of considerable difficulty, involving an increased amount of labour and expense; but the objects set forth by the hon. Member's Question are so desirable that I will undertake to have the whole matter thoroughly

inquired into with a view to its solution. The children ought certainly not to grow up without education.

INLAND REVENUE—COLLECTION OF TAXES.

MR. BAKER asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the custom of the Department that Taxes should be collected at public houses, if such is the custom, whether he will consider the disadvantages of compelling a number of persons, many of whom have only small payments to make, to attend at such places; and, whether an attendance of two hours during one day in a week affords sufficient convenience for those having to make such payments?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER who replied said, that the Treasury had no control over the manner in which the Board of Inland Revenue collected taxes. The Board only used public-houses as places of collection when no other place was available.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—THE IRISH CHURCH FUND.

MR. BLAKE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Treasury will carry out the undertaking given in 1881 to the Member for the county of Waterford by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary to the Treasury that interest would be allowed on the unexpired balances of the two hundred and fifty thousand pounds granted out of the Irish Church Fund for the construction of fishery piers and harbours; and, if so, taking into consideration the great distress existing at various places along the coast, especially at Achill Island, owing to want of employment, the Treasury will, by a Minute, authorise the Piers and Harbour Commissioners to proceed at once to allocate the money derivable from the interest for the construction of piers and harbours in the distressed localities, so as to employ the people on reproductive works?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: The question of allowing interest on the extended balances of the £250,000 granted out of the Church Fund for Fishery Piers and Harbours was raised by the hon. Member for Waterford in 1884; and, in reply, the then Secretary

to the Treasury stated that the matter was being, and would be, carefully considered, and he thought favourably considered, but that no action was possible at the time, as legislation would be required if the suggestion were adopted. No actual promise was given that interest would be allowed. As regards the present state of the question, I have to state that no decision has yet been arrived at, and that it will be necessary, before deciding it, to consider very seriously the present condition of the Irish Church Fund, and its ability to bear any further charges.

INSPECTORS OF IRISH FISHERIES— SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND.

MR. BLAKE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will state the amount of loans granted out of the Sea Coast Fishery Fund by the Inspectors of Fisheries since that fund was taken out of the hands of the trustees to aid the Sea and Coast Fisheries of Ireland by the Act 47 and 48 Vic. c. 21, and transferred to the Board of Works, specifying the amounts of loans in 1884, 1885, and up to the present of this year; and, if from the books and accounts of the trustees, which were transferred by that Act to the Board of Works, he will state the amounts of loans made by the late trustees during each year, 1881, 1882, 1883, and in 1884, up to the passing of that Act?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HENRY H. FOWLER), in reply, said, the amount of loans granted by the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries was, in 1884 (from September 30) £3,308; 1885, £6,390; 1886 (to date), £911; and that the amounts advanced by the late trustees were, in 1881, £2,584; 1882, £4,245; 1883, £3,834; 1884, £2,600.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY— POLICE BARRACK AT MEENACLADDY, CO. DONEGAL.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that negotiations have been proceeding for the establishment of a police barrack at Meenacaddy, county Donegal; on whose representation they were started; what causes were alleged as justifying this burden on the locality; and, whether the allegations have been investi-

gated, so as to give the local representatives of the district, and the people themselves, an opportunity of defending their interests?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY), in reply, said, the matter was under the consideration of the Irish Government. The station was recommended by the local police and magisterial authorities, and no question of charge on the locality was involved.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, before sanctioning the establishment of this station, to consider the antecedents of the local magistrates and their relations to the tenantry.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—ACCIDENT AT ATHY RAILWAY STATION.

MR. OAREW asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the article headed "The Athy Railway Accident," in *The Leinster Leader* of the 20th of February, alleging, amongst other things, that the accident was due to the want of proper provision for passengers crossing the line at Athy Railway Station; whether it is a fact, as stated, that "the only mode of crossing the line is to jump on to the rails and scramble up at the other side;" whether there is an absence of footbridges at Naas and other stations on the same line; and, whether the Board of Trade will take steps to ensure the safety of passengers, and prevent the occurrence of similar accidents, on the Great Southern and Western Line of Railway in Ireland?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. MUNDELLA), in reply, said, his attention had been called to the matter. A foot bridge for Athy Station was in course of erection. The Board of Trade issued an order, on the 22nd December, for the construction of a bridge in place of the level crossing at Naas; but the construction of this bridge had not been commenced. The delay was occasioned by the length of notice required under the Railway Clauses Act, 1863, for acquiring the necessary land.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE BARROW DRAIN- AGE COMMISSION.

MR. LALOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, in view of the fact that the Barrow

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Drainage Commission have closed their inquiry and made their Report, in which they recommend that the main works on that river, as recommended by Mr. Manning, C.E., should be carried out; and, in view also of the great injury to the health and property of the inhabitants of the locality by the flooding of the river, and the necessity for giving immediate employment to a great number of labourers in the district, he will take steps to have the drainage works on the River Barrow commenced without further delay?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The Report to which the hon. Member refers has only just come before me. I observe that very large financial considerations are involved in the matter, and also the question of legislation. The matter will require more time for consideration than I have yet been able to give to it.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE PARCEL POST—RURAL LETTER CARRIERS

MR. O'HANLON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the institut on of the Parcel Post has greatly increased the labour performed by the rural letter-carriers in Ireland; whether the keepers of sub post offices are paid for the additional work caused by the Parcel Post system; whether no such payment is made to the carriers; and, when steps will be taken to put an end to this inequality?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER), in reply, said, that the Parcel Post had, doubtless, increased the work of the postmen; but they were paid strictly by the amount of work they had to do, and the wages were reconsidered from time to time, as justice demanded. As to sub-postmasters, they were not paid by salary, but by commission on all kinds of business. They were not required to give the whole of their time to the work of the Department.

THE ENFIELD SMALL ARMS WORKS—DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is intended to discharge a number of workmen from the Enfield Small Arms Works on the 1st April; and, if so, how many are to be so discharged; and, whether any weapons, such as might be produced at Enfield, have been, or are

being, made on the Continent for the War Department?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): With regard to the first part of the hon. and gallant Member's Question, I would ask him to allow me to give the answer in reply to the Questions Nos. 63 and 65 standing in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell and of the noble Viscount the Member for Enfield Viscount Folkestone); because those Questions were, at my request, postponed till to-day from Tuesday last. With reference to the latter part of the Question, only awards have been contracted for out of this country, under circumstances already explained to the House. Existing contracts cannot be interfered with; but no additional number will be obtained from abroad in consequence of any arrangements now made for the supplies of next year.

POST OFFICE—THE PARCEL POST—RURAL LETTER CARRIERS

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the weights of parcels required to be carried by the rural postmen; whether it is the fact that when the Parcel Post was established it was promised that the weight to be carried should not exceed thirty-five pounds, and that extra assistance should be given if that weight was exceeded; and, whether he will give instructions that, in the event of rural postmen being required to carry weights above thirty-five pounds, extra assistance shall be given or their pay increased?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER): The facts of the case as regards the weights, not merely of parcels, but of all kinds of postal matter requiring to be carried by rural postmen are correctly stated by the hon. Member, and I am assured that the rule on the subject is well understood, and it is believed everywhere observed. If the hon. Member has any particular case in his mind and will communicate with the Postmaster General, my noble Friend will gladly inquire into it.

POST OFFICE—TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES

COUNSEL NOLAN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Has he registered

a short telegraphic address for the House of Commons; and, if not, can he do so?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER): No address has as yet been registered for the House of Commons. But "House Commons, London," is sufficient address. ["Oh, oh!"] I would not forejudge the case as to whether that may not be shortened; but I think it is not necessary to add anything more at the present time, as the Postmaster General is considering the matter, and in a few days it will be seen what can be done.

DR. CAMERON: Could you not say, Sir, "Short Commons?"

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. DONALD CRAWFORD asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether he intends, during the present Session, to re-introduce the Universities (Scotland) Bill of last year, or some similar Bill?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN): I, or my right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate, have every intention soon to introduce a Bill undoubtedly much resembling the Bill of last year.

EGYPT—THE PORT OF SUAKIN.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Suakin was proved the most convenient port for trade with Central Africa; whether some of the tribes in the interior are hostile to Egyptian rule; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will consider the advantages to trade to be derived from making Suakin a free port under International control, before handing it over to the Egyptian Government?

THE UNDER SECRETARY (Mr. BAYCE): The first part of the Question put by the hon. Member is matter of opinion; and, considering the vastness of the region to which it refers, it would be difficult to say whether Suakin or any other port has been proved to be the most convenient for trade with Central Africa. The second part is matter of fact; and I think recent events have sufficiently proved that some of the tribes in the interior are hostile to Egyptian rule. In reply to the third part, I have to say that Suakin is no part of Her Majesty's Dominions, but

constitutes a portion of Egyptian territory; and Sir Charles Warren, who commands the British Forces there, holds supreme Civil authority by delegation from the Egyptian Government. It therefore does not rest with Her Majesty's Government to take the course suggested by the hon. Member.

MR. O'KELLY: I will refer to the subject on the Army Estimates.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—MR. JOSEPH D. GRIER, CLERK TO THE CAVAN POOR LAW BOARD.

MR. MAURICE HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the conduct of Mr. Joseph D. Grier, clerk of the Cavan Poor Law Board, in connection with the coming election of Poor Law Guardians for that Union; whether it is the fact that the Nationalist ratepayers of the Union, having lodged a large number of claims to vote, Mr. Grier, acting as returning officer, has issued an advertisement in local papers (*Anglo-Celt* of the 20th instant) requiring "documentary evidence in support of all claims to vote" lodged since the last election; what powers a returning officer has to require "documentary" evidence in support of claims to vote, such claims being in many cases, from their nature, incapable of being so supported; whether he is aware that the medium of advertisement selected as a substitute for direct communication is one which is exceedingly unlikely to come under the notice of a large proportion of the claimants; whether it is the fact that a large number of the claimants live at considerable distances, in some cases as much as ten miles, from the board room where Mr. Grier proposes to hold his court, and would be put to great inconvenience by being compelled needlessly to attend there; whether it is the fact that Mr. Grier's action is entirely without precedent; whether the proceeding in question is taken under the 6 and 7 Vic. c. 92, s. 26; and, if so, whether that enactment, being limited to particular cases in which a returning officer "has reasonable cause to doubt the correctness of any claim to vote," the Local Government Board will direct Mr. Grier to abandon his proposed general court of inquiry, and to issue voting papers to all claimants except in particular cases in which doubt has

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been thrown on the correctness of any claim, and the claimant, after notice directly given, has failed to satisfy him; whether he is aware that a returning officer at Poor Law elections exercises in many cases judicial functions involving the impartial determination of difficult questions both of law and fact; whether he is aware that Mr. Grier is a member of the Orange Association, and is in the habit of appearing in the regalia of that body at public party demonstrations; is also a land agent, the assistant secretary of the Cavan Defence Union, and member of a Local Landlord Anti-Nationalist Association; and, whether, if so, the Local Government Board intend to continue him in the position of returning officer?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY), in reply, said that Mr. Grier published the notice referred to; and he did so in consequence of the large number of claims lodged since last year by both political Parties. The Local Government Board have pointed out that he was wrong in taking that course. The Local Government Board consider that Mr. Grier committed an error of judgment in the matter. Nothing appears against him in the records of the Department during the 15 years he had acted as Clerk and Returning Officer, and they had no ground for supposing that he was unfit for the latter office.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: Is it a fact that he acted in a similar manner last year?

[No reply.]

OVERHEAD TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE WIRES.

MR. M'IVER asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is proposed, in dealing with overhead telegraph and telephone wires, to give corporations and urban authorities power to make bye-laws or regulations with respect to such wires, for the protection of life and property?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD Mr. JAMES COLLINS, who replied said: The Board have no doubt that if a measure were brought in dealing with overhead wires powers would be conferred on urban sanitary authorities to make bye-laws or regulations with respect to such wires.

SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT—THE SEED RATE—PAYMENT OF FOURTH INSTALMENT.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can now state whether he will, in consequence of the present depression, permit such unions as may apply for delay to postpone the payment of the fourth instalment of the Seed Rate for another year?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): There is still some delay connected with the completion of certain formalities in relation to the arrangement, and that prevents my giving the hon. and gallant Member a reply.

COLONEL NOLAN: When shall I put down the Question?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: About this day week.

IRELAND DEPARTMENT OF THE REGISTRAR GENERAL—SCHEME OF RE-ORGANIZATION.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will lay upon the Table a copy of the Minute of the Registrar General, setting forth the details of the proposed scheme of re-organization of his Department?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY Mr. JOHN MORLEY, in reply, said, he would lay the Paper on the Table.

FISHERIES (IRELAND) — BEQUEST OF THE LATE MR. MC COMAS, DALKEY, CO. DUBLIN.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the late Mr. McComas, of Dalkey, county Dublin, left by his will a sum of £500 for the benefit of the fisheries of Ireland; whether such sum was claimed by the late Trustees to aid Sea Coast Fisheries, who have been since abolished by Act of Parliament; whether, at the hearing of the cause before the late Master of the Rolls (Sir Edward Sullivan), it was decided their claim to it was invalid, and that the money should be placed in the hands of the Charitable Donations and Bequests Commissioners; whether that sum of money still remains in their hands unutilized; whether they have offered to apply only the interest of said sum for the benefit of the fisheries; whe-

ther he will consider whether this course of action on the part of the Commissioners is warrantable, as not carrying out the wishes or intentions of the testator; whether, considering that this money might be judiciously applied in whole to the benefit of the fisheries, he will take such steps as he may consider advisable, whether by legislation or otherwise, to have such money placed in the hands of trustees to carry out the intentions of the testator; and, would there be any objection to a Return being furnished of all moneys in the hands of the Charitable Bequest Commissioners, showing from what sources derived, and how they are expended annually?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY), in reply, said, that the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests informed him that they were most anxious that this fund should be utilized. If the executor of the deceased and one of the Inspectors of Fisheries to whom they had offered the interest continued to decline to administer it, they had determined to offer it to the Board of Works, to whom the administration of the Sea Coast Fisheries Fund had been transferred; but, in the absence of an order from a competent authority—which he presumed was a Court of Law—they must decline to hand over the *corpus* of the fund to any private person, there being no direction in the will to that effect. He should add that the late Master of the Rolls made no decision on the claim of the Sea Coast Fisheries Commission to the Fund. As a matter of fact, the interest had been handed over to that Commission so long as it existed. The information requested in the last paragraph of the Question, he understood, was contained in the annual Reports of the Commissioners of Donations and Bequests.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would follow the example of his Predecessor, and bring in a Bill, in order that this fund might be properly administered?

MR. JOHN MORLEY said he would consider the matter.

LAW AND JUSTICE—EXECUTIONS.

MR. GREGORY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If, having regard to recent failures in carrying out the extreme sentence of the Law, and to the fact that the State has

now assumed the control and government of the gaols in England, the Government would consider the propriety of appointing proper persons to carry out executions within the walls of the gaol, and in future relieving the sheriffs from that duty?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): In reply, I beg to inform the hon. Member that a Committee, of which Lord Aberdare is Chairman, was appointed by my Predecessor to consider what precautions should be adopted, without alteration of the law, to prevent the possibility of failure or miscarriage in executions. On receiving the Report of that Committee, the whole subject will have to be most carefully considered by me.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL PENSIONS.

CAPTAIN PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will state the number of Pensioners who are now in receipt of Greenwich Hospital Pensions, though under the age of fifty-five, on account of their having served in the Seaman Pensioner Reserve; and, what is the total amount of this class of Pension?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. R. W. DUFF) (who replied) said: I will furnish the statement asked for by the hon. and gallant Member; but the preparation of the same will take a day or two.

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES BILL.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Bill entitled "Compensation for Damages," Whether it is a fact that, in practice, and contrary to the clear intention of the Legislature, compensation is not recoverable in cases of ordinary riot; and, whether he would take into consideration the existing Law, which is in a very unsatisfactory state, being regulated by an old Statute of George 4, in itself indefinite in terms, and, instead of dealing with the subject by piecemeal legislation, introduce a measure of general application to the whole community?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): I am glad that the right hon. Baronet has addressed this Question to me, because recent events have impressed me very strongly with the fact that the law as to compensation for

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damage done by rioting as it now stands is in an unsatisfactory and uncertain state. Though I consider it best that present needs should be promptly satisfied by a measure such as has been introduced, I am quite prepared to consult with the Law Officers of the Crown as to the advisability of introducing a larger measure of general application, as the right hon. Baronet suggests.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE LATE POSTMASTER OF BALLYHEIGNE, CO. KERRY.

MR. HENRY CAMPBELL asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether one of the district postmasters of the General Post Office named Michael Laido, of Ballyheigue, county Kerry, did, at the Cork March Assizes, 1883, plead guilty to a charge of embezzlement of the sum of £18 3s. belonging to Bridget Kenny, of Tindur, Ballyheigue; whether this money was sent to this lady by her brother David Kenny, Soldiers' House, State of Ohio, by bank draft on the International Bank of London (Limited), dated 24th December, 1883; whether, upon such confession of guilt, the said Michael Laido was sentenced to a period of five years' imprisonment; whether the said Bridget Kenny has been refused payment of the above amount by the Postmaster General; and, whether, bearing in mind the great loss which this money would be to Bridget Kenny, he will give instructions that the amount be refunded to her?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER, in reply, said, the late postmaster pleaded guilty to the offence referred to, and was sentenced to five years' penal servitude. He was sorry to say there were other cases besides the case of Bridget Kenny. As the letter was not registered, the Postmaster General had no power to give compensation.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POSTMASTER OF DONEMANAGH, CO. TYRONE.

MR. DILLON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is true that the present postmaster of Donemanagh, county Tyrone, some time since became a defaulter to the extent of £10; whether the post office was, in consequence, removed from his house; whether he

has been recently reinstated as postmaster; and, whether any complaints have reached the Post Office in reference to this official?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER, in reply, said, that the present sub-postmaster was appointed last October. He was not a defaulter, but the late sub-postmaster was a defaulter. There was no complaint against the present man.

LAW AND JUSTICE—CONVICT LABOUR.

MR. DAWSON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What is the number of convicts now employed on public works, and on what works are they employed; what number of convicts it is proposed to employ on the projected harbour works at Dover; and, whether he can inform the House when the various works on which convicts are now employed will be completed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDEUR, in reply to the hon. Member, I may say that there would be no objection to granting a Return of the number of convicts such as he asks for; but I think he would find all the information he wants in the Report of the Committee of Convict Labour of 1881-2, in the Directors' Report for 1881, and the Directors' last Annual Report for 1883-4. Those Reports also contain an estimate of the time by which the various works will be completed.

THE FOREST OF DEAN—UNFENCED QUARRIES.

MR. THOMAS BLAKE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the accidents, many of which are fatal, which so frequently occur to persons resident in Her Majesty's Forest of Dean, arising from numerous unfenced stone quarries; whether he has received a copy of an official report of M. F. Carter, esquire, the coroner of the Forest of Dean Division of Gloucestershire, stating that he has, between the 2nd of August 1873 and the 10th of February 1886, held nine inquests upon the bodies of persons who have fallen into unfenced quarries in Her Majesty's Forest of Dean; and, if, with a view to prevent further loss of life, he will, on behalf of the Govern-

ment, bring in or support a Bill rendering it compulsory upon the owners of quarries properly to fence or protect the same?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER): I have received no copy of an official Report by Mr. M. F. Carter, Coroner, as to inquests held on bodies of persons who had fallen into unfenced quarries in Dean Forest. As regards what are called the "award" quarries—namely, those still held under the award of the Commissioners of Woods, made in pursuance of the Act 1 & 2 *Vict.*, c. 43, the Crown is powerless, as the Commissioners omitted in their rules and regulations for working quarries to require them to be fenced. Quarries held under lease from the Commissioners are required to be fenced. There are at present 122 award quarries and 130 leased quarries. It might be well to place all quarries under the Inspectors of Mines.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS— ELECTION EXPENSES (SCOTLAND).

SIR DONALD CURRIE asked the Lord Advocate, in reference to the heavy expenses charged by returning officers at the last General Election in Scotland, Whether he will introduce a Bill to establish a fixed scale of fees and charges?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Yes, Sir; we do propose to introduce a Bill on this subject.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Do you propose to extend the Bill to the three countries?

[No reply.]

ALLOTMENTS AND SMALL HOLDINGS— AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether he would add to the Return which he proposed to lay upon the Table of the House, showing the number of Allotments and Small Holdings, a column showing the total number of Agricultural Labourers?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY (Mr. HENEGAN): I shall be very glad to add a column showing the total number of agricultural labourers, to the Allotments and Small Holdings Return already promised, so far as the Census Returns of the Registrar General of 1881

will furnish the information required by my hon. Friend.

POST OFFICE—COLONIAL POST CARDS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Has the Postmaster General any objection to open up communication with the Australasian Governments, with the view of establishing a system of penny postcards between England and these Colonies?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER): There is a financial objection to the proposal of the hon. Member, which would affect not only the Imperial Exchequer, but also the Australian Colonies; and, having regard to the serious loss already sustained by that Postal Service, the Postmaster General is not prepared to take up the subject under present circumstances.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL.

MR. KIMBER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the fact that Transvaal produce, including tobacco, is allowed to enter Natal by land free of Duty, although tobacco and other imports entering the Transvaal from Natal are subjected to heavy import Duties, and how this is reconcilable with Article 13 of the Convention with the Transvaal or South African Republic of February 1884, which provides, among other things, that—

"The same treatment shall be given to any article coming to Great Britain from the South African Republic as to the like article coming from any other place or country,"

tobacco being an article liable to Duty both in Great Britain and in Natal; whether the influx of Transvaal tobacco under protection into Natal, which is thus unprotected, is causing very serious losses among the tobacco growers and manufacturers of Natal, and causing discontinuance of its cultivation; whether a British officer has been appointed, under Article 3 of that Convention, to reside in the Republic and discharge consular functions; and, whether any and what efforts were made, on the occasion of that Convention taking the place of British suzerainty, to secure reciprocal free trade between the Transvaal and the adjoining Crown Colony of Natal, or have been made since?

Mr. Thomas Blake

THE UNDER SECRETARY (Mr. OSBORNE MOROAN): It is the fact that Transvaal produce, including tobacco, is allowed to enter Natal (which has no inland Custom Houses) by land, free of duty, and that tobacco and other imports entering the Transvaal from Natal are subjected to heavy import duties; but I am unable to see what bearing Article 13 of the Convention of London has upon the question, as it is only the usual "Most Favoured Nation" Clause, and merely stipulates that no differential duties shall be imposed by the Transvaal against articles coming "from any part of Her Majesty's Dominions." I have not heard that the influx of Transvaal tobacco is causing losses among tobacco growers and manufacturers in Natal. No suggestion of the kind has been made by the Natal Government. The Government decided, in accordance with the desire of the South African Republic, to appoint a Consular officer at Pretoria, and the salary was placed on the Estimates for 1885-6. Sir Hercules Robinson, however, having repeatedly declared that such an appointment was unnecessary, the Government have decided not to fill it up at present; but the salary for such an officer has again been placed on the Estimates for 1886-7, in case it should be thought desirable to reconsider the matter. No steps have been taken to secure the passage of goods duty free from Natal into the Transvaal, Her Majesty's Government believing that any such attempt would, for reasons which it is impossible for me to state within the limits of an answer to a Question, be inexpedient in the interests of that Colony.

MR BRADLAUGH.

Mr. NORRIS asked Mr. Attorney General, If he can give any information to the House as to what proceedings are or will be taken in the Law Courts on the question of the legality of the junior Member for Northampton sitting and voting in this House, and to state when a decision is likely to be arrived at?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL. The Question of the hon. Member only appeared in the Paper this morning. I presume it is intended to relate to the sitting and voting of the hon. Member for Northampton in the

present Parliament. If I am right in that supposition, I should be much obliged if the hon. Member would repeat his Question this day week, in order to give me an opportunity of consulting the Government.

LOCAL TAXATION RETURNS SCOTLAND.

Mr. BRUCE asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether, in view of the intended reforms in Local Government, he will direct his attention to remedying the defects in form and completeness of the annual Local Taxation Returns for Scotland, and especially take care that these Returns shall hereafter give a complete statement of all local loans?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN): I am much obliged to my hon. Friend for calling my attention to what he regards as defects in the Local Taxation Returns, and I at once corresponded with the Board of Supervision on the subject. I cordially agree in the immense importance of having loans and repayments most clearly stated.

BURIAL GROUNDS BILL.

Mr. SHIRLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, when the Government introduce their Burial Grounds Bill, they will insert a clause authorising Cemetery Commissioners to purchase additional ground and enlarge their cemeteries in cases where at present they are not empowered to do so, and sanctioning their action where they have exceeded their powers in enlarging their ground?

THE UNDER SECRETARY (Mr. OSBORNE MOROAN): The Burial Grounds Bill, which I hope to introduce to-night, like the Bill which I introduced last year, which it will closely resemble, deals only with religious services at burials and matters incidental thereto. Such a clause as that suggested in the Question would, in my opinion, be beyond the scope of the proposed Bill; though, no doubt, it might properly form a part of a general measure for the consolidation and amendment of the Cemeteries Acts. If, however, the hon. Member, when he sees the Bill, would draft such a clause and put it down as an Amendment to the Bill, I should be very happy to consider it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—MR. RENTON, PROCURATOR FISCAL FOR EAST FIFE.

MR. BOYD-KINNEAR asked the Lord Advocate, Whether Mr. Renton has accepted the appointment of Procurator Fiscal of the Eastern Division of Fife; and, if so, when he will enter on the duties of the office which have now for a year been performed by deputy; and, what steps Government is taking in the matter?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): Mr. Renton has intimated that he will accept the office, under the conditions which I previously mentioned. Such conditions should, however, enter the commission of the Fiscal, which is granted by the Sheriff. At present the office of Sheriff of Fife is vacant, but it will shortly be filled, and then the matter will, no doubt, be completed without delay.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS— SECRECY OF THE BALLOT.

MR. EVERETT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of what has happened in the scrutiny connected with the Stepney Election, he will consider the propriety of proposing, at an early day, such an amendment of the Law as will in future prevent the secrecy of the Ballot from being infringed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. CHILDERS): In reply to the hon. Member, I can only say that I know nothing of the proceedings at the Stepney Election Scrutiny, except from a newspaper report, and I am not aware in what manner the secrecy of the Ballot was infringed. If I should receive an official Report of the proceedings, I will consider, with the Law Officers, whether it discloses anything demanding an alteration of the Ballot Act.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—SITTINGS IN KERRY.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the Land Court Sub-Commissioners have not sat in Tralee for the past half-year to hear applications for the fixing of fair rents?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (MR. JOHN MORLEY), in reply, said, that the Sub-Commission sat in Tralee four months ago, and the number of cases pending for the County Kerry was 97.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—SUBSIDIES BY FOREIGN NATIONS.

MR. KIMBER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the practice of certain Foreign Governments of subsidising articles of commerce produced and manufactured in their countries, and competing with British manufacturers in British markets, is in accordance with, or a violation of, Free Trade principles, and unfair between friendly nations; whether any, and what, endeavours are being made by the Foreign Office to get such practice abolished; and, whether, failing such endeavours, the Government are willing to try the effect of an intimation that, if such subsidies are persisted in, a fine or duty equal to the subsidy will be imposed on any such goods entering British ports, in order that foreigners shall only compete in British markets under fair and natural economic conditions?

THE UNDER SECRETARY (MR. BRYCE): If I rightly gather the purport of the first part of the hon. Member's Question, he invites me to pronounce an opinion upon the commercial policy of foreign countries with regard to bounties; but, as this does not come either within the sphere of my own duties, or within the province of a Question in this House, I regret that I am unable to comply with his request. In reply to the second part of the Question, I may state that any action for the purpose of obtaining the discontinuance of bounties by Foreign Governments in the case of goods exported to British markets would be taken by the Foreign Office at the instance of the Board of Trade; and it is, therefore, to that Department that his Question should be addressed. Her Majesty's Government have constantly declared, and given effect in practice to their opinion, that the principles of Free Trade are beneficial to any and every country; but they conceive that they would injure and not forward such principles by entering upon a war of tariffs; and they cannot, therefore, hold out to the hon. Member any prospect of

their trying the effect of the intimation which he suggests.

**PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION
GROUNDS—PUBLIC PARK AT
DULWICH.**

Mr. BAUMANN asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether any thing is being done by the Board towards laying out the seventy-three acres of ground which was granted last August by the Estates Governors of Dulwich College for a public park; and, whether the Board will endeavour to do everything in its power to hurry forward so desirable a public work, which would give employment to so many labourers?

Sir JAMES MCGAREL-HOUGO: In reply to the hon. Member, I beg to inform him that, although the Act of Parliament passed last Session vested in the Board about 72 acres of land to be appropriated as a public park, arrangements have to be made to acquire the interests of the tenants and occupiers of the land before possession can be taken. It has also been found necessary to apply to Parliament for powers to stop up certain public and private ways across the lands to be devoted to the park, in order to obtain authority to prevent the public going into the park during the late hours of the night. That is being done by the Board's Various Powers Bill of this Session. No unnecessary delay has taken place, or will take place, in carrying out the intentions of Parliament to provide a park.

POST OFFICE—THE UNIVERSITIES

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY (for Mr. RAikes) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he can now state the statutory provisions of any Act or Acts of Parliament relied upon by the Post Office Authorities to justify their interference with the employment of college messengers by the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge to deliver private notes in the town from members of those colleges?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER): The statute in question is 1 *Fict. c. 33*. I may say that there is every reason to believe that the arrangement referred to in my answer of the 25th ultimo will work satisfactorily, and I may add that

there is no desire on the part of the Post Office to interfere with the legitimate employment by the College authorities of messengers to carry private notes, so long as the provisions of that Act are not infringed.

**CRIME AND OUTRAGE IRELAND.—
BOYCOTTED CATTLE THE CORK
STEAM PACKET COMPANY.**

Mr. MACARTNEY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement in *The Freeman's Journal* of 1st March 1886:—

"Although no stipulation is made in the agreement about boycotted cattle, an honourable undertaking has been given to the cattle dealers, which they regard as highly satisfactory. The promise is such that no boycotted cattle will be shipped by the steamers to the Steam Packet Company."

and to the following statement made by Mr. John O'Connor, M.P., at a meeting of the Cattle Trade Association, and reported in the same paper:—

"Let us see what we have gained. First, the main principle for which we have contended, namely, that, so far as the Steam Packet and British Navigation Companies are concerned, the Port of Cork is blocked against the exportation of cattle seized or sold for rent;"

and, whether the Government intend taking any steps to enforce on common carriers trading from the Port of Cork the legal obligation of carrying all cattle delivered to them for carriage in the course of their trade, and to prevent such carriers from being prevented from performing this duty by intimidation?

Mr. O'HEA asked, whether it would not be entirely unusual and unprecedented to attempt to supersede the Common Law with regard to common carriers?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): I think it would. I am not aware that the undertaking referred to has been given which is mentioned in the second paragraph of the Question. The obligations of common carriers are part of the law of the land, enforceable by all those who suffer from a breach of them, and it is no part of the duty of the Government to take any special action in that matter. In any proved case of intimidation the Government will, of course, enforce the law.

THE PHOENIX PARK, DUBLIN.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, as it is admitted that nearly one-fourth of the area of the Phoenix Park, Dublin, has been withdrawn from public use and is enclosed for official purposes, he will suspend further expenditure on the proposed barracks for married policemen now about to be erected therein, pending the sanction of this House, and give orders that the hewing down of trees to make room for it be meantime stopped; also, can he give the name of the official responsible for the proposed encroachment?

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT also asked the hon. Gentleman, whether the entire acreage of the following London parks:—St. James's, Green Park, Hyde Park, and Kensington Gardens, Victoria, Regent's, Battersea, and Greenwich Parks—was only slightly in excess of that of the Phoenix Park; and, whether, in his opinion, considering the vast difference in the population of the two cities, an area of 1,339 acres, available for all purposes in the Phoenix Park, did not afford ample scope for the enjoyment of those who neither cared to take part in, or look on at games of polo and cricket?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HENRY H. FOWLER): The Viceregal demesne and other enclosures in the Phoenix Park occupied for public purposes, and containing in all 379 acres, have been enclosed since the Park was purchased by the Crown in the middle of the 17th century, and, though within the Park boundary, there are no records showing that the public had access to them at any time. It is, therefore, scarcely correct to say that they have been withdrawn from public use. The other enclosures, including the 19 acres of the Zoological Gardens, to which the public are admitted on payment, cover in all 34 acres. The proposed married constables' quarters will cover only an acre and a-half, thus leaving more than 1,330 acres open to the public. No more trees will require to be felled. As regards the suspension of building operations, I have to state that a contract has been entered into for building the barracks, and the preparation of the foundations has been proceeded with. The necessity for the

barracks was urged by the Constabulary Department and admitted by the Irish Government; and as there was no other site available, the Treasury, on the recommendation of the Board of Works, agreed to the appropriation of this space of an acre and a-half for the purpose. In reply to the Question of the hon. and gallant Member for East Antrim, of which he has given me private Notice, I have to state that the total acreage of the London Parks he mentions is 1,702 acres, the Phoenix Park containing altogether 1,752 acres, of which, as I have said, more than 1,330 acres are open to the public. The second part of the hon. and gallant Member's Question is rather matter of argument.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the hon. Gentleman state whether, before proceeding with the work, he will await the opportunity being given for discussing the question, and affording the House an opportunity of expressing an opinion on it?

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: That is a very proper Question, and I shall make inquiry; and if no serious public injury is done, the work will be suspended until the Vote for the purpose comes before the House.

EGYPT—THE SHEIKH OF GEMAI.

MR. DILLON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been directed to the following paragraph in Egypt (No. 2) Inclosure, in No. 144:—

"Obstacles have been found on the Railway between Halfa and Gemai, placed there undoubtedly by the villagers. . . . The Sheikh of Gemai was accordingly punished;"

whether he can inform the House what punishment was inflicted on this man; and, whether the man had any kind of trial?

THE UNDER SECRETARY (MR. BRAYCE): I am not in a position to reply as fully as I could have wished to the hon. Member's Question; but I am informed that General Grenfell issued several Proclamations through the Khedive's agents warning the Sheikhs of the villages against interrupting our railway communication. In spite of these warnings the traffic was frequently interrupted and lives endangered by obstacles being placed on the line with a view to upsetting the trains. An officer with an armed party was even-

tually despatched to trace the origin of these interruptions, and found the Sheikh of Gemai to be responsible. He was accordingly brought back to Halfa under escort, and having been put under supervision for several days he was eventually released. No further interruption of traffic occurred.

NAVY EXPENDITURE.

Mr. PEARCE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he will grant a Return showing the first cost of the armoured, unarmoured, protected, and partially protected ships of the Navy, the amount spent on repairs, alterations, and maintenance, and the estimated present value?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT): I regret that I am unable to grant the Return asked for by the hon. Member for Govan. Such a Return would not only be a very difficult and a very voluminous one to prepare; but, when complete, it would be liable to mislead, owing to the various conditions under which, from time to time, the repairs of Her Majesty's ships have been carried out, and the expense recorded at the Admiralty. It would also be impossible to give any reliable information as to the "estimated present value" of the ships referred to in the hon. Member's Question.

Mr. PEARCE: In consequence of the answer of the hon. Gentleman, I beg to give Notice that I will call attention to the want of this information on going into Committee of Supply on the Naval Estimates, and move a Resolution.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENT OF HEAD INSPECTORS.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been directed to a leading article in *The Witness* newspaper of the 5th February, the Belfast organ of the Irish Presbyterian Church, headed "Changes in the National Education Office, Dublin," charging the National Board with violating the practice hitherto observed of maintaining the denominational balance between Presbyterians and Episcopalians in appointments to the office of head inspectors, and with appointing the son of the Ex-Secretary to the Board, now a member, a very

junior district inspector, to the position of head inspector, passing over fourteen district inspectors of long and efficient service; whether such charges are well founded; if the gentleman now put over the heads of so many of his seniors obtained his original appointment as district inspector, without having been required to undergo the competitive examination by which all inspectors for a lengthened period received their appointments; and, whether such appointment was made when only three Commissioners were present, and in spite of the protest of one of the three?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY Mr. JOHN MORLEY: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that they have recently promoted Mr. Newell, a son of their ex-Secretary, to the post of Head Inspector. Mr. Newell is stated to be a very able and meritorious officer. The post which he now fills is a very important one, and it has never been the practice to make appointments to it solely or mainly on the basis of seniority. The Commissioners have never recognized or sanctioned any such practice or understanding as is implied in the newspaper article referred to by the hon. Member. On the contrary, when such a practice was suggested in 1876 they distinctly declined to adopt it. As a matter of fact, I believe Mr. Newell fills a post vacated by a member of the same Church as himself. The circumstances of Mr. Newell's original appointment as Inspector were exceptional—though not without precedent—in that he was appointed on the result of previous satisfactory examination without being required to undergo a fresh competition. Sixteen Commissioners were present, and the appointment was made unanimously.

EVICTIOMS IRELAND—EMPLOYMENT OF MILITARY FORCES—RETURN FOR 1884-5.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will, on the part of the Government, lay upon the Table at an early day a Return of the number of cases in which, during the last two years 1884 and 1885, the Military Forces of the Crown have been employed in carrying out evictions of tenants of land or land and houses, distinguishing each county and province in Ireland?

Mr. DILLON asked, if the right hon. Gentleman would also include in the Return the number of armed police who had been employed on similar duty?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY), in reply, said, if the Return asked for were moved in the ordinary way, there would be no objection on the part of the Government to granting it. When that Return was moved for, then the hon. Member for East Mayo could propose that it should include the number of armed police.

WOOLWICH ARSENAL—DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN.

Mr. HOWELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in addition to the 800 men which it is alleged are to be discharged from the Small Arms Factory at Enfield, it is true that a large number of men, numbering, it is asserted, 5,000 persons, are to be discharged from Woolwich Arsenal; and, if so, if he would consider whether, in the existing condition of trade, it is desirable that so large a number of men should be thrown upon the labour market, and also if some arrangement could be made, by a reduction of the working hours or otherwise, to render unnecessary such discharge of workmen at the present time?

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, at this period of distress from want of employment, it is in contemplation to reduce the number of employes at the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield; and, if so, by how many?

Mr. HANBURY asked, whether the men about to be dismissed were specially engaged to push on the manufacture of the additional Martini rifles necessary for the supply of the Regular and Volunteer Forces; and, if so, whether the supply of Martinis was now such as to require the dismissal of nearly one-half of the workmen at a time like the present of widespread distress?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): Perhaps the noble Viscount will kindly give me Notice of that part of his Question which relates to my answer last Friday. I have to thank him and my hon. Friend (Mr. Howell) for postponing their Questions in order to suit my convenience from Tuesday last. Both as regards Enfield and Woolwich, the Estimates

for the next financial year will not provide for the maintenance throughout the year of that high-pressure rate of production in the manufacturing departments which has prevailed for some months; and, therefore, there will be in some of them a reduction in the numbers of workmen. The precise numbers to be reduced cannot be accurately stated at present; but every endeavour will be made to effect the reductions gradually, so as to diminish as much as possible the unavoidable inconvenience. In reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), I have to say that I shall be prepared, on the Estimates, to explain the grounds upon which it has been decided somewhat to diminish the rate of manufacture at Enfield. It would be unusual to enter into details in answer to a Question.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE: I will ask the right hon. Gentleman to-morrow, whether the reserve of small arms at Enfield is not now 100,000, or about 500,000 less than is supposed to be required; also, whether the re-arming of the Forces at home and in India, arranged by the late Government, has been entirely suspended; and, if so, what is the reason for altering those arrangements?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I appeal to the noble Viscount whether the answer I have just given does not equally apply to this Question? These matters really arise on the Estimates, and there is a difficulty in answering them in this way.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked, whether, in the forthcoming Army Estimates, provision would be made for proceeding with the defences of the coaling stations and of the military and the mercantile ports, under the Estimates prepared by direction of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), and approved by the Treasury.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, it would, he thought, be unusual for him to anticipate the publication of the Army Estimates by a particular answer to his right hon. Friend's Question. He hoped that the Estimates would be in hon. Members' hands very shortly. They would give the right hon. Gentleman the information he sought.

Mr. W. H. SMITH gave Notice that, on going into Committee of Supply on the Army Estimates, he would call atten-

tion to the necessity of providing for the security of this country, and in the interests of economy—[*Laughter*—yes, he meant economy—for a continuous execution of the works and the manufacture of the materials which were ascertained to be required for the protection of our coaling stations abroad, and of our mercantile harbours and military ports.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman state whether the reductions which he has announced in the Estimates of next year will at all interfere with the supply of Martini-Henry rifles to the Indian Army, which have been promised to the Indian Government?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, he thought that this was also a Question for discussion on the Estimates, though, if the noble Lord gave Notice, he would not object to answer the Question. The noble Lord must have misinterpreted what had fallen from him if he understood him to have said that there would be a reduction in the Army Estimates.

CAPTAIN PRICE asked, whether similar reductions to those mentioned were to be made in the Royal Dockyards?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY **MR. HIBBERT,** in reply, said, he would make a statement on the subject on Monday week on the Navy Estimates.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked, whether a notice had been posted at the Small Arms Factory, announcing that 800 men would be dismissed on April 1?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, that he believed that such a notice had been posted.

IMMIGRATION OF FOREIGN LABOUR

MR. EVELYN asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in view of the great number of the unemployed among our own people, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce any measure for the purpose of restricting or regulating the immigration of indigent Foreigners into the United Kingdom?

MR. DAWSON asked, Whether there was any means of ascertaining, in regard to persons coming into this country, whether they were, or were not, British subjects; and, whether any inquiry

could be made into the means they possessed?

THE SECRETARY **MR. JAMES COLLINGS,** in reply, said he must ask for Notice of the latter Question; and, with regard to the former, it was not the intention of the Government.

IRELAND—DEPOSITS IN IRISH BANKS.

MR. HANBURY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Annual Report, first issued in 1840, showing the aggregate amount of deposits in the eight principal banks of Ireland, has been discontinued since 1832; and, if so, for what reason; and, whether the Government Report of 1882 showed the total deposits to be £30,667,000, whereas the balance sheets of 1885 show total deposits of £33,610,000; and, if so, whether the Report of 1882 can be taken as being an accurate statement of the facts, for the purpose of comparing the deposits of the two years?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY **MR. JOHN MORLEY:** The Report has not been discontinued. As I stated on the 1st instant, the last one is dated as recently as the 10th ultimo. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of these Reports. The balance sheets of the banks include items that are necessarily excluded from the Report, which is intended to show, as nearly as possible, the cash balances on deposit receipt and current account of Irish depositors. I need only refer to such items as the large English business of the National Bank, which is included in their balance sheet, the public account of the Government in the Bank of Ireland, and bills of certain kinds which banks include in their cash balances, to show that a comparison between the figures in the Report and the balance sheets of the banks is quite fallacious. As a matter of fact, there has been a decrease in these deposits as between December 1882 and December 1885.

NAVY—THE QUEEN'S REGULATIONS—PROMOTION OF SEAMEN.

CAPTAIN VERNEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Having regard to Order No. 251, page 60, of the Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions, holding out to the seamen of the Fleet

hopes of special promotion for acts of gallantry and daring, which Order has been stated to have remained for thirty-three years a dead letter, whether he will inform the House if it be the intention of the Admiralty either to cancel that Order or to give it effect?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT): The present condition of entry, education, and promotion of naval officers have prevented hitherto any special promotion of seamen to commissioned officer, except such as is provided for in the commissioned ranks of chief warrant officer; and the recent wars in which the Navy has borne part have not been of such a nature, from a naval point of view, as to give sufficient reason for the exercise of the powers given in the Article quoted by the hon. and gallant Member. The Admiralty do not intend to cancel the Order, as if we were involved in a great national struggle it might have a very beneficial effect.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Motion for a Committee to inquire into the Government of India will be brought forward?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, he had heard from his noble Friend (the Earl of Kimberley) that Notice had been given in the House of Lords of a Motion for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the Government of India. The consequent steps, if the Lords acceded to the Motion, would be taken in the House of Commons in the usual form.

CORRESPONDENCE ON THE IRISH QUESTION.

MR. JOHNSTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will lay upon the Table of the House the Correspondence on the Irish Question, invited in his letter to Lord de Vesci, that will have taken place before the 1st of April, in order that facilities may be afforded for forming an opinion on the question of Irish Legislation, in the same manner as enjoyed by the Government?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): There are two reasons why I cannot give a simple affirmative

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answer to this Question. One is that much of the Correspondence would be of a private and miscellaneous character—by private I mean representing only the opinions of private individuals. The other reason is, that the communications which I may receive may, in many cases, be in other forms than writing. They may be oral, and therefore I cannot answer in the affirmative. I have no doubt, however, that there will be representations—as, indeed, there have already been—from public bodies, some of which it may be expedient to place before the House. That I will consider.

LEASEHOLDS ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

MR. LAWSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will instruct the Select Committee to be appointed to inquire into the terms of occupation and the compensation for improvements possessed by the occupiers of town houses in Great Britain and Ireland, to include the Leaseholds Enfranchisement Bill in their examination?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, the idea was thrown out in a recent discussion on an Irish Bill, and such an intimation as that suggested would be a large addition to the field of inquiry of that Committee. He did not say that there would be anything wrong in it; but he would have to know a little more of the views of the House before he would be prepared to give a pledge. He thought, however, that a private Member might very fairly give Notice of a Motion enlarging the scope of the Committee in the manner indicated by the hon. Member. If he did so, it would receive careful attention.

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the First of the Treasury, When he intended to take the Army Estimates?

MR. GLADSTONE said, that the Army Estimates would be taken on that day fortnight, provided sufficient progress were made on the Monday proceeding with the Navy Estimates.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he hoped copies of the Estimates would be supplied to Members some days before the date named by the right hon. Gentleman.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That Mr. Speaker do now leave the
Chair."

MAINTENANCE OF SOCIAL ORDER
(IRELAND).—RESOLUTION.

Mr. HOLMES, in rising to move—

"That this House is unwilling to entertain Estimates for the Civil Establishments in Ireland before being placed in possession of the policy which Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue for the restoration and maintenance of social order in that Country."

said, that he rose to address the House under a sense of deep responsibility. He should not have brought this Amendment forward had he not been convinced that the subject was one of extreme urgency and of very grave importance. He need not apologize, however, for taking the course which he intended to take that evening. The first duty of any Government was to maintain social order; and if it could be shown that the Government of the day had failed in that respect, or was careless, or not entirely in earnest about preserving social order in any part of Her Majesty's Dominions, it became not only the right, but the actual duty, of a Member of that House, who represented a constituency situated in the country where the disorder existed, and who had been connected with the administration of justice in that country, to take every means in his power to impress the Government with the necessity of performing their duty, or at least of explaining their position. The Government had at all times peculiar means of forming a correct opinion as to the condition of any part of the country; and, that being so, the House had some reason to complain that in connection with the present state of affairs in Ireland it had not received the assistance and guidance which on former occasions it had generally obtained, and which at all times it had a right to expect. The question of social order in Ireland had been much discussed of late. They had heard on all sides that Ireland was in a dangerous condition; but notwithstanding that, and notwithstanding that upon the first occasion when the House met after the change of Ministry,

his right hon. Friend the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) challenged in the most pointed way the Irish Chief Secretary to make a statement as to the condition of Ireland, no definite information had yet been given by any Member of the Government. It was true that the Prime Minister had, on more than one occasion, used the expression "social order" in connection with Ireland; but they had not heard from him what his own opinion was as to whether the condition of that country with regard to social order was now satisfactory or the reverse; and if it were unsatisfactory, to what extent, and in what way, that unsatisfactory condition was made manifest. Under those circumstances, it would be necessary for him on the present occasion to endeavour from other sources, and by facts and inferences which could hardly be denied, to describe the state of Ireland. For that purpose it would be necessary to go back a little; but he would promise the House that he was not about to enter upon any matters of ancient history, and that in referring to bygone transactions he did not desire to enter into any Party recriminations, which seemed to him to be as unbecoming as they were useless. He would ask the House to consider if there was any material from which they could judge of the condition of Ireland as regarded social order in the month of May in last year. At that time the Executive in Ireland had for almost three years been governing the country by means of an Act passed in 1882, in the carrying of which the late Liberal Administration received the loyal assistance of the Conservative Party in the House. That Act did a very good and a very effective work. Crime, outrage, and all those offences described as agrarian, which had risen to an enormous amount in 1881 and 1882, towards the end of 1883 were reduced, he was ready to admit, to a very great extent from the operation of that statute, to about one-third of the number in 1881 and 1882. For the 15 or 16 months that followed the year 1883, and up to May, 1884, those offences, as regarded their character and number, remained almost uniform. In the month of May, 1884, there was a decided improvement as compared with 1881 and 1882; but he thought he was justified

in saying that a reference to statistics would show that the state of things was far from satisfactory; for, although an improvement existed as compared with 1881 and 1882, if they made a comparison with the five-and-a-half years of Lord Beaconsfield's Administration they would find that those crimes and outrages were, at all events, two-fold, if not three-fold, more than during those five-and-a-half years. In the month of May, 1885, Her Majesty's then Government, presided over by the right hon. Gentleman now Prime Minister, who had the assistance of many of the Members of his present Administration, undertook, he had no doubt in the most careful, anxious, and circumspect way, the consideration of this question; and what was the conclusion arrived at by them and announced to the House at the end of May or the beginning of June? They were told that, although that Parliament was then expiring, they had arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary for the safety of Ireland that some portion of the statute should be re-enacted. He did not think it was ever definitely stated in the House what were the particular provisions it was determined to submit to the House for renewal; but he gathered from a letter to his right hon. Friend the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) that the provisions it was proposed to renew consisted of almost all the provisions that had been in practical use—in other words, all the useful and effective provisions of the Act of 1882. What was the natural inference from that? It was that the condition of Ireland, in the judgment of the then Government, was in the months of May and June last year so grave that it required immediate legislation for the enforcement of the law. Circumstances occurred, as they all remembered, in the month of June of the same year which led to the then Government being replaced by the Administration of Lord Salisbury. [*Ironical Irish cheers.*] He was quite prepared to hear from time to time that cry from hon. Members below the Gangway, which he supposed he was bound by courtesy to describe as a cheer; but he could assure hon. Members that he would proceed with his observations regardless whether the cheers were in one direction or the other. The first question the Administration of Lord

Salisbury had to take into consideration was the very same question their Predecessors had to consider, and in connection with which they arrived at the conclusion to which he had referred. The House was aware that after that question had been carefully considered by that Administration they came to the conclusion that the Act might be allowed to lapse for the period that would intervene until a Parliament was returned by the new electorate. There was no portion of the policy of Lord Salisbury's Government that had been more attacked by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite than the resolution not to renew the Crimes Act. That was the only portion of the policy of that Government that had been attacked in any general way. As regarded the foreign policy of that Administration, as regarded its Colonial policy, as regarded its domestic policy they had heard little or nothing but praise from right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He was not rising on the present occasion to defend the resolution then arrived at, and he would at once tell right hon. Gentlemen opposite the reason why he did not consider it necessary to defend it. It was this—that if the House considered that the conclusion at which Lord Salisbury's Government arrived was erroneous, it strengthened a hundred, even a thousand-fold, the argument which he was now impressing upon the House. There was one matter to which he wished to call attention in this connection, and that was that at the time when that policy was submitted to the House by Lord Salisbury's Administration it was not stated in the House or elsewhere that in their judgment the social condition of Ireland was in a satisfactory state. The only thing stated was that, having regard to the peculiar circumstances of the time, to the fact that Parliament was then expiring, to the fact that any renewal of that measure must be of a temporary character, and having regard to the belief that the lapse of that measure would not be followed by any outburst of crime, the Government came to the conclusion that, under the special circumstances of the case, the Act should not be renewed. He would also state that in forming that opinion he believed the Government were further influenced by the hope that if Ire-

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land were relieved from the exceptional legislation against which she had so vigorously protested, if she were treated in this respect in a spirit of trust and confidence, the good feeling of the inhabitants themselves would operate in the direction of law and order, and that in this way a distinct and positive improvement might be obtained. What-ever might be said with regard to other anticipations, he regretted to say that that hope was not realized; and, in so far as that hope was concerned, the experiment proved totally and entirely unsuccessful.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Why did you not say that before the General Election?

MR. HOLMES, continuing, said, he made that admission frankly and fairly; but, at the same time, he declared there never was a more ridiculous or absurd proposition brought forward with reference to Ireland than the one suggested, he believed, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he said that the step thus taken by Lord Salisbury's Administration changed for ever the policy of Irish government. Statesmen who were thinking of renouncing opinions but recently expressed, and of unsaying words that had been recently spoken, were very frequently driven to find extraordinary explanations; but he would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman, if he was contemplating any tergiversation of that kind, that it would be prudent of him to seek some more reasonable explanation. In fact, he thought that if the right hon. Gentleman wished to justify his own change of opinion by a change of policy taken in reference to Ireland by a Government just coming into power, he might refer to what was done in that connection by a Government of which he was a Member when it assumed Office in 1880, and when, at a most critical period of that country's history, it determined to abandon that Peace Preservation Act which had been in existence over 30 years, and the renewal of which was considered by its predecessors to be absolutely necessary for the public safety. He now came to the period during which, as regarded the state of Ireland, he had considerable knowledge, and as to which he might be even permitted to speak with some degree of authority. Being responsible to a considerable extent for the administration of justice in Ireland

during the last months of 1885, he applied himself to the task with whatever abilities he possessed, and certainly with unremitting attention. The Criminal Law was put in force on every possible occasion; every effort was made to maintain the reign of law and order; but, nevertheless, the social condition of the country did not improve. As regarded crime and outrage, and those offences which found their way into criminal statistics, he did not say that, as compared with the month of May and previous months, there was a marked deterioration; but so far as there was a change it was a change for the worse. He had heard it said by Gentlemen below the Gangway on that side that during that period Ireland was never more peaceful and free from crime. He could only say that, so far as there was a change from the month of May, it was a change for the worse, and especially in the last months of the year it was more marked; and he would ask, if the state of the country was not satisfactory in the month of May as regarded crime and outrage, how could it be contended that during the latter part of the year it never was more peaceful and safe? So far as regarded the number of criminals; but when they turned away from the mere enumeration to consider the nature and character of the crimes committed, and the circumstances by which they were attended, the picture became much more melancholy. In this country, and in many others, it was often said, and said truly, that crime, as a rule, was the work of the criminal classes, who had broken away from restraint, set society at defiance, and entered upon a regular life of lawlessness. It was not so long ago that the same description might have been applied to crime in Ireland. They had in years past crimes connected with "Whiteboyism," and with "Moonlighting;" and apologists had given extraordinary explanations of those crimes. They had been told that they were all the work of the police; at other times that they were the work of landlords; at other times that they were the work of the agents of Tory Governments; and more generally that they were the work of Liberal Governments. He supposed that that allegation would not be accepted. But they were also told that those crimes were committed by persons who came from

a distance into the districts where they took place, and that they did not point to any general demoralization. Now, he had looked with great care into those crimes which were committed in Ireland in the latter part of 1885; and he regretted to say that, as far as he could judge, they were committed by men in the immediate district where they occurred, and whose antecedents and general character would lead to the presumption that they were law-abiding; and it was to be observed that the criminals received the sympathy and protection of the people in the districts in which the crimes were committed. He did not make that statement on his own responsibility only; it was supported by facts and evidence. Some of the Moonlighters about the end of last year were detected and brought to justice. They were tried and convicted. In every single instance, as far as he remembered, they were committed by farmers or sons of farmers who lived in the immediate neighbourhood, and who received, and in all other respects deserved, an excellent character; and in almost every instance witnesses of the same description were produced for the defence in support of fabricated statements, for the purpose of rendering convictions difficult, if not impossible. ["Oh!"] He said fabricated statements, because the verdict of the jury must be taken as conclusive on this point. All that pointed to a different state of things than that those crimes were the work of the merely ordinary criminal class—it pointed to a widespread demoralization. But other circumstances told the same story. Reference had been made in that House to what was called the Curtin murder case. That murder had been described by the Chief Secretary for Ireland as an unfortunate death. ["Hear, hear!" and "No!"] Certainly, that word had been used by the Chief Secretary.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. JOHN MORLEY): I used the word "death," but instantly altered it. I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman why he did not indict Casey for murder?

MR. HOLMES said, he supposed that the question just put to him covered a suggestion that the death was not a murder. He would tell the right hon. Gentleman why they did not indict Casey

for murder. They did not indict him for murder because he had left the place and had abandoned the undertaking entirely and completely before the murder was committed; and by a well-known rule of law, though he was guilty of one of the most serious offences, it would not amount to murder. But Mr. Curtin was shot at and murdered. The man who fired the fatal shot was a murderer, and the man who died from the shot was a murdered man. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would be satisfied with that explanation. Former Chief Secretaries for Ireland had applied to murder the name that it generally bore; and, as regarded the administration of justice in Ireland, it would be just as well that that practice should be continued. He now came to the case itself. Considerable attention was attracted to the case, by reason of the heroic conduct of members of the family; but in other respects it was a very typical case, and all its circumstances might be taken as an illustration of the state of things. Mr. Curtin was a man who, as far as anyone had been able to ascertain, had always lived a peaceable and blameless life, unless, indeed, it was considered as an offence to be a little more prosperous than his neighbours, and to have paid his rent. He had committed no offence, as far as he understood. A band of marauders, however, attacked his family and his home. They were composed of farmers living in the neighbourhood, having no just fault to find with him, and yet they engaged in that expedition. When that band entered his house there were in it, in addition to the members of the family, six farm servants who had been living there for years, and who were as strong and stalwart as any to be found in the country. Those farm servants had no quarrel with their employer. They were attached to him, as he understood; but, being there, they said no word and raised no hand to protect him or the family. In a civilized Christian country could anything be more demoralizing and more degrading than that? That was a typical case. There lay two corpses there after the terrible occurrence. One was the body of the head of the family—the man who had stood up in defence of his property and the people about him, and whose very last words before he received the

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fatal shot were words of moderation and kindness. The other was the body of the man who was shot with a mask on his face and a gun in his hand, which he had discharged but a few moments before against the head of that family. With which of those two men was the general public sympathy of the neighbourhood? It was stated at the time, and never contradicted, that a few days after, on the following Sunday, after Mass had been celebrated and the clergyman was addressing the congregation and referring with respect to the murdered man's memory, the congregation rose and left the chapel. That had never been contradicted; it was true; but it had been explained, and the explanation proved his case. It was said that the congregation left the chapel, not on account of what was said, but to attend the funeral of the dead Moonlighter. And there were those two funeral processions; the one that was followed merely by the members of the Curtin family; and the other that of the dead murderer, which was followed by almost all the neighbours. But that was not all. The members of the murdered man's family, as they were bound in duty to do, gave evidence in the case. They did not seem to desire to bring home the guilt of the accused; they certainly gave their evidence without any apparent animus or desire for vengeance. A short time after they appeared as witnesses they returned to the place in the neighbourhood where they had always lived, and where up to then they had been respected. How were they received? Did hon. Members forget the way in which this family were received by the people when they attended service at church, or the attack which was made on the chapel itself, and that it was necessary for the prelate of the diocese to announce that religious service would be suspended for several weeks?

MR. PARNELL: May I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he will inform the House as to the date of the murder of Mr. Curtin?

MR. HOLMES: No; I cannot inform the House. Nor can I see that the date can make the murder one whit less frightful a crime, nor the sympathizers with that murder one whit less guilty.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: It was in November, before the General Election.

MR. HOLMES said, he presumed that hon. Members must feel that there was something to answer in regard to this matter, and he thought their answers might be little more relevant. He had referred to what inference could be drawn from the statistics of crime, and also to the inference which could be drawn from the character of that crime, and the circumstances which had attended it. He had shown that even in the month of May it was necessary, in the opinion of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, that there should be some repressive legislation which could actually brook no delay, and which became much more important in December of last year. It would be a great mistake to judge the social condition of any country, no matter where it was situated, by criminal statistics alone. As far as Ireland was concerned, the statistics of crime and outrage reflected but a small light on the social condition of that land. He asserted without fear of contradiction that in Ireland a terrible tyranny was spreading over the three Provinces. When the Land League was suppressed for its illegal acts, the Government of the day, having behind it an Act which enabled the Executive upon the warrant of the Lord Lieutenant to imprison any person throughout the country, allowed within a short time the National League to spring up. This body increased in strength and in power; and he had not the smallest doubt that right hon. Gentlemen opposite, when considering this matter in May, were impressed with the power which the National League possessed. Even at that time—aye, and long before that time—it was exercising a kind of intimidation which made it almost impossible for any man to use his personal liberty. As far as he was aware, or could judge, he did not think that the provisions of the Act of 1882 were calculated to produce much effect, if any, on the intimidation carried out by that League. He was under the impression that the noble Earl who was then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had come to a somewhat different opinion; but he thought it must be admitted that that intimidation had become of such a character that, though some check might be placed on it by the provisions of the Statute, yet an effective check that Act was not. They found month by month that the National League

increased in power and in influence, until at last, towards the end of 1885, it overshadowed not merely the three Provinces, but the paralyzed administration of the law and the Queen's authority in those Provinces. There was not a single act of social life in which it did not presume to judge between man and man. It dictated to the master what servant he should employ, and to the servant what master he should serve. It dictated to the merchant and the shopkeeper whom he should supply with necessities, and from whom he should buy goods. In short, there was no social relation of life into which the tyranny of that body was not carried. He believed that he spoke of things which were generally known. The House might remember that during the Licensing Sessions in Ireland held in October and November last, in almost every county in the South and West of Ireland it was necessary to oppose licences given to publicans, who were the only purveyors of the necessities of life, because at the dictation of the League they refused to supply persons who came under the ban of the League. In November such was the difficulty of serving legal process that it was necessary for the Judges to direct that that process should be sent by post. Not long ago the House was engaged in considering a Supplementary Constabulary Vote, which was needed because the Constabulary could not hire cars, and actually could not obtain the necessities of life. It was necessary, therefore, to supply capital wherewith they might buy cars, establish depôts for food, and forges at which they could shoe their horses. As regarded this part of the matter, he would appeal to events which could hardly be denied. In the first place, he appealed to a late Chief Secretary for Ireland. The Government of Ireland was entrusted to a capable and conscientious body of public servants. Those men had no interest except to perform their duty. He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Border Burghs (Mr. Trevelyan) whether or not he could bear out his testimony that these men could be trusted and could perform their duty? [Mr. TREVELYAN expressed assent.] A few days ago he was reading a speech of the right hon. Gentleman in which, in a most generous spirit, he described the

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men from the Judge to the constable as a body of public servants who were thoroughly to be trusted. It would be, and had been, the duty of persons in that position to make representations on this point. They made reports, and it was in the power of the Chief Secretary always to obtain them. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman to say whether the information which could be obtained from that authentic source did not show the country might be painted as black colours as he had described it? He asked hon. Members, however, if they wanted authentic information on this point, to read the Nationalist newspapers which were published in Ireland during October, November, and December last. What would they find? They would find that records of the branches of the National League were kept, and the way in which the League was carrying its influence through every circle of society, rendering individual action in any way almost impossible. He knew that a week or two ago a letter was written by an hon. Member on the subject of what were called Land League Courts, and they were told that such Courts did not exist. But the House was not altogether under the dominion of words; they might sometimes look at facts. If a man was summoned before the National League he was described as having been "invited;" and if he was subjected to a trial they were told that he had "submitted to arbitration;" and if judgment was passed upon him they were told that "advice" was given him. When the master of a hundred legions sat down before a small and undefended fortress and invited it to surrender, it was an invitation which was not likely to be refused. In the same way, when a footpad presented a pistol at the breast of a traveller and "invited" him to hand over his purse, such an invitation could not be lightly regarded. They knew that the "invitation" of the National League was equivalent to a command which could not be disobeyed, and they knew that the "advice" tendered was far more efficacious than the judgment of any Court, and had far more terrible sanctions behind it. Such was the state of Ireland, as he believed, in the month of December last year, and in the beginning of January of the present year. It was the duty of Her Majesty's Government to take

that matter into their most serious consideration. The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt : Hear, hear). He could tell the right hon. Gentleman who cheered ironically that it received as serious consideration as any subject ever received at the hands of any Government, not, as had been stated again and again, within a day or two of Parliament meeting, but at a considerable period before that. It was fully discussed and considered, and the remedies to be applied in order to counteract those evils were not allowed to remain in any shadowy form, but were reduced to writing, and in that form discussed and considered too. There was no want of elaboration and care, and the only reason why a measure was not announced before the fourth day of the Session was because a change in the person responsible for the government of Ireland took place at that period. It was natural, therefore, that, although the right hon. Gentleman, Mr. W. H. Smith, had investigated this matter with the greatest care, and had gone through the Reports with the greatest accuracy—although he had seen the provisions which were suggested as a remedy to counteract the evils—it was natural that the new official should say that he must personally see some of the important persons in Ireland before he gave his sanction. If hon. Members were to assume Office in similar circumstances they would do the same. Was there any unnecessary delay on the subject? Some doubts had been suggested that there was no measure in preparation. He spoke of a thing which he knew, and he knew that not only was the measure in preparation, but it had been prepared; and when the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks Beach) announced his intention to submit the measure to Parliament, it might have been laid at that moment on the Table of the House. He could further say that long before that time the provisions embodied in that measure had been fully discussed and had been reduced to the form of a Statute; so that, in point of fact, there was no foundation for the allegations that what was done by the late Government was a thing quickly conceived and very hastily executed. In the circumstances he had described there came a change of Govern-

ment. The new Government was practically that which was in power in the preceding May. If it had then considered repressive legislation necessary; and if the state of Ireland at the end of the year and at the beginning of this year were what he had described, how was it to be explained that the present Government had not taken some steps in reference to the serious question of social order? Under the circumstances he had mentioned, surely it was the first duty of the Government at the earliest moment to consider the social condition of Ireland; and he presumed that that duty was done. Yet not a word had been heard from right hon. Gentlemen opposite in reference to that question. There had, however, been some indications to which he would refer. In drawing an inference from words of the Prime Minister he was approaching a matter of some difficulty; but it was a difficulty he would endeavour to overcome. The right hon. hon. Gentleman had two or three times spoken of social order in Ireland as a question deserving most serious consideration; and it was not an unreasonable inference to draw from that that the right hon. Gentleman considered that as regarded social order Ireland was in an unsatisfactory state. It was not said that social order in Scotland required careful consideration, because law and order prevailed there. Furthermore, it was said that it was not the intention of the Government to propose repressive legislation; but that was generally accompanied by the qualification "at present," or "immediately;" it was, therefore, not unreasonable to assume that it might be necessary at a very early date to introduce such legislation. There was difficulty in attaching a meaning to the term "at present" unless it would justify some such inference. Within the last few days a noble Earl, better acquainted than any other noble Lord, perhaps, with the state of Ireland, had said that it was worse—a hundred-fold worse—than it was in May or June last. It might, therefore, be assumed that he had not now drawn any exaggerated or too highly-coloured picture of the state of Ireland. If that were so, what was the reason why it had not received the immediate attention of the Government? It might, perhaps, be said that some improvement had taken place recently;

but, at all events, such improvement was not due to any action of the Government. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had made no positive announcement on the subject. He remained silent when challenged. If the Chief Secretary had any doubts remaining, he appealed to him to resolve them that evening, or as soon as possible. The Chief Secretary, it was true, had said that under certain circumstances, and within certain limitations, he reserved it to himself to decide whether military force should be employed for the purpose of carrying out decrees of eviction. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman cheered that statement; but what was it that he cheered? How could the Chief Secretary know, when the judgment of a Court was produced to him, whether it covered a shadowy right or a substantial one? For that was what he undertook to decide. That view of the right hon. Gentleman was repugnant to every principle of justice, law, and equity. Earl Spencer had, within the last few days, described the state of Ireland as much worse at present than it was in May or June last. If this were so, what reason was there why this question should not receive immediate attention? Could it be said that any improvement had taken place in the country since the present Administration had taken Office? If improvement existed, it had not arisen from any action of the Government; but action had been taken in other quarters. Mr. Davitt had gone to one of the disturbed districts and preached in the strongest way that those outrages must be given up. To what extent this advice had been followed he did not know; but the organs of the National League had to a great extent ceased the publication of the proceedings of their branches in these respects. [Mr. W. O'BRIEN: Consult the last issues.] At all events, they were materially altered in their character, and anyone could see that by comparing what used to be printed with what was now printed in those journals. Suppose it to be the fact that these things conduced to make the country a little better, surely this showed that a more alarming state of things existed than even the outrages. What was demonstrated was that what the Queen's Government could not do could be performed by that terrible force which had been carrying on this tyranny in the

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country for months past, and whose object it was now to arrest it for a limited time, and for a limited purpose. Anyone looking at the state of Ireland in a fair and ordinary way could see that it required immediate attention, and every day's delay rendered the problem much more difficult. There was another aspect of the case, which involved an element of still greater danger. When the Government was considering the question in May last, not a word was said in reference to the Repeal of the Union. As far as could be gathered from all that passed, the Government appeared to adhere to the views that had been laid down by all English statesmen of the present century. They held with Lord Althorp that if they had to choose between civil war and the Repeal of the Legislative Union they would choose civil war. Similar views had been expressed by Russell, Peel, and Palmerston. And what words had the present Prime Minister used on more than one occasion?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Quote them.

MR. HOLMES said, that if he could not quote the exact words of the right hon. Gentleman he could refer him to where he would find them. He referred him to the occasion when Mr. Butt's Home Rule Resolution was before that House.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I was absent then.

MR. HOLMES: If the Prime Minister wished he would withdraw, in the most unreserved way, what he had said, and he would assume that the policy of the Prime Minister differed from that of the other statesmen he had named, and that the right hon. Gentleman not merely now, but when the scheme of Mr. Butt was before the country, considered that much might be said in favour of the Repeal of the Legislative Union.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: When did I say so?

MR. HOLMES said, he did not attribute those words to the right hon. Gentleman. All he said was that if the right hon. Gentleman so desired he would assume them. But better far than going into old matters of this kind, than discussing what might have been said in the past, it was to consider what was now before the country. It was generally conceived that some statesmen during the month of December began to

look at this question in a different light from what they had done before. Had this any effect upon Ireland at the present time? It could not be denied that this question of Repeal was now spoken of in every part of Ireland. What was the position of Ireland at the present moment? Ireland at the present time consisted, not of a single nation, but of two distinct nations or nationalities; and, indeed, it might be said to have been in that condition for years and even centuries past. One of these nations, he admitted, was in a majority. That majority, at the present moment, were looking forward with the most anxious hope to a measure which would sever their connection with this country, as to which they had never concealed their hate. The other nationality, which was in a minority, looked with dread to the measure which would sever their connection with this country, to belong to which was their glory and their pride. Ireland was in an intense state of tension, and social order was very much disturbed, and rendered much more critical by this situation. He had used the words majority and minority, and he hoped the House would pardon him if he called to mind the extent of the majority and of the minority. Hon. Members more than once had stated that the Nationalist Party in that House was five-sixths of the whole number of Irish Members returned. Would anyone tell him that the Nationalist Party represented five-sixths of the population? It was perfectly clear that the power of a minority in the country and the extent of its representation depended very much upon the way in which it was distributed. He contended that the statement that the Nationalist Party represented five-sixths of the entire population of Ireland had not been proved. A more accurate calculation was that the minority was one third, while the majority was two-thirds. Hon. Members below the Gangway had spoken of the minority in a somewhat contemptuous way; but he could tell hon. Members opposite that if they shared in these feelings they were holding them against their own kith and kin, seeing there was a great number of Scotch and English in the minority. So far from the minority being in any respects turbulent, it was the most industrious, law-abiding, and prosperous portion of the people. They

had heard a great deal about the town of Belfast. That was a town of which any country might well be proud. It was by the untiring industry of the citizens that there had been formed in Belfast one of the greatest manufacturing centres in the country, and this had been done in spite of laws discouraging to their industry—laws which, however, had long since passed away. He might mention that the minority in Ireland—as, perhaps, the House understood—was on this question thoroughly in earnest. Hon. Members below the Gangway would say that the majority was also in earnest. There had been a great deal said, and it seemed to him that a great deal of folly had been spoken, about his noble Friend the Member for Paddington. It had been said that his noble Friend went to Belfast for the purpose of stirring up civil war. His noble Friend was anxious to meet that charge face to face if an opportunity were given him. That opportunity, however, had not been afforded him. It seemed to him that if any attack was to be made upon the noble Lord, it would be much better that it should be made to his face, instead of behind his back. What was the lesson that might be drawn from the visit of the noble Lord? The reception which he got at Belfast, judging it by the might and majesty of numbers and the earnestness of the people, was a reception which had probably never been given to a statesman before. From all they had heard, it would be difficult to parallel that reception by any Viceroy or Royal progress. They admired the genius of his noble Friend, and they acknowledged the fact that by the exercise of his abilities he had obtained a very commanding position among public men. But it was not the reputation arising from his genius or position that collected the vast assembly in Belfast. The greatest statesman that ever lived could not have drawn away artisans from their workshops but for a cause which went to the hearts of those men. The great question of the Repeal of the Union and the severance of the connection between England and Ireland, which was their glory, and which stirred souls to their inmost depths, brought the hundreds and thousands of workmen together. He had stated that the minority was in earnest. How did that reflect upon the

question of social order? Would it be denied that at the present time the social ties which bound people in Ireland together were drawn so tight as to run the risk of snapping? Suppose that in four or six weeks the Government made an announcement with regard to Ireland, had they taken into consideration the effect which it would have upon the excited population of Ireland? If the result of the deliberations of the Government should be to deny what hon. Members below the Gangway expected, would any Member of the Government say that that would lead to peace and order? If, on the other hand, the deliberations of the Government should result in the granting of that which those attached to the Union dreaded, would any Member of the Government say that that would lead to peace and order in Ireland? Then, again, if the measure satisfied neither the one nor the other, but disappointed both, would that lead, if the crisis was prolonged, to the promotion of peace and order in Ireland? It seemed to him that by delaying this matter they were adding terribly to the alarming state of the country; and if the delay was persisted in the crisis would become of a most fearful character. Had any suggestion been made why guidance on these important questions should not be given by the Government? The Prime Minister had told them that the Business of Supply would necessarily occupy the attention of the House for some time; but if the question of Ireland was a question of serious importance, ought there to be any hesitation in taking the time now at the disposal of private Members? Supply had already given way to the Crofters' Bill, and surely the present state of Ireland was a more serious matter than the Crofters' Question. They had been told by the Prime Minister that it would be impossible for the Government, suddenly called upon to take Office under the present circumstances, to deal with this matter as quickly as some hon. Members thought they ought. He was bound to admit that right hon. Gentlemen opposite were not compelled to declare their policy when in Opposition or when they were striving for Office; but he contended that they ought to have some definite views now. There never was a Government more prepared than this to come to a rapid

conclusion. There were in the Government two noble Lords who had occupied the position of Viceroy in Ireland, and there were two right hon. Gentlemen who had been Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. Besides this, the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had had opportunities during his long experience of considering this question, and they all knew that he had given attention to it of late both by day and by night. Were they to be told that the Government had been four weeks in Office, while Parliament had been sitting a fortnight, and yet they could not state what their policy was? He did not ask for a Bill; but could not the Government announce something like what their policy would be? The Chief Secretary, in a speech which he recently made, referred to the critical position of the country, and said that we were standing on the brink of a crisis resembling that mighty cataract which swept away everything with irresistible force. That was the position of the country according to the right hon. Gentleman. Surely, therefore, they had a right to call upon the Government for some guidance. They had a right to call upon the right hon. Gentleman opposite to say, whether it might embarrass his Parliamentary plans or not—he did not say that it would—to let the House know what was in contemplation, so that they might be the better able to judge whether there was any real attempt to grapple with the condition of social order in Ireland. He would not have trespassed on the House so long were it not that the matter appeared to him of supreme importance. He would now conclude. He would only say, as he had in the beginning, that he believed it was his right, and that he should not be fulfilling his duty, were he not to take the opportunity which the Forms of the House presented to-night for bringing forward this grave and serious question. The basis of his argument was that the social condition of Ireland was in a dangerous state, and each hour that passed made it more critical. Under these circumstances he asked the Government what course they were prepared to take? That was a question which the House had a right to ask, and the Government were bound to answer; and any delay in the granting of the Civil Service Estimates that might occur would be but a small

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matter when compared with the advantage that would arise if they could obtain such an assurance from the Government as he asked for, upon which would depend the future peace and safety of the State.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the House is unwilling to entertain Estimates for the Civil Establishments in Ireland before being placed in possession of the policy which Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue for the restoration and maintenance of social order in that Country."—(*Mr. Helms*.)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (*Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE*): *SIR*, I can assure the right hon. and learned Gentleman that I perfectly understand the modest request at the close of his speech, when he asked the Government for some guidance. The meaning of that is that he intends and desires that we should proclaim the principles and basis of the measures which we hope to frame and introduce without being able either to state the reasons upon which they will be founded or the particulars by which they will be adjusted to the circumstances of Ireland, and that by an imprudence of that kind on our part he considers, after the irresistible speech he has delivered, it will be no longer possible for us to evade a declaration, and he and his Friends will be in a condition to undertake more pilgrimages to the North of Ireland, of which we recently had a conspicuous example, and that in the course of those pilgrimages they will be able to offer the kind of contribution which we have had to-night from the right hon. and learned Gentleman towards the settlement of the great question of the social condition of Ireland. *SIR*, I do not take credit to myself for any great sagacity. *Laughter from the Opposition.* I am delighted to be agreed with those Gentlemen: there is nothing that pleases me more than to find myself in perfect harmony with hon. Gentlemen who are remarkable for their experience, for their wisdom, and for all their other high statesmanlike qualities. But, without giving credit to myself for any great sagacity, I may, perhaps, not betray

undue presumption in saying that I am not such a simpleton in the position that I occupy as to be led away by the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The right hon. and learned Gentleman complains of us that he cannot hear our views. He hoped that we were going to attend to the social condition of Ireland. Why, upon the very first occasion that we occupied this seat he was told in language I should have thought plain—but there are none so deaf as those who will not hear, none so ignorant as those who will not understand—that the social condition of Ireland was the very first of all the questions that attracted and fastened our attention from the first moment of our entrance into Office, and that attention has been maintained without intermission down to the time at which I speak. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, I may observe, has not said one single word upon the subject of his own Motion. His feelings entirely drew him off, and caused him to forget the proposition upon which we are invited to agree. I may say, paying attention to the paper put into my hands this morning, I saw that the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh Major Sanderson had given Notice of a Motion taking precedence of that now made, and declaring that the condition of Ireland is such as to require the immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government, with the object of restoring the authority of the law. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was not satisfied with the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member. He thought he could improve upon it, and no doubt he had the assistance of the statesmanlike qualities and collective wisdom always to be found on that Bench. But how did he recommend his Motion? Instead of merely saying in a plain and intelligible fashion that this was an urgent matter, he resorted to the *ultima ratio* of Parliament, and threatened us with a partial stoppage of Supply. That is an extreme remedy which the House of Commons possesses, and which it applies, or might apply, when the obstinacy of a Government in its adherence to Office or to a particular policy is so perverse or extreme that nothing can be done but to stop Supply. But surely this is not a case to warrant resort to this extreme remedy. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said we have

been four weeks in Office; that is rather an exaggerated statement of the case. But we are certainly approaching, I believe, the completion of four weeks. Under these circumstances, the right hon. and learned Gentleman finds it necessary to bring out of the armoury of Parliament this very formidable weapon, and threatens the Crown with withholding the Supplies necessary for the Public Service. And what does he propose to do? He proposes—and I do not wonder that he said nothing upon his Motion, for it may have dawned upon him that it was totally indefensible—he proposes to withhold the Irish portion of the Supplies. Was there ever a proceeding that could be called, by those who criticize Ireland, more Irish? What portion of the country is it that is suffering from the present misconduct and neglect of Her Majesty's Government? It is poor Ireland. As the right hon. and learned Gentleman tells us, the condition is intolerable, and is becoming worse and worse every day; and in that state of facts the prescription offered by the right hon. and learned Gentleman to amend the state of Ireland is that he adds to this condition of things, already intolerable, the stoppage of all the services necessary to work the social machinery. This, I think, the right hon. and learned Gentleman ought in some degree to have explained in the course of his speech. The House will remember that, instead of withholding our views, we made to the House a most important declaration—a declaration that, after reviewing the social state of Ireland, we arrived at the conclusion that at the juncture at which we stood we should not be justified in proposing to supply the defects of social order in Ireland, whatever they may be, by means of special repressive legislation, but that it was our duty to search out more positive, substantive, remedial measures, and to present them to Parliament at the earliest possible moment consistent with the due consideration of matters of such complexity and such difficulty. I have said, and I must repeat it, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman has found my language so hard to understand. That is a stereotyped method of proceeding. It is well known, I think, that I have been more than a half a century in public life; that I have spoken a great deal; and that I

was never able to say anything which my countrymen were able to understand. No doubt that is a natural defect on my part, which I am afraid it is too late for me to hope to remedy; but this I have said, which appears to me to be not wholly unintelligible—that there are three questions before us in regard to the condition of Ireland—the first, that of social order; the second, the question of the land; and the third, the question of the future government of Ireland. These three questions are so entwined together that I defy the wit of man to disjoin them; and we hope to get at the question of social order, as I have said, not by the specific of the right hon. and learned Gentleman—namely, repressive criminal legislation—but by positive and substantial measures relating to the other two branches of the subject. Well, Sir, is it really to be said that Ireland has suffered horribly from the delay in the announcement of our plans? Why are our plans so late? I do not hesitate to say what is the time the Government ought to have for the purpose of preparing plans dealing with subjects so large, so vital, and so difficult. It ought to have at least three months—three clear unembarrassed months—before the Session of Parliament. Why were we deprived of that opportunity? Three months, Sir, there could not have been; but there was a considerable time between the first week of December, in which the Elections were decided, and the Queen's Speech on the 21st of January. I do not censure the late Government when they departed from a course of precedent uniform since 1868, and first established by Lord Beaconsfield; because when I saw 250 Gentlemen determined to meet Parliament as the Government of the country, I said surely these men have, and mean to have, a policy for Ireland. They know, and they knew, that the last support I could give them was at their command. [*Ironical cheers from the Opposition.*] I do not say that the Gentlemen whom I see cheering me knew it, but I say that the late Government knew it. It is in that way, Sir, that time has been lost, if time has been lost. And how was it spent by the late Government? Well, it was spent in a hopeless attempt to consider the state of Ireland; and the right hon. and learned Gentleman tonight has given us an excuse so futile

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and so ludicrous that he must indeed have a mean opinion of the understanding of this House if he believes that here it can pass muster for a moment. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has told us that the late Government on the 21st of January had made up its mind to propose repressive criminal legislation for Ireland. I am not misrepresenting the right hon. and learned Gentleman in stating that to have been the clear declaration that he has made. In the first place, I do not know how it is possible to reconcile that declaration with the language of the Queen's Speech, which was "that there had been during the last year no marked increase of serious crime;" and still less is it possible to reconcile that declaration with the express and explicit words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who, on the 21st of January, speaking in this House, used these words in addressing us—

"Whether it is possible to deal with the outrages and social disorders by any further application of the powers of the ordinary law, or whether it is necessary for the Government to ask Parliament to confer on the Executive additional powers, are questions which"—

what? which according to the right hon. Gentleman have been decided? No; but—

"are questions which will receive the immediate and earnest attention of my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster" (*3 Hansard*, 302, 124)

who at that time had undertaken a mission to Ireland, and on whose Report the decision of the late Government was to depend. Now, Sir, my contention is that these statements, both proceeding from very high authority, are in flat, absolute, diametrical contradiction. And then comes the futile excuse which the right hon. and learned Gentleman has been bold enough to palm upon us. He said it was impossible to make the announcement, because there was to be a change in the Lord Lieutenantcy of Ireland. But why should that make it impossible? Was there no other Lord Lieutenant to be found? I could have understood the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he had gone a little further into the facts, and told us that the mind of Lord Carnarvon, a humane, honourable, and intelligent man, was so struck by his experience in Ireland that he was no longer

willing to be a party to a policy of repression. But to tell us simply that because there was to be a change in the hands that were to wield the Executive power in Ireland, therefore the fundamental principles of the policy of the Government could not be announced, is to propound to us that which would not pass muster in the lowest class in a national school. It seems to be forgotten that besides Lord Carnarvon there was somebody else in the Cabinet—another Irishman, a most distinguished Irishman, whose able exertions in this House we shall not lightly forget—I mean Lord Ashbourne. Why was not his presence in the Cabinet sufficient to enable the Cabinet to bridge over this vital interval, and to maintain some continuity of ideas between the day when Lord Carnarvon held Office and the day on which he did not? Now, Sir, I will say a word more as to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's defence of this extraordinary Motion, in which, because we have been cruelly and unjustly punishing Ireland by keeping her in painful suspense, he proposes further to punish her by stopping the action of the Civil Service of that country. There is much more to be said of the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman than that. It is a speech for the immediate application of coercive legislation to Ireland. I hope I shall speak intelligibly, even to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, when I tell him that to such a purpose we will be no party. I will go further, and say that it is my firm conviction that if the late Government had been enabled by continuance in Office to make their proposals, the effect of their attempt to pass them through this House would, under the actual circumstances of Ireland, have led to nothing but disastrous Parliamentary discomfiture. But, Sir, the right hon. and learned Gentleman, besides making such a plea, has made it with accompaniments on which I must offer an observation. He has spoken, especially in the last portion of his speech, of the condition of Ireland, and of the relations of one set of Irishmen to another set of Irishmen, and the only proper mode of dealing with Ireland in such a case is to stir up again every ancient controversy, to aggravate and inflame every animosity, and to show us more clearly, if possible, than we see it already, that if there is

to be hope for Ireland in the future, or hope for the relations between the countries, it must be from the adoption of very different proposals and the promotion of a very different temper from that of the late Attorney General for Ireland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, in his speech, said a great deal more than that, for he has pronounced the heaviest indictment I have yet heard pronounced against the late Government; and he has likewise supplied the present Government with an acquittal with which I, for one, am perfectly satisfied. The right hon. and learned Gentleman is pressing upon us an immediate resort to coercive or repressive legislation. He says there is nothing else for it, and he proves it by the most ingenious argument. He says, either you will fail to please the Nationalists, and then there will be no peace for Ireland, but increased exasperation; or you will fail to please the Protestants, and then there will be no peace, but increased exasperation; or you will fail to please both, and then the same mischief will occur, and there will be increased exasperation.

MR. HOLMES: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman would not wish to misrepresent me. I never used the word "Protestant."

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I am much obliged to the right hon. and learned Gentleman. I was wrong in using the word "Protestant;" I meant the minority. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, I have no doubt, is proud of that argument by exhaustion; and he does not at all question the fact that he contended that there was nothing to be done by any medicine for Ireland except the drastic purge which he recommends. He stated facts which are most material to the case on both sides—most material to the case on our side; for what is his—I will not say his admission, but his allegation? He seemed to suspect there was some real improvement in the state of Ireland; but then he said—"What does that come to, and what does that signify? It is not an improvement which is due to the action of Her Majesty's Government." So, according to the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, it does not signify how much Ireland improves through the action of the people, or through the action of the popular leaders, unless you can show that it improves through re-

pressive legislation. He says there is no improvement worth having unless it comes through the action of repressive legislation. "Mr. Davitt has been down preaching order;" I am extremely glad to hear it; "and the National League is mitigating and moderating its language." Again, I am extremely glad to hear it. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman says not only that he is not glad to hear it, but that this is exactly what alarms him. It is so much the worse, not only in the sanctuary of his private mind, which I do not seek to penetrate; but it is so much the worse in this sense, if I understand him rightly—that he considers the fact that Mr. Davitt is preaching order, and the National League is mending its manners, as an additional point strengthening the argument for repressive legislation. That is the precise representation of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's argument. But I have much more than this to say. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has drawn a dreadful picture of the state of Ireland in order to sustain his argument on behalf of coercive legislation. From whence did he draw materials for his demonstration? What are the dates? He dwelt particularly upon the deplorable Curtin murder. He was asked what was the date of that murder? He did not know. Oh, Sir, what a delightful infantile innocence of recollection! Most fortunate for him was it that he did not know the date of that murder. One thing we know from the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and that is the character of the murder as he views it, and as in substance too truly views it. The character of that murder was not ascertained by investigations carried on long after, but became palpable at the time; because the right hon. and learned Gentleman truly says it is not the mere amount of crime in the country, but the sympathy with which it is regarded, which determines its character; and the sympathy in the Curtin murder was manifested immediately on the day of the funeral. Therefore it becomes a matter of fresh and enhanced interest to investigate this recondite and almost inaccessible fact of the date of the murder. The date of the murder was, it appears, the 13th of November, and Parliament was dissolved on the 17th of November, and the Elections began about the 24th of

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November. There was thus plenty of time, aided by the glaring light of the Curtin murder, to exhibit to the country the condition of Ireland at that time, and to announce to the country at the Elections the intention of the Government to deal with that condition in the manner in which alone the right hon. and learned Gentleman conceives it can be dealt with—namely, by establishing repressive legislation. Where, then, were the declarations of the Government after the occurrence of the Curtin murder? Such sentiments as we have heard from the right hon. and learned Gentleman to-night were not forthcoming at all. But other declarations were forthcoming after the Curtin murder, and yet before the Elections; for, unless I am much mistaken—I did not copy out the words of the sentence, but they were supplied me—a speech was made by the noble Lord the Member for Paddington Lord Randolph Churchill, on the 20th of November at Birmingham, a week after the Curtin murder. What said the noble Lord on the 20th of November? I hope he has been correctly reported; but he is here to correct the statement if it is inaccurate. On the 20th of November the noble Lord is reported to have spoken thus—

"We undertook on accepting Office that we would endeavour to govern Ireland and preserve order by the same laws with which we preserve order in England, and that we would endeavour to do without the abridgements of liberty which Mr. Gladstone has found necessary. I venture to say that up to the present date that claim has been abundantly justified. Although there has been one or two outrages of a serious character, on the whole crime and outrage in Ireland have greatly diminished."

Now, Sir, first of all, I call attention to that speech; and, secondly, I will say how far it is true that crime and outrage in Ireland had greatly diminished. According to the right hon. and learned Gentleman—and upon this subject he practised a somewhat prudent reserve—it may be clearly inferred to be his belief that in June and July last the late Government were justified in abandoning the Crimes Act. He has not said "Aye" to that proposition, but neither has he said "No;" and as he is a Gentleman so much alive to the value of clear and perspicuous speech, no doubt he is prepared to sustain the inference which this raises. I assume that he thinks the late Government were justified in abandon-

ing the Crimes Act, because he says there was nothing for which they were so much attacked. I do not know if the right hon. and learned Gentleman was in this House at the time the announcement was made. But my recollection is that no attack whatever was made on them unless by some of their own Friends. For myself, I gave them every encouragement. I thought the experiment was rash; but I cordially wished it success, and nothing would have been more delightful if we had found that we had been demonstrably wrong in the intention which we had previously formed. Since that a great change has taken place—according to the late Attorney General for Ireland—a great change in the condition of Ireland, and a great change in the views and intentions of the late Government. When did the two changes occur? It is obvious that down to the Elections not the faintest intimation was conveyed by the late Government of the failure of their scheme. (Sir MICHAEL HURKE-BEACH: It was intimated.) Such an intimation was conveyed! Let us hear it, and in the meantime I stand not upon an intimation, but upon a declaration, a solemn avowal made on November 20 by the noble Lord that the decision of the Government had been abundantly justified. But now the charge against us is that we do not immediately resort to repressive criminal legislation. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says there has been a fatal change. When did that change take place? When did the increase of outrages and of "Boycotting" occur? It is idle to take the mere fact of the multiplication of the branches of the National League without reference to the work which those branches are accused of doing. We have a test of the efficiency of whatever is evil in the working of those branches in the amount of "Boycotting" in the country. What is the history of "Boycotting" in Ireland? Conveyed in very few words indeed, in the month of May, before Lord Spencer retired, there were, according to official Returns, 53 individuals under the unmitigated proscription of "Boycotting" and 174 under the partial proscription, making 227 in all. What was the state of things in October, three months after the retirement of Lord Spencer, and at the time when, as the noble Lord tells us, the decision had been

abundantly justified? The number of persons totally "Boycotted" had risen to 165, and of those partially "Boycotted" 714. Thus, the number had risen from 227 to 879; and yet, according to the noble Lord, the experiment or decision was abundantly justified. What is the state of things with regard to "Boycotting" now? The point is that the late Government said its experiment had succeeded in November, but has now failed, and that there must be immediate coercive legislation. What is the state of "Boycotting" now? Between June and October "Boycotting" rose from 227 to 879. In the latest Returns for January the number was virtually stationary—for it has risen from 879 to 900. I am justified in saying that it is stationary, as between the dropping of the Crimes Act and November it had increased fourfold. Yet the Government persisted in saying that the experiment had succeeded until after the Elections were over. Then, after a considerable time, the state of things in Ireland is declared to be intolerable, when, in point of fact, as regards "Boycotting" it had undergone no change whatever since November worth the naming. What was the state of things in regard to agrarian crime? It was this. In November the agrarian crimes reported, including threatening letters, were 84; in December they were 89; and in January they were 96. And yet, Sir, in October, when the state of things was satisfactory, and nothing required to be said which could produce a breach between the Tories and the Nationalist Party, the agrarian crimes reported were 106—the highest figure of all that has come before us. That was in the month of October, the month immediately preceding the General Election. How does the right hon. and learned Gentleman meet this? It is true that there has been a change up to a certain point in the state of Ireland; in my opinion, it is not a change which would justify our resorting at this juncture to repressive criminal legislation. It is true that there had been a change, a great change; it is also true that that change had taken place in the month of October; but from the moment that the late Government announced its change of intention and a determination to resort to repressive criminal legislation there was no change whatever of a sensible magnitude as

compared with what had been going on for months without their notice and without their action. This appears to be a state of things requiring a great deal more explanation than the right hon. and learned Gentleman has afforded even in his lengthy speech. He has dealt with the Curtin murder. I have shown that the character of that murder was known in the month of November, and it was not until the end of January that coercive legislation was announced. He has dwelt upon the action of the National League; I have shown that that action, in so far as it is objectionable, as tested by the amount of "Boycotting" and intimidation, had been stationary since October, and that the greater change that had taken place took place long before. What appears, therefore, upon the undoubted showing of the fact is this—that while the state of Ireland was changing in respect of crime and intimidation, the late Government stood calmly by with folded arms, and said nothing and did nothing that could interfere with the then recently established political harmony. It was not till after the Election that the state of things was described as intolerable. Then it was that the late Government came forward and said that they must have coercive legislation immediately, and that they must put aside all Business of Parliament, although, as I have shown, no change whatever had occurred in the state of Ireland. I do not know that there is anything in the state of Ireland now which we can regard as conveying the idea of a radical change. I do not doubt for a moment the evils that mark the social condition of Ireland with reference to law and the execution of justice. The question between us is a question of the mode of meeting those evils, and I own it appears to me that the course pursued by the right hon. and learned Gentleman of exasperating and inflaming passion and thwarting every attempt we can make to deal largely with the Land Question, or with other matters in which Ireland takes so deep an interest, is simply to aggravate the difficulties and dangers of the situation; certainly it can do nothing whatever in any sense to mitigate or relieve them. Yet I observed with some satisfaction that the agrarian crimes, which in October were 106, when the right hon. and learned Gentleman saw no neces-

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ality for repressive legislation, now, when he is urging repressive legislation with might and main, are, at any rate, a little better than they were, because they have sunk in February to 71. [Mr. T. P. O'Connor: Including threatening letters.] I rather believe that the proportion of threatening letters in February was remarkably large. I am not, however, quite sure as to that point; but I stand at present upon the unquestionable fact with regard to the numbers. Now, I think I had some justification for the statement when I said the right hon. and learned Gentleman supplied us with the material for an acquittal, and that he had, on the contrary, raised a most grave and serious question tending to the condemnation of himself and his own Government. Because they amount to this—a total neglect of the facts as to the state of Ireland down to a certain date in November, which it would be invidious to connect too closely with the occurrence of the General Election; but, at any rate, a total neglect of the state of Ireland. And as to the assertion that upon the whole the experiment of governing Ireland by the ordinary law has succeeded, I have shown that, in point of fact, all the additional evils that are alleged to have come had come then. The subsequent change of intention everybody presumes to have been founded upon some great aggravation then going on; whereas we now find that there was no aggravation whatever, and no addition to the evils which required to be faced. I must say that the attack of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, though he has made it under the pressure of conscience and the sharpness of its stings, which, he found, would have been perfectly intolerable unless he had brought this Motion forward, is one of the feeblest attacks that I have ever witnessed against the policy and the proceedings of an Executive Government.

Lord ERNEST HAMILTON said, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister proposed, as he had just told the House, to adopt positive and substantial remedies which should deal with the three questions—the three great questions in Ireland—namely, with social disorder, the land, and the question of self-government collectively; and the right hon. Gentleman had told the

House, moreover, that these three questions were bound together by ties so strong that it was not in the power of man to separate them. Now, he Lord Ernest Hamilton would ask the right hon. Gentleman, if these three questions were bound together so strongly, which was the one question of the three upon which the other two turned? For an answer to this question the Prime Minister could do no better than appeal to hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway, and who professed to represent Irish opinion. What had the House been told by them? They were told the other night by the hon. Member for North Longford Mr. Justin M'Carthy) that they declined to take the questions in the order in which they were proposed to be taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. The hon. Member for Longford had told them that the question of self-government must come first. He Lord Ernest Hamilton) had little doubt as to the minds of hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway now; but he would like to ask those Gentlemen had they always put this question so prominently forward? What was the question that was put forward most prominently at the hustings during the last Elections? He had no hesitation in saying that the question of Local Self-Government pure and simple—that was to say, the right to govern the Irish people by an Irish Parliament sitting in Dublin—was never put before the people of Ireland at the Elections. [Laughter.] Hon. Members might laugh, but he challenged them to quote a single speech in which Home Rule pure and simple was put forward in the way he had described. It was the question of the land that was put before the people; and it was upon the distinct understanding that the establishment of a native Parliament would be the signal for the abolition of rents, the extinction of landlords, and the redistribution of property, that these 84 Gentlemen were sent to Parliament nominally to represent four-fifths of the Irish people. These hon. Gentlemen had two very distinct and opposite sides to their views—one being used when expressing them here, and the other when addressing the people of Ireland. It had been his Lord Ernest Hamilton's fate to mix with the crowd when hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway

were addressing friendly and sympathetic audiences in Ireland. He thought that if hon. Gentlemen could see the extraordinary transformation which took place the moment they were transplanted to their native mountains, out of sight of the Front Treasury Bench, and compared them with their attitude in the House, they would hardly believe that the mild and lamb-like individuals they saw sitting below the Gangway, speaking in honeyed accents, were the same persons whom he (Lord Ernest Hamilton) had seen holding forth in places like Cork and Kinsale. In the House they were Vesuvius in repose; in Ireland they were Vesuvius in eruption. No one would guess that under the tranquil and placid exterior the fires of Ireland smothered within. He could tell the House that these men were now slumbering volcanoes. It was not his intention to produce extracts from speeches delivered by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, showing deliberate intention to incite crime and outrage. Those facts were on record, and it was needless to repeat them; but he would say that there were many meetings held in Ireland where reporters were not present, and where the speakers were not kept back by the fear of seeing their speeches in print next morning, where all restraint was abandoned, and where it was possible to sow the seeds of crime in minds only too ready to receive them by subtle references. At these meetings the whole powers of the speakers were brought to bear upon the ignorance and excitability of their credulous audiences to the one object of stirring up their passions against landlords. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had excused these instances, when some of his followers had recommended their hearers to get rid of their landlords by shooting them like partridges, by saying that they could not put old heads on young shoulders. He (Lord Ernest Hamilton) should imagine that the hon. Member for the City of Cork included his own head in this category, because there was no one whose utterances could be more easily construed into an incitement to outrage and crime than those of the hon. Gentleman himself. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway disclaimed that they were in any way concerned in or responsible for the outrages which had taken place in

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recent years in Ireland. Very probably they would say that their only object was to impress upon the people of Ireland a due sense of the wrongs they suffered at the hands of the needy and exacting landlords. Well, if they acknowledged that, they acknowledged that they were responsible for every agrarian outrage which had taken place of recent years in Ireland. In respect of that he would produce the testimony of Archbishop Walsh, who, writing to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in the middle of last month, and speaking of the state of Ireland, said—

"In point of fact, every disturbance of social order which has appeared amongst our people has arisen from a sense of wrong entertained by a large majority of the occupiers of the soil, owing to the merciless exactions of unfeeling or extravagant landlords."

["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen applauded the sentiment; but it was a mere sense of wrong that was entertained; and hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway had done everything in their power to foster and promote it. Now, when they considered this, and when they coupled it with the connection which undoubtedly existed in the mind of every Irishman, and which, he confessed, the present Government had done everything in their power to confirm, that as long as they were peaceful and law-abiding their claims would be ignored, and that the only way to enforce the recollection of their grievances on the British Government was by the perpetration of crime and outrage, was it to be wondered at that the Irish people resorted to crime and outrage? The Prime Minister had produced figures to show that crime had not been on the increase since the expiration of the Crimes Act. ["No, no!"] He begged pardon—since the Election. At all events, hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway claimed that crime had not been on the increase since the expiration of the Crimes Act; and what else were they told by the same Gentlemen—that crime had not been on the increase, because it had been superseded by the safer and more effectual method of "Boycotting." ["No, no!"] It certainly had been said by the hon. Member for South Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that "Boycotting" was a safety valve for crime, and that so long as "Boycotting" was unchecked, so

long crime would not increase. The moment steps were taken to suppress "Boycotting" they were given to understand that the safety-valve would burst, and the inevitable explosion take place. At the present moment, crime was only kept in check by the supreme efforts of the Leaders of the National Party; but it was not because crime was repugnant to their feelings, but because they were making a final and combined effort to obtain that legislative independence which they—*he did not say the Irish people*—were so anxious to have for obvious reasons, which he need not mention, and because they knew that at a juncture like the present acts of crime and outrage would be a serious stumbling block in the way of obtaining their object. But if they were foiled in their efforts the restraining hand would be withdrawn. Under such circumstances, if the Government failed in its obvious duty, it would have the blood of many innocent people on its head. If the question were met firmly it would prove to be no more serious than the bursting of a soap-bubble. Irish Celts were not made of the stuff that martyrs were made of. The very knowledge of the fact that they could not commit crime with impunity was sufficient to prevent it. But if concessions were granted in the outbursts of crime it would most assuredly be taken for weakness, and be an incentive to fresh crime for the sake of obtaining fresh concessions. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway exclaimed against coercion; but there was now in Ireland coercion of the very worst kind. It was coercion to compel the people to resist the law of the land, and submit absolutely to the law of the National League. He maintained that if the ordinary law was not sufficient to cope with this state of things, if it was to be a question whether it was to be coercion to resist or to obey the law, could any Government hesitate about its duty? He was sure there were some hon. Members of the House who would agree with him that, at the present moment, a measure which would suppress crime in Ireland would be looked upon, not only by the Loyalists, but by a considerable portion of the Catholics, not as an Act of coercion, but as an Act of universal emancipation. They were tired of this agitation, which was ruining the country. They were tired of the domination

of the National League, and they wanted quiet and rest in order to be able to pursue their ordinary occupations in peace. It was not his intention to refer at any length to the absurd attempt on the part of the hon. Members below the Gangway to censure a prominent Member of the Late Government Lord Randolph Churchill, for his alleged incitement to outrage and intimidation of the House; but he did desire to say this—that being as he was tolerably familiar and conversant with the language and style which these hon. Gentlemen adopted in their native country, it appeared to him supremely ludicrous that they should seriously and with all solemnity express virtuous indignation at the conduct of the noble Lord, and that they should try to misinterpret his meaning into an attempt to incite the people to outrage. He had read the speech of the noble Lord, and also the resolutions passed in the recent meeting in Belfast, with interest and with care, and he failed to see in the language of the noble Lord or in the wording of the resolutions anything but an expression of the opinion which was entertained not only by the Loyalists of Ireland, but which he had every reason to believe was shared even by many of the most devoted admirers of the hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and that was when they contemplated the possibility of handing over the entire control of Irish affairs to the Parnellite Members they must remember that a long term of apprenticeship in the art of brewing social disorder and in creating social difficulties, though it might possibly ingratiate them for the time being with certain classes, was hardly calculated to fit them in a marked degree for the duties of legislators, excellent as they might be, and excellent as they undoubtedly were in their present capacity as agitators. If their past actions were taken as indications what might be expected in the future? The probability was that as framers of the law and preservers of the peace they would prove to be ridiculous, worthless, and incapable. There was the unalterable opinion of a large portion of the Irish population, and this opinion the people would express. As long as there was liberty of speech in the country they would continue to protest against a form of government which, not taking into considera-

tion other grave facts, they had every reason to believe would in itself prove ridiculous and incompetent, and make Ireland the laughing-stock of the civilized world.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY said, that, as an Englishman who had spent many years in Ireland and had thus acquired a considerable knowledge of the Irish character, he felt that it was his duty to make a few observations upon this question, especially as the House had heard a great deal in reference to it from hon. Members who had no acquaintance whatever with that country. At the present moment an exceptional state of things prevailed in Ireland. The Queen's writs did not run in that country, and the people were practically at the mercy of the National League. The National League had ramifications all over Ireland—a fact for which the landlords themselves were greatly to blame. When the National League first came into power the landlords should have called attention to the power that was gradually overspreading the country, and to the growth of a tyranny under which people were prohibited from entering into free contracts and from discharging the ordinary duties of life. The Irish Question ought to be approached from a National and not from a Party point of view. To show how little he was biased by Party considerations in reference to this subject, he might say that when he found that the late Government had made no statement in the Speech from the Throne of their intention to proclaim the National League, he wrote to his friends in Ireland asking them to communicate to him facts with regard to the condition of things in that country which were within their own knowledge, so that he might have materials for calling the attention of the House to this subject at an early date. In response to that invitation he had received a large number of very valuable communications which showed that the landlords could not get their rents from their tenants, and that even those tenants who were in a position to pay and who were willing to pay their rents were prevented by the National League from doing so. The present Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) had arrogated to himself the right of determining which of the writs from Her Majesty's Courts of Justice

should be permitted to run, and he should like to know whether the Chief Secretary was ready also to prevent the mortgagees from foreclosing on those estates on which the landlords were prevented from meeting their obligations in consequence of his action? In one of the letters which he had received from Ireland it was stated that the people had cut down the woods on the estate and had burned the timber, and had threatened to cut off the ears of the agent if he interfered. [An hon. MEMBER: Where has that taken place?] Not being anxious that any person's ears should be cut off, he must decline to give names or places. Just before coming down to that House to-day he had received a letter from an officer in the Army asking for the loan of £25, on the ground that he was in want of almost the necessaries of life in consequence of the non-payment of rent on his Irish estates. In May next a large number of loans would become due, and if the Queen's writs were not to run in Ireland the landlords would be totally unable to meet their obligations. In his opinion, the Irish people had not been properly treated. The votes of the Irish people ought to be disregarded and justice ought to be done, not only to the tenants, but to the landlords. The question had been raised as to whether Ireland should have Home Rule; and he should like to know whether hon. Members were prepared to hand over to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway the actual manipulation of the affairs of that country? He might say that whatever Government suppressed the National League, which body was a disgrace to Ireland and also to this country, they would have his support, and if the present Government brought forward effectual measures to uphold Her Majesty's authority in Ireland he was sure they would have a much larger majority than they now had in that House. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had stated that he was prepared to protect the Protestants of Ireland as well as the Catholics in the event of a Home Rule measure being passed. He had no doubt that that was the hon. Gentleman's intention. But there was an old saying "that he who pays the piper calls the tune," and though the hon. Gentleman might be very useful to the people who now employed him, still the moment he ceased to play

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the tune they wished him to play his power would be gone. If they gave Home Rule to Ireland there would be nothing but jobbery practised there. He wished to protest against any greater power being given to the Irish nation until the National League was suppressed.

MR. JOHNSTON said, that the question now before the House was one that so largely interested all the Loyalist Members from Ireland that it would not be right if he hesitated for a short time to trouble the House in laying before it some of the views of the constituency which he represented upon the question of the future well-being and government of Ireland. The hon. Member for the City of Cork, on various occasions, had taken care to utter with no uncertain voice the sentiments of the great Party which he led. He quite admitted that it was a great Party. It was a Party which was well organized, thoroughly united, and which had no indefinite object or uncertain aim. It aimed at the utter annihilation of the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland and at breaking up the whole British Empire. "No, no!" It was all very well for hon. Gentlemen to cry "No!" but he might point out that in a recent publication of a newspaper—which he sometimes read, and which, no doubt, the hon. Members below the Gangway read regularly and eagerly—called *The Irish World*, of the 30th of January last, there appeared some correspondence under the heading "Transatlantic," which spoke of Ireland's mission to destroy the British Empire. It was for this mission that the National League had been organized. Well, he wished to draw attention to the fact that an hon. Member below the Gangway wrote a weekly letter to the organ of the League in America under the signature of "Transatlantic" ("Name, name!" Well, probably hon. Gentlemen would cry "Oh, oh!" if he said it was Mr. T. P. O'Connor).

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I rise to give the most emphatic contradiction to that statement. I never wrote a line in *The Irish World* in my life.

MR. JOHNSTON said, that was very satisfactory, and he would withdraw the statement. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway often spoke about the wrongs

of Ireland, past and present. This generous country was always ready to listen to the story of the wrongs of Ireland; but because statements made by some Irish Members were uncontradicted in that House, Englishmen thought they were incapable of contradiction, and therefore believed them. The noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) had been accused of uttering violent language and inciting to civil war. But he should like to point out that there was such a thing as an Irish-American military organization on the other side of the Atlantic. It might not be known to every hon. Member of the House that Patrick Egan, who, for reasons which might be easily understood, thought proper to place the broad Atlantic between himself and the administration of justice in Ireland, was now President of the National League in America. There appeared in *The Irish World* in January last the following letter:—

"New York City, Jan. 22, '86.

"Editor *The Irish World*.—I am glad to see by the announcement in your last issue that the preparations for the Irish-American military camp at Newark, N.J., next Fourth of July are proceeding steadily. In view especially of what has lately occurred on the other side, the military movement ought to be looked on as of supreme importance and ought to be heartily supported by all in a sincere and disinterested way.

"The men who originate an idea can best bring about its development and practical application, and I therefore hope that while all Irish Americans will give every encouragement to the others who have started the project, there will be no attempt whatever made by any party or under any pretence to interfere with their work. Let them go on as they have begun, and the rest of us will be not only indebted to themselves and their race in the United States, but help greatly to advance the cause of Irish liberty."

"HIBERNIAN."

And he (Mr. Johnston) declared his belief that hon. Members below the Gangway were in league with the conspirators across the Atlantic in order to compass the destruction of the British Empire; but the Loyalists of Ireland were proud to belong to the British Empire, of which they were determined ever to form a part. In fact, the contents of their letters in *The Irish World* were in complete conformity with the utterances of the Leaders of the Irish Party in this country and in Ireland. A little while ago Mr. Parnell said—on the

6th September, 1880—[*Laughter*—well, hon. Members no doubt looked upon what was said five years ago as ancient history; and, at all events, they did not like to be reminded of their own words. Mr. Parnell said—"We will work within the lines of the Constitution as long as it suits us." How long it would suit them would depend upon the action of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury—whether governing Ireland on the principles that the country had been governed by British statesmen from generation to generation, or whether he attempted to carry out the new-fangled ideas which he had taken up in order to seat himself on the Treasury Bench. It would also appear from certain passages in *The Irish World* that there was a quarrel as to whether Russians or Irishmen were entitled to the honour of the invention of the dynamite mode of warfare, and that Irishmen claimed the honour. In dealing with this question it was necessary to make some allusion to the attitude taken up by the priests and Prelates of the Church of Rome. For a long time those reverend gentlemen had held aloof, and had looked upon the Parnellite Party as revolutionary; but of recent years they had been compelled by the force of circumstances to place themselves at the head of the anti-English Party in Ireland, and, seeing in that Party the means for carrying out their ultimate designs, they had now thoroughly identified themselves with it. There was one thing upon which the Roman Catholic clergy and the Party led by the hon. Member for Cork were at one, and that was the desire to accomplish the destruction of Orangeism in Ireland. He would call attention to recent utterances of Archbishop Croke, who said he wished to see the country restored to its pristine vigour, that commerce and agriculture and honest industry might flourish, Orangeism be broken down, and that the green flag might float once more over a prosperous people. It was within the knowledge of hon. Members that in the Province of Ulster, where Orangeism flourished, commerce flourished also; whereas in the other parts of Ireland, where the Orange Institution scarcely existed, commerce was almost extinguished, and honest industry

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was rewarded by being "Boycotted." The only industry the National Party cared to support in Ireland was the whisky industry; for when it was proposed to close the public-houses on Sunday in Dublin they held a mass meeting in the Phoenix Park to protest against it. It had no doubt disappointed hon. Members below the Gangway that the anticipation of *The Irish World* with regard to the recent change of Government had not been realized. A paragraph had appeared in that paper to the following effect:—

"Chief Secretary Parnell.—I am strongly of opinion that the time has come for Parnell to accept the Chief Secretaryship of Ireland. It is due to the Irish Party that the offer of the office be made. It is a hundred times more important for Irishmen to administer English laws in Ireland than to make laws for themselves and have them administered by aliens, as under the régime of 1782. Of the four new law officers of the Castle, it is expected by many that Tim Healy shall be one. There will be no difficulty about Parnell's or Healy's re-election."

He was afraid, however, that those anticipations had been grievously disappointed. He wondered if the Prime Minister had made any overtures to Mr. Parnell—he begged pardon, the hon. Member for the City of Cork—on the subject. [*Home Rule cries of "Divide!"*] He knew that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway were always very anxious to divide. They had expressed a great desire a night or two ago to hear some statement from the Benches on which he sat; but he had waited in vain for any of them to rise and attempt to explain the damaging statements that had been made against them and their League by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University. Were they prepared to repudiate in that House the charges brought against them; or would they not substitute for their mild and dove-like utterances in that House those violent speeches they made in Ireland, such as that he was about to quote? In October, 1880, a Gentleman whose name was reported to be Biggar made use of the following words:—

"Now, our worthy chairman in his speech said that it was undesirable that anything in the way of violence towards the landlords should be perpetrated. Now, on that subject I will say this, that the Land League as a body wants to do what is most beneficial, and they do not

want that any violence should be offered to the landlords. Now, one of the reasons is this—that persons who have undertaken to shoot landlords have missed the landlord and shot someone whom they did not intend."

He thought he might also refer to the manner in which the Leader of the Party below the Gangway spoke on the same subject. Speaking on the 26th of September, 1880, at New Ross, the hon. Member for the City of Cork said—

"I had wished in referring to a sad occurrence which took place lately, the shooting, or attempted shooting, of a land agent in this neighbourhood—I had wished to point out that recourse to such measures of procedure is entirely unnecessary, and absolutely preposterous, where there is a suitable organization among the tenants themselves."

They had heard that night from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Holmes) a very pathetic account of the murder of Mr. Curtin. But the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister treated that account in a rather jocular manner, and a smile played upon the right hon. Gentleman's countenance when he said that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University had forgotten the date of the occurrence. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had forgotten the date of the murder of General Gordon when he was seen enjoying the play at the Criterion Theatre. Was it hopeless of those who were contending for life and liberty in Ireland to expect anything from those who at present ruled the destinies of the British Empire? Murder had for the moment comparatively ceased in Ireland; but that country had been too long the shuttlecock of Party. The lives and liberties of the fellow-subjects of Englishmen and Scotchmen in that portion of the British Empire were, or ought to be, of some consideration to British statesmen, and he could not think that when the destinies of the Empire were committed to their care of right hon. Gentlemen opposite there should be any hesitation in announcing a policy for protecting the lives and liberties of the Englishmen in Ireland. He would not wish to trench upon the province of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of Treasury in denouncing the deeds of the Land League. The National League was only another name for the Land League, and on the 7th of October,

1881, the right hon. Gentleman, when Prime Minister of England, speaking before 20,000 people at Leeds, openly and deliberately charged the President of the Irish National Land League with complicity with the assassination of President of America. The right hon. Gentleman said on that occasion—

"Mr. Parnell has said America is the only friend of Ireland, but in all his references to America he has never found time to utter one word of disapproval about what is known as the assassination literature of that country. Not American literature—no, there is not an American who does not spurn and loathe it, but there are, it is said to say, a knot of Irishmen who are not ashamed to point out, in the Press which they maintain, how the ships of Her Majesty's Navy ought to be blown into the air to destroy the power of England by secret treachery, and how individuals they are pleased to select ought to be made the object of the knife of the assassin because they do not conform to the new Irish gospel."

The whole policy of the Nationalists was to disintegrate the Empire. That was the object of the United Irishmen in the Rebellion of 1798, and, down to the present day, the whole policy of the Party was to destroy the welfare and prosperity of the country. He need only point to the recent attempt of *The Freeman's Journal* to damage bank stock in Ireland. When the Prince of Wales passed through Cork it was well known how the Nationalists received him. There were a great many things which hon. Members below the Gangway were prepared to deny; but could they deny that at recent meetings in Ireland, the name of the Mahdi was greeted with loud applause, while that of England was received with groans? The Loyalists of Ireland appealed with confidence to this country, for they could not imagine that it was a crime, by sending soldiers to the field and officers to command them, to uphold the great British Empire. They had assisted in sending out Governors to the Colonies, and they had promoted by every means in their power the trade and commerce of this country. They did not think that at this critical moment they ought to be abandoned to those who hated the name and were the eternal foes of England, and who were leagued with traitors in the American States to bring about the ruin of this great Empire and to destroy the rule of the Queen in Ireland. An eloquent writer had described

how crime was brought about in Ireland. He said—

"Half a score of men met in secret; the leader tells them that Ireland has been too long trampled upon by such men as A. B., that it is time to throw off the yoke of landlords and tyrants. Three of them are sworn to shoot A. B.; they armed themselves and find their opportunity; and we read of another brutal murder. This is the type of transaction which has exasperated England during the last two years."

That passage appeared in *The Nineteenth Century*, November, 1882, and the writer was "John Morley." He (Mr. Johnston) hoped that the right hon. Gentleman entertained the same views on that grave question at the present moment. It was not the landlords and agents principally, but the farmers and labourers, Roman Catholics more than Protestants, who were the victims; and the description given in *The Nineteenth Century* was strictly and literally true. He (Mr. Johnston), although an Orangeman, would give perfect liberty to his fellow Roman Catholics, and in the matters affecting their welfare he would show no Party feeling in that House. He regretted to think that there was too much truth in the statement made recently by a priest in Dublin to a Correspondent of *The New York Nation*, when he said—

"I'll tell you what, there is no use in your talking of moderation or reconciliation with England. They hate us, and we hate them. So long as I have the power I'll work and I'll work for Home Rule; and then I'd work and I'd strive for separation; and then I'd work and I'd strive for the destruction of the British Empire."

The First Lord of the Treasury had from time to time introduced measures for the pacification of Ireland and the conciliation of the people. With such a people conciliation was out of the question and impossible. Some of those measures for the amelioration of the condition of the tenantry had his support in 1870. But each measure seemed to be attended with disastrous failure, and the Irreconcilables would take his measures to-day and work for the destruction of the Empire to-morrow.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM said, they could not get rid of the wrongs and injuries of two centuries in the short space of years that that Parliament had been working in the right direction. In dealing with Ireland they ought to aim at the peace and prosperity of the country,

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and whatever else might bring about that happy result, he was quite sure that coercion was not going to do it. If coercion would make a country happy and prosperous, Ireland ought to be in that condition, for there was no country that he knew, except such as had the misfortune to be under the rule of the Turks, that had ever had so much of it. Yet Ireland stood in a position of which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Johnston) was ashamed—and so was he—and he should continue to be ashamed till every wrong under which that country suffered had been removed. What had tended more than anything else to cause the evils under which Ireland laboured were the efforts made by some people, including certain hon. Members, to fan the flames of religious bigotry. The attempt to fan the flames of religious bigotry and hate would not promote peace and prosperity. Such speeches as those delivered lately by the hon. Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) would have just the opposite effect. Another thing that would not promote peace and prosperity was to have one policy before the elections and another after. That would not only not promote peace and prosperity, but it would tend to destroy confidence in public men by the vacillating policy that had been pursued. [*Opposition cheers.*] If hon. Gentlemen opposite wanted proofs of that, he would not have to go further than the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington. Ireland had been lately invited to express its opinions in a Constitutional way, and having so done he, as a Liberal, maintained that those opinions ought to be listened to. There were only two ways in which a nation could express its views—the one being the Constitutional way, and the other illegal, and a way that would bring disgrace upon any country. In no way could a country be brought into greater misfortune in crime—namely, the refusal to listen to its Constitutionally-expressed opinions. Ireland had sent her Representatives to the House of Commons to express her views; and while he did not say that the House was bound to agree with them, he did say that it ought to hear them. He entered a serious protest against the sentiment that Ireland was to be governed against her own will, and as a Liberal

and Constitutionalist he claimed for a people the right to govern themselves. He respected the views of a minority as much as any man; but surely in that House they would not hesitate to admit that minorities must yield to the will of majorities. It would be a happy day for legislation in regard to Ireland, as well as in regard to England, when the wishes of the people were listened to; most of the troubles and misfortunes in Ireland, as in England, were due to government for a class. The noble Lord who spoke from the Opposition side had said that the Irish National Members had two sides to their character, and he was happy to hear that they had only two. The speech of the late Premier (the Marquess of Salisbury) delivered at Newport just before the elections, and his speech at the Crystal Palace on the previous night, undoubtedly exhibited two sides, if not several, or he (Mr. Cosham) did not understand English. There were points in them which even the genius of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington could not reconcile; and, more than that, he could not reconcile his own. They were told that for some reason or other the National League were now endeavouring to suppress crime, and he was thankful for that, but believed that any attempt to promote coercion would lead to a revival of crime. The cheapest, wisest, and most Christian thing to do was to do justice, and the most unsafe thing in law and legislation was injustice — and when he said that he referred to injustice to the rich as well as to the poor, to the men who paid the rates as well as to those who received them. Hon. Gentlemen opposite thought of justice only in relation to landowners; but he thought of justice with regard to producers and consumers. Some of the darkest chapters in the history of the nation had been associated with this acquiescing with the interests of a class. The Prime Minister had that night raised himself to a higher position than he had ever stood in before. The right hon. Gentleman had conferred great blessings upon the country, and he would remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that the legislation of the last 50 years had been mainly associated with his name. The measures which had made the country great had not come from the Conservative side. Their policy had

been to say "No" to everything that had been proposed with the object of making the country great. Mr. Gladstone's name would be remembered in history, whereas those of hon. Gentlemen opposite were only written in sand; and he was going to crown his honourable and noble career by one more attempt to make Ireland peaceful and happy.

COLONEL BRIDGEMAN said, he thought the Prime Minister's references to the terms of the Motion now before the House were scarcely called for, having regard to the fact that it was well understood that those who brought it forward had no desire to stop the Supplies, and only framed the Motion in the usual Constitutional mode. A great deal had been said as to whether there should be coercion in Ireland; but it would be more honest to admit that there was coercion in Ireland at the present moment; and the question was whether the coercion should be exercised by the Representatives of the Queen's Government or by the members of a League responsible neither to God nor man. Again, upon whom was this coercion to be exercised? The Loyalists wished it to be applied to the moonlighter, the lawbreaker, the vicious, and the disloyal; but hon. Members who sat below the Gangway appeared to be quite satisfied provided it was only applied to the weak, the virtuous, and the loyal. The Prime Minister had tried a great number of experiments for the pacification of Ireland, but what had been their result? He asked whether hon. Gentlemen on the Liberal Benches were satisfied with the experiments in legislation which the Prime Minister had made in respect to Ireland? He was glad to find there were some men who refused to follow the right hon. Gentleman on the present occasion — noble exceptions, like the noble Marquess the Member for Rosendale, the Marquess of Hartington, and the hon. Member for Bury Sir Henry James, who sacrificed place and power in order to stand up for right and justice, principle and truth. He hoped they would reap a rich reward, a reward far higher than a seat on the Treasury Bench. They had gained the pleasure of a satisfied conscience and the admiration and respect of their fellow-countrymen.

Mr. ALLISON expressed the pleasure with which he had heard that night

were addressing friendly and sympathetic audiences in Ireland. He thought that if hon. Gentlemen could see the extraordinary transformation which took place the moment they were transplanted to their native mountains, out of sight of the Front Treasury Bench, and compared them with their attitude in the House, they would hardly believe that the mild and lamb-like individuals they saw sitting below the Gangway, speaking in honeyed accents, were the same persons whom he (Lord Ernest Hamilton) had seen holding forth in places like Cork and Kinsale. In the House they were Vesuvius in repose; in Ireland they were Vesuvius in eruption. No one would guess that under the tranquil and placid exterior the fires of Ireland smothered within. He could tell the House that these men were now slumbering volcanoes. It was not his intention to produce extracts from speeches delivered by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, showing deliberate intention to incite crime and outrage. Those facts were on record, and it was needless to repeat them; but he would say that there were many meetings held in Ireland where reporters were not present, and where the speakers were not kept back by the fear of seeing their speeches in print next morning, where all restraint was abandoned, and where it was possible to sow the seeds of crime in minds only too ready to receive them by subtle references. At these meetings the whole powers of the speakers were brought to bear upon the ignorance and excitability of their credulous audiences to the one object of stirring up their passions against landlords. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had excused these instances, when some of his followers had recommended their hearers to get rid of their landlords by shooting them like partridges, by saying that they could not put old heads on young shoulders. He (Lord Ernest Hamilton) should imagine that the hon. Member for the City of Cork included his own head in this category, because there was no one whose utterances could be more easily construed into an incitement to outrage and crime than those of the hon. Gentleman himself. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway disclaimed that they were in any way concerned in or responsible for the outrages which had taken place in

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recent years in Ireland. Very probably they would say that their only object was to impress upon the people of Ireland a due sense of the wrongs they suffered at the hands of the needy and exacting landlords. Well, if they acknowledged that, they acknowledged that they were responsible for every agrarian outrage which had taken place of recent years in Ireland. In respect of that he would produce the testimony of Archbishop Walsh, who, writing to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in the middle of last month, and speaking of the state of Ireland, said—

“In point of fact, every disturbance of social order which has appeared amongst our people has arisen from a sense of wrong entertained by a large majority of the occupiers of the soil, owing to the merciless exactions of unfeeling or extravagant landlords.”

[“Hear, hear!”] Hon. Gentlemen applauded the sentiment; but it was a mere sense of wrong that was entertained; and hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway had done everything in their power to foster and promote it. Now, when they considered this, and when they coupled it with the connection which undoubtedly existed in the mind of every Irishman, and which, he confessed, the present Government had done everything in their power to confirm, that as long as they were peaceful and law-abiding their claims would be ignored, and that the only way to enforce the recollection of their grievances on the British Government was by the perpetration of crime and outrage, was it to be wondered at that the Irish people resorted to crime and outrage? The Prime Minister had produced figures to show that crime had not been on the increase since the expiration of the Crimes Act. [“No, no!”] He begged pardon—since the Election. At all events, hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway claimed that crime had not been on the increase since the expiration of the Crimes Act; and what else were they told by the same Gentlemen—that crime had not been on the increase, because it had been superseded by the safer and more effectual method of “Boycotting.” [“No, no!”] It certainly had been said by the hon. Member for South Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that “Boycotting” was a safety valve for crime, and that so long as “Boycotting” was unchecked, so

long crime would not increase. The moment steps were taken to suppress "Boycotting" they were given to understand that the safety-valve would burst, and the inevitable explosion take place. At the present moment, crime was only kept in check by the supreme efforts of the Leaders of the National Party; but it was not because crime was repugnant to their feelings, but because they were making a final and combined effort to obtain that legislative independence which they—he did not say the Irish people—were so anxious to have for obvious reasons, which he need not mention, and because they knew that at a juncture like the present acts of crime and outrage would be a serious stumbling block in the way of obtaining their object. But if they were foiled in their efforts the restraining hand would be withdrawn. Under such circumstances, if the Government failed in its obvious duty, it would have the blood of many innocent people on its head. If the question were met firmly it would prove to be no more serious than the bursting of a soap-bubble. Irish Celts were not made of the stuff that martyrs were made of. The very knowledge of the fact that they could not commit crime with impunity was sufficient to prevent it. But if concessions were granted in the outbursts of crime it would most assuredly be taken for weakness, and be an incentive to fresh crime for the sake of obtaining fresh concessions. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway exclaimed against coercion; but there was now in Ireland coercion of the very worst kind. It was coercion to compel the people to resist the law of the land, and submit absolutely to the law of the National League. He maintained that if the ordinary law was not sufficient to cope with this state of things, if it was to be a question whether it was to be coercion to resist or to obey the law, could any Government hesitate about its duty? He was sure there were some hon. Members of the House who would agree with him that, at the present moment, a measure which would suppress crime in Ireland would be looked upon, not only by the Loyalists, but by a considerable portion of the Catholics, not as an Act of coercion, but as an Act of universal emancipation. They were tired of this agitation, which was ruining the country. They were tired of the domination

of the National League, and they wanted quiet and rest in order to be able to pursue their ordinary occupations in peace. It was not his intention to refer at any length to the absurd attempt on the part of the hon. Members below the Gangway to censure a prominent Member of the Late Government Lord Randolph Churchill, for his alleged incitement to outrage and intimidation of the House; but he did desire to say this—that being as he was tolerably familiar and conversant with the language and style which those hon. Gentlemen adopted in their native country, it appeared to him supremely ludicrous that they should seriously and with all solemnity express virtuous indignation at the conduct of the noble Lord, and that they should try to misinterpret his meaning into an attempt to incite the people to outrage. He had read the speech of the noble Lord, and also the resolutions passed in the recent meeting in Belfast, with interest and with care, and he failed to see in the language of the noble Lord or in the wording of the resolutions anything but an expression of the opinion which was entertained not only by the Loyalists of Ireland, but which he had every reason to believe was shared even by many of the most devoted admirers of the hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and that was when they contemplated the possibility of handing over the entire control of Irish affairs to the Parnellite Members they must remember that a long term of apprenticeship in the art of brewing social disorder and in creating social difficulties, though it might possibly ingratiate them for the time being with certain classes, was hardly calculated to fit them in a marked degree for the duties of legislators, excellent as they might be, and excellent as they undoubtedly were in their present capacity as agitators. If their past actions were taken as indications what might be expected in the future? The probability was that as framers of the law and preservers of the peace they would prove to be ridiculous, worthless, and incapable. This was the unalterable opinion of a large portion of the Irish population, and this opinion the people would express. As long as there was liberty of speech in the country they would continue to protest against a form of government which, not taking into considera-

vested with authority to administer the interests of Ireland, that administration would be in the interests of anarchy and to the detriment of those elements which had contributed to the peace and prosperity of the Irish population. It was quite within the mark to say that the Loyalists of Ireland amounted to one-third of the population, and it was a matter that ought to be put to the test at the earliest moment. It could be demonstrated by an impartial *plébescite* if all terrorism were withdrawn. He believed that one-half the population—and that half the law-abiding, thrifty, and prosperous—would be found to be antagonistic to the policy of concession, and in favour of the maintenance of the unity of the Empire, and of drawing the bonds of union closer than they were at present. It was said that there were two Nationalities in Ireland; but the Prime Minister seemed to recognize one only, and to make his concessions to it. The hon. Member for South Sligo (Mr. Sexton) told the House that every Parliamentary device would be resorted to for the purpose of embarrassing the Government if the claims of his Party were not satisfied; but two could play at that game, and it was not a dignified or just thing that the Business of the Empire should be obstructed and time frittered away by these everlasting discussions. If any Party undertook to solve this question by the desperate expedient of severing the Union, some hon. Members would resort to every Parliamentary and Constitutional means to resist the granting of such a concession. If upon the eventful day of the 1st of April the Prime Minister disclosed a scheme which they found to be inimical to the interests of the Loyalists of Ireland, so far as their Representatives were concerned they would offer it the most strenuous and inflexible opposition.

SIR WALTER B. BARTELOT: I am one of those who have never altered their opinions with regard to Ireland, one of those who have always advocated the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, which it is the first duty and business of the Government to maintain, in spite of the opinion of hon. Members whose business I believe it to be to see Ireland never at peace and never tranquil. I have never hesitated to say that the late Government made a mistake in that they did not maintain

the portions of the Crimes Act upon which the former Government went out. It is all very well to say that the former Liberal Government went out on trifling questions with regard to beer and spirits; they went out because they could not agree among themselves with regard to the renewal of the Crimes Act. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] I will undertake to say, unless the right hon. Gentleman contradicts me, that the Crimes Act was the difficulty in the Cabinet. Will the right hon. Gentleman get up and say his Cabinet was agreed?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am anxious to meet that request of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and therefore I rise to say that I have not a word to add to my letter to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), in which I stated that the Cabinet met to consider the Crimes Act on the day before the debate on the Budget, that every point was settled in the Cabinet excepting one, and that the subject of that one, as I stated in the letter, I believe, was with respect to the provisions against "Boycotting"—whether they should continue as direct provisions, or as provisions which the Lord Lieutenant should be empowered to put into force.

SIR WALTER B. BARTELOT: That may be so; but the right hon. Gentleman will not go further and say that there was not a great disagreement in the Cabinet, nor will he say that it was not upon that question that the Cabinet made up their minds to resign.

MR. GLADSTONE: The Cabinet really resigned upon the question on which they publicly resigned.

SIR WALTER B. BARTELOT: That may be so; but that was not the opinion of the country, nor is it the opinion of the country at this moment. It is remarkable that, having gone out on the question of the Crimes Act, they have now come in upon that question. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that he did not turn out the late Government on the Motion of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), but that he really turned them out on the question of dealing with Ireland. [*Cries of "No!"*] Why, the admission has been made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley). No doubt, the first object of the right

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hon. Gentleman is to maintain law and order; but what has been done to obtain that object? Not a single thing, and it is this the House has to consider. The right hon. Gentleman admits that the cases of "Boycotting" had increased enormously by the month of October, and yet when he came into Office he took no steps to diminish the number of such offences. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the case of Curtin, and no case can demonstrate more clearly the shocking state in which Ireland is. The hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon), with reference to whom the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), who is now all civility, once used very strong terms, stated on one occasion that if he were in possession of a farm he would fire upon any man who should come to turn him out of it. I will ask the hon. Member for Mayo whether he looks with complacency on the incidents of Curtin's murder, and the treatment to which his heroic daughters were afterwards subjected by their neighbours?

MR. DILLON said, that he did not look with complacency on what had happened. He considered the whole matter a most disgraceful and miserable business.

SIR WALTER B. BARTELOT: The question is this—Would these things have occurred if the National League had not been in command? If the Queen's Government had been in authority would these things have occurred? And, if they had occurred, it would have been the duty of the right hon. Gentleman, having newly come into power, to take care that they were at once put a stop to. He says that no more coercion is to be introduced. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that, as the late Government had given up coercion, it would not be possible to reintroduce it; but that is a decision I think the right hon. Gentleman may have to reconsider. We have given up bleeding, because it is considered to be an antiquated remedy; but, if you think that the only way to save the life of a patient is by bleeding him, surely you would not refuse to take that step. I venture to say that at some future time we may find the Prime Minister a most strenuous advocate for the reintroduction of coercion. I have

no desire to go into ancient history; but I must do so for a moment. I cannot but remember that, notwithstanding the warnings which sounded in his ears, the right hon. Gentleman was the man to give up the Peace Preservation Act, although he was cautioned in the strongest terms that it was the worst thing that could be done for Ireland. What was the effect of not continuing the Peace Preservation Act? The Arms Act had expired, and arms were allowed to be brought into the country, and very soon the right hon. Gentleman had to come down to Parliament and ask for a large measure of coercion, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) was the man who had to carry out that coercion. But there was something a great deal more than that, and I would like to mention it to the House, because it is as well to recall these things in the present aspect of affairs. After the right hon. Gentleman got that Act passed, murders continued to be rife in Ireland. Lord Leitrim and Mrs. Smythe were murdered. (Mr. GLAUCSTONE dissented.) The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head; but it is a fact. An hon. Member: In 1877? Yes; it was my mistake. Lord Leitrim's murder was earlier. It was Lord Mountmorres who was murdered at that time. It was not until after Lord Mountmorres and Mrs. Smythe were murdered that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) came down here and demanded, in solemn tones, that further powers should be given to him. I have the speech of the right hon. Gentleman here, if I can find it. ["Oh, oh!"] The groans of hon. Members below the Gangway do not upset me. Nothing was done by the Government until after the right hon. Gentleman had retired, and after those two terrible murders took place in the Phoenix Park. The right hon. Gentleman himself will well recollect those murders. Up to the time those two murders took place he would do nothing to remedy or prevent the outrages which were taking place in Ireland. I do not want to enter into too many details; but I also recollect, and the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) will recollect, that the right hon. Gentleman made a speech in Leeds. The hon. Member for the City of Cork answered

that speech, and the moment the hon. Gentleman had made his reply the right hon. Gentleman gave orders that he should be apprehended and put in prison, and then the right hon. Gentleman went down to the dinner at Guildhall, and stated that he had at last placed in prison the man who was steeped up to the lips in treason.

MR. SEXTON: It was the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland who said that.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I think it was the right hon. Gentleman, and that the statement was made at the Guildhall dinner, the words being that he had caused the hon. Member for the City of Cork, who was steeped to the lips in treason, to be thrown into prison. The right hon. Gentleman, after the Phoenix Park murders, came down to this House and introduced the strongest Coercion Act that had ever been submitted to the House. What did the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford say? He told us that, terrible as these murders were, they had saved Ireland, and that if they had not taken place the Government would not have thought it their duty to bring in the Prevention of Crimes Act, or, at any rate, anything like so strong a Crimes Act as that which was introduced. The state of matters had gone from bad to worse, and in a very short time it would have been necessary to put crime and outrage down, not by a Prevention Act, but by cannon and an armed force of soldiers. That was the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, expressed to his constituents long after the Phoenix Park murders took place. What were the steps taken by hon. Members below the Gangway to bring to justice the perpetrators of the murders I have mentioned, and what will they do to prevent a repetition of such horrible crimes? Can it be said that what happened then is not likely to happen again? I venture to say that if the right hon. Gentleman does not grant to hon. Members below the Gangway all they ask for, and what they think they have a chance of getting, things in Ireland will shortly revert to the very worst condition in which they have ever been, and you will find that, instead of peace and order being preserved in Ireland, crime and outrage will again prevail. Will the right hon.

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Gentleman say for one moment—because he must remember that the late Government were only in Office for something like six months—will he say that Ireland is in such a state of prosperity and well-being, that it is able to attract capital, and to induce men to invest their money there as they ought to do, in an integral part of this great Empire? I venture to say that until things are settled and until we know what is going to be done in Ireland, which we do not know at present, there can be no confidence whatever that peace and order will be restored in Ireland. Look for a moment at the population of Ireland. I have no desire to put one class against another, or one religion against another; but I believe that there are many men in Ireland—Roman Catholics as well as Protestants—who as firmly support the Union between the two countries as any hon. Member sitting on this side of the House. I believe that the desire for the repeal of the Union has been grossly exaggerated. I firmly believe that if they came to the test, and the people of Ireland were left to themselves, you would find a large number, who are now believed to be in favour of the separation of England and Ireland, who would be found in reality to be warm supporters of the Union. Do not let us make any mistake about that question. The question at present before us is that peace and order should be maintained; and I say that when the right hon. Gentleman told us that day and night for weeks and months, and even for years, he has been thinking of a solution of this difficult question, surely he is able to say what it is that he proposes to do for the preservation of peace and order in Ireland. I am sorry to say that is the one thing he will not tell us; and I think it will be for the interest of Ireland, and for the interest of the United Kingdom, if he will inform us plainly and distinctly whether he means to have a Parliament on College Green. That is the question which is agitating the minds of hon. Members below the Gangway—that is what they have taken off their coats to fight for; that is what they have stated distinctly will satisfy them, and nothing else. ["Hear, hear!"] Well, that is a point gained. We now know exactly where we stand. Hon. Members below the Gangway do desire a Parliament

on College Green; and if I know the views and opinions of my countrymen and of hon. Members who sit in this House, and of men who are ready to put Party considerations on one side, and to look only to the interests of the country, the first thing they have at heart is that the interests of this great Empire shall be preserved. I know that, whether we may or may not agree with many hon. Members in all particulars, there are on the opposite Benches hon. Gentlemen who have already made sacrifices in the interests of their country; and the time will come, and that before long, when they will have an opportunity of saying that, although they did not agree with many things we have done, yet, in the main, there is no very wide separation between us. [*Laughter.*] It is very well to laugh; but the times are a great deal too serious for laughter; and I think that the proposal of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill, to the moderate Liberals to join us, was a fair, reasonable, and just proposal. I am satisfied that although some hon. Members on that side of the House differ from us in many of our views, yet, when the time comes for placing this great question before us by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, it will be found that there are men in the ranks of our opponents who prefer their country's interests to that of their Party, and who are convinced that it is for the interests of their country that the Union, which has subsisted for the last 700 years, should be maintained. I trust that that Union will be preserved, not only by us and our sons, but by our sons' sons for generations, for I firmly believe that without the existing Legislative Union the honour, dignity, and the integrity of this great Empire cannot be maintained.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I desire to say a word or two, after the powerful speech which has just been delivered—[*Laughter*—] by the hon. Baronet the Member for North Western Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot). There is one remark with which, I think, all Parties in the House, and every individual in the House, will almost entirely and absolutely agree, and that is, that the times are rather too serious for laughter, and that the subject of debate to-night raises not only

questions involving the highest and longest-cherished hopes of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, but that it also raises questions which we believe in their ultimate solution will greatly affect the fate of the British Empire. I think that hon. Members will be inclined to agree that these are questions that are worthy of the most serious and grave discussion by the House of Commons; and certainly, in any remarks I may offer to the House, I will endeavour, to the best of my ability, to act up to the principle I have ventured to lay down; and on this occasion I ask for more than the usual measure of the indulgence of the House, because it would have been far more agreeable to me, on account of feeling extreme fatigue by reason of various incidents, to have postponed my remarks to a later occasion; but I thought that I myself had been chargeable, and am chargeable, with a very great deal of the controversy about this Irish Question; and I also thought that a good deal of controversy had been raised, even in this debate, about the remarks I have made, and about the attitude with regard to this Irish Question which I have taken up. I was, therefore, anxious to take the earliest opportunity not only to explain, to the best of my ability, my views with regard to Ireland so far as the indulgence of the House will permit me, but I was also anxious to take the earliest opportunity of inviting those—and they are many—who have accusations to bring against me—some accusations such as those made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, made in open discussion in public, and other accusations made by a more contemptible class of opponents—mean opponents who shelter themselves under pseudonyms or other disguises. I thought it right that I should take this opportunity of inviting such, if there are any in the House, to state in the House what they have to urge against the views I have put forward in regard to Ireland; because, if I exhaust my right of speaking, I know there are Friends on this side of the House who are capable of answering the charges which may be made. Therefore, with the indulgence of the House, I will now endeavour, to the best of my ability, to reply to the arguments adduced by the Prime Minister against the Motion of my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr.

Holmes). Mr. Speaker, I will endeavour to put aside altogether an argument with which the right hon. Gentleman opposite (the First Lord of the Treasury) occupied a great deal of time this evening. It was a thoroughly technical argument—an argument which I have often heard used in the House of Commons, and an argument which I have never known to have any weight with the House of Commons—but it is an argument of apparently inexhaustible resource with the right hon. Gentleman. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman was this—"You"—meaning us, the Opposition—"you allege that the state of Ireland is grave and bad, and how do you propose to remedy the state of Ireland while you ask the House of Commons to stop the Supplies?" Now, no one knows better than the right hon. Gentleman that that is not the Motion before the House; and not only is that not the Motion before the House, but no one knows better than the right hon. Gentleman that even if by any miracle this Motion were to receive the support of the majority of the Members of the House, the Supplies to the Crown would be voted with the same regularity as in former years. That being so, why did the right hon. Gentleman occupy so much of his time, and exhaust so much of his satire and power of invective, in what I can only call beating the air? The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that when the House is called upon by the Government to go into Committee of Supply, it is the right of every Member of this House—and more especially is it the right of the Opposition as a body—to raise any great question of public or State importance in the best manner they can; and that it is a most convenient and Constitutional opportunity for eliciting from the Government of the day the policy which the Government intend to pursue on any important or critical state of affairs. Now, the right hon. Gentleman's experience of the House of Commons is too long and too profound for him to offer the smallest contradiction, either by interruption or by sign, to that statement of mine. Therefore, I proceed to affirm, without fear of contradiction from the Prime Minister, or from any other Member of the House who is experienced in its working, that the Motion which my right hon. and learned Friend has sub-

mitted to the House to-night is an eminently Constitutional Motion; that the occasion which my right hon. and learned Friend has chosen is an eminently Constitutional occasion; and that no blame or censure can be pronounced either upon the one or upon the other. Well, Sir, there was a reason—a very grave reason—which induced my right hon. and learned Friend, after consultation with those in whom he had confidence, to submit this Motion to the House of Commons. The Prime Minister is the greatest living master—I believe he is the greatest master that ever lived—of the art of Parliamentary tactics. I cannot at all describe, in my limited knowledge of English, my admiration for the resources—the Parliamentary tactics—which the right hon. Gentleman is on every occasion able to display; and the right hon. Gentleman himself, on a very solemn occasion—the opening of Parliament—gave the most serious advice to his Followers to take such and such a line of action, because he said he was an "old Parliamentary hand." Well, that being so—and we recognize the fact that the utmost limit to which the right hon. Gentleman would wish us to recognize it—it behoves us to be on our guard, as far as our limited faculties enable us to be on our guard, because what do we find in the position of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to Ireland? We find that the right hon. Gentleman, undoubtedly for one purpose or another, contemplates a large policy with regard to Ireland; but the tactics which he is pursuing, and the delay which he has claimed from Parliament, and which he still claims, are calculated to lull the public mind of England into a state of torpor and lethargy, and are calculated to accustom the public mind of England to policies and schemes which, if they were at once placed before the public mind of England, would not have a chance of being accepted. That is the danger which we feel we have to guard against. Hon. Gentlemen need not imagine for a moment that I underrate the tremendous power of the Prime Minister in this country. Not for a moment; but it is because I estimate his power at its proper value that I agree in the prudence of the Motion which my right hon. and learned Friend has brought before the House to-night; because, even if he

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does not succeed in securing the sympathy of the House, the object of the Motion—he be right or wrong—is, at a Constitutional moment and in a Constitutional manner, to draw the attention of England to the state of Ireland, and to the policy which we believe Her Majesty's Government contemplate with regard to that country. Now, I understand from the reply of the Prime Minister, which was an eminently controversial reply, that he questions, and even denies, the right of the Opposition who sit in this quarter of the House to raise the question of Ireland at all, not only in the form of censure on the Government, but even in the form of inquiry from the Government. The right hon. Gentleman asserts that our whole Irish policy was a mistake from beginning to end—that it has utterly failed. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The general tenour of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman was undoubtedly that our policy had altogether failed, and that it betrayed vacillation, hesitation, and incapacity for making up our mind. The right hon. Gentleman asserted that altogether our Irish policy had been so essentially wrong, and so essentially vicious, that it was impossible and utterly hopeless, even with the best will in the world, for him and his Party, in the position they then occupied, to restrain themselves from turning the late Government out of Office. And the right hon. Gentleman also denies the right of the present Opposition to raise this question of social order in Ireland, because, he asserts, or he assumes, or he imagines that the present Opposition, when they were in Office, had entered into a compact and an alliance with the Irish Nationalist Party in this House—a compact which was based essentially upon the utter and permanent abandonment of all measures in the nature of repressive legislation; and that, therefore, having entered into that compact and having broken that compact—according to his argument—we are utterly precluded, either from inquiring from the Government what policy they intend to pursue, or from pressing on the Government legislation which the Government might deem to be of an extraordinary or repressive nature. That is the position which the Prime Minister takes up. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No.] That is the essential position which the right hon.

Gentleman takes up. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No.] Well, I am so anxious to get as rapidly as I can, with the kind indulgence of the House, to the principal part of the argument, that I will clear the way of these preliminaries. I am, therefore, prepared, mainly for the purposes of this debate, to make to the Prime Minister very large admissions. I believe it to be the hereditary and inalienable tendency of all British Governments to blunder. I am led to that conclusion from a close and profound study of history, and of the career of the right hon. Gentleman, and I am quite prepared to admit—I see no object whatever in denying it, because I want to get at the real gist of the argument—that the late Government did not present themselves before Parliament, with regard to Ireland, in that absolutely perfect and impregnable form which an ideal Government would like to occupy. I make the Prime Minister a present of that admission. Therefore, all the arguments about the incapacity of the late Government—all the alliances they concluded, and the blunders they committed—I put aside, for the purpose of argument, because, if the right hon. Gentleman likes, I admit them all. But there is one accusation which he almost directly made, which I do not admit, and which I will not admit for a moment. He asserted, perhaps not directly—but the whole tendency of his argument was to assert—that the decision of the late Government, when they took Office, with regard to coercion, was influenced, and solely influenced, by the prospect of catching the Irish vote at the late Election. Well, now, if the House of Commons had only to do with myself—had only to rely upon my assertion—I should not think of arguing this matter with it. I see no object in this kind of argument. Therefore, I say, assert whatever you please, make whatever accusations you like, attribute to me, if it will do any good, the worst and most despicable motives—I content myself with the knowledge of what I have in my own mind, and what is in my own mind is enough for me. But what I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman is this—without claiming the smallest consideration for myself, I would ask—Does the right hon. Gentleman seriously think that a statesman like Lord Salisbury, with Colleagues like Lord Carnarvon and Lord Cran-

brook—does he think that a Gentleman who has been so long before the House of Commons as my right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition in this House—does he think that one whom he was always ready to flatter and eulogize, when it suited him—Lord Iddesleigh—does he think that these men are so utterly lost to all consideration of political honour and to every consideration of political honesty that they are influenced, and only influenced, by the meanest and most corrupt motives which can actuate the lowest politician? Does he think that men like them would, in dealing with the question of the government of Ireland—involving the future of Ireland—an integral and, perhaps, one of the most interesting portions of the United Kingdom—would take a decision, with regard to the government of Ireland, guided only by considerations of an electioneering character? I will go further, and ask him whether he thinks that Lord Salisbury, or Lord Iddesleigh, or my right hon. Friend who sits near me, would take a decision of that kind—[*Cries of "Yes!" from the Home Rule Members*]—from electioneering considerations? I am certain that hon. Members below the Gangway, although, in the heat of debate, they manifest some slight signs of incredulity, if this matter were calmly discussed in a room with two or three people, would admit that my arguments are perfectly sound, and that a Minister like Lord Salisbury is utterly incapable of being liable to, or chargeable for one moment with, an accusation of that character. Well, Sir, I am not going to deny—I am not going to conceal it from the House for one moment—why should I do so, for I never have concealed anything from the House, and I am not going to begin to-day—that at one time I had an idea that the Tory Party might co-operate with the Irish Party. [*Laughter.*] I must pray the House to allow me to argue this out calmly. I have often worked with Irish Members. I hope to be able to do so again. I am anxious not to detain the House longer than it is necessary; but it will be difficult for me to argue consecutively unless I am assisted by the kind indulgence of the House. I admit that I have never concealed—I never concealed it in the last Parliament—that I thought it possible that, on many Irish subjects, the Tory Party might co-

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operate with the Irish National Party. But what did I go upon? I had an immense precedent to go upon. I had the precedent of the Whig Ministry of the days of Mr. O'Connell. O'Connell occupied, at one time, as strong, and if possible a stronger, position, having regard to the relative position of Parties, than the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) now occupies. [*"No, no!" from the Home Rule Members.*] I maintain that I am historically correct. What was the state of the case then? O'Connell had got a large Irish Party of about 35, after a change of Parliament, and pressed upon Parliament the policy of Repeal; and in the Election of 1835—I think I am accurate in saying it was 1835—O'Connell, in addressing his Dublin constituents, used these words—"Sink or swim, live or die, I go for Repeal, and nothing but Repeal." Mr. O'Connell came back to Parliament on that programme, determined to press it upon Parliament at all hazards and at all costs. What happened? The Whig Ministry of that day, being unable to carry on the Government of the country without an alliance with the Irish Party, came to terms with Mr. O'Connell, and O'Connell dropped the policy of Repeal. [*Cries of "No!"*] Is it not so? [*"No!"*] Yes, certainly. And why? He dropped the policy of Repeal, on condition that the Whig Ministry—

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: He gave it upon promises which were broken by the Whigs.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I have nothing to do with that. Mr. O'Connell dropped the policy of Repeal, on the understanding that the Whig Ministry would bring forward such measures for Ireland, short of Repeal, as Mr. O'Connell and his Friends thought absolutely necessary to be put before the country. That is a great historical precedent. There you had a powerful English Party, perhaps one of the proudest England has ever known, allying itself with the Irish Party, elected on the platform of unconditional Repeal, on the condition that that Irish Party dropped the policy of Repeal, and consenting to legislate for such matters as the development of Irish prosperity and progress in a manner which might be agreeable to the Party from Ireland. Well, I own I had that precedent in my

mind in the last Parliament, and I did not see why that state of things should not occur again. It always appeared to me that the Tory Party were well qualified to deal with many questions of Irish interest in a manner which might be thoroughly agreeable to the Irish people, and which would not be in the least dangerous to the general welfare of the Empire. I particularly allude to the question of education, and to the question of the land. Judging by past history, I imagined that though the cry of Repeal might be raised as strongly as ever, and the Irish Members might say again—"Live or die, sink or swim, we go for Repeal," still I imagined that might merely turn out to be a sentiment for keeping together a powerful political Party, and that if Repeal was absolutely against the wish of the Imperial Parliament the policy of Repeal would be dropped. [An hon. MEMBER: Times are changed.] Well, it is quite true that times are changed. I do not pretend to be a magician, or a prophet, and I could only judge by the past; and I did not see why the Irish Party, finding that the House of Commons, as a whole, was totally opposed to the Repeal of the Union, might not co-operate either with the Tory or the Liberal Party in bringing forward such measures short of Repeal as the Irish Party might wish for. I maintain that there was nothing unreasonable, extravagant, or wrong in that supposition. I never concealed it from anyone, but made a frank and open confession of it. I quite admit that that supposition turned out to be entirely wrong. I make no concealment of that. There were two tremendous faults in my calculation. One was that I never calculated—it never entered into my wildest dreams—that the present Prime Minister would ever go in for the policy of Repeal. Now, that was not an altogether unsound calculation on my part. I rather fancy that there are many on that side of the House—in fact, I doubt whether there was a single person on the Ministerial side of the House who did not make the same calculation. I wonder whether there is any person on the Front Ministerial Bench, with the exception of the Home Secretary, who made so remarkable a speech at the time of the Pontefract Election, who did not make the

same erroneous calculation? It was in my calculation that whoever might go in for Repeal, in whatever quarter he might sit, the last man to go in for it would be the present Prime Minister of England. Now, why did I take that view? Hon. Members will at once admit that I had enormous ground for believing that the whole House of Commons, whether under Tory or Liberal Leadership, would be opposed to Repeal. That was my view. My right hon. and learned Friend the late Attorney General for Ireland, in the speech with which he opened the debate, declared that the Prime Minister had often spoken strongly against Home Rule, or the policy of Repeal, and the Prime Minister interrupted the late Attorney General for Ireland, and said—"Quote, quote." Well, if the Prime Minister will allow me, and if the House will allow me, I will quote one of the most remarkable and one of the strongest declarations against the policy of Repeal which any modern public man has ever put before the English people. They are the words of the present Prime Minister at Aberdeen, when the citizens of Aberdeen, believing that he was a strong supporter of the Union of the United Kingdom, conferred upon him the freedom of that city. And it is not very long ago—nothing considering the rate at which we live now. It was only in 1871; and you must remember that 1871 was a very remarkable epoch, for at that time the Prime Minister imagined that he had altogether settled the Irish Question. He had disestablished the Irish Church; he had dealt with the Irish land; and it is perfectly certain that at that time—but I will not anticipate. Mr. Butt had at that time just been returned for the City of Limerick, and the Prime Minister alluded to his return and the claims he was going to make on Parliament in regard to the Repeal of the Union. This is what the Prime Minister said—

"We are told that it is necessary for Ireland to close her relations with the Parliament of this country, and to have a Parliament of her own. Well, now, we shall say to this demand—Why is the Imperial Parliament to be broken up? Has Ireland great grievances? What is it that Ireland has demanded from the Imperial Parliament which that Imperial Parliament has refused? Loud cheers from the freemen of Aberdeen. I have indeed in vain"—

recollect that the Prime Minister at that

time had had much experience of public life—

"I have looked in vain for any practical scheme of policy which the Imperial Parliament is not equal to deal with, which it refuses to deal with, and which is to be brought about by Home Rule."

Then the Prime Minister proceeds to turn the policy of Repeal into ridicule. The House heard him satirize my right hon. and learned Friend with all the force of his satire; but that satire was perfectly feeble compared with the force of the ridicule he poured upon the policy of Repeal at Aberdeen. What did he say? He said—

"I have seen nothing in favour of Repeal, except that it is stated that there is a quantity of fish in the seas which surround Ireland; and that if they had Home Rule they would catch a great deal of these fish." (Much laughter and loud cheers from the citizens of Aberdeen.)

But the Prime Minister argued his point out very closely. He continued—

"There are fish in the seas which surround England and Scotland. England has no Home Rule; Scotland has no Home Rule; but they manage to catch the fish."

Again loud laughter and renewed cheers. Then he goes on—

"You would expect, when it is said that the Imperial Parliament is to be broken up, that at least a case should be made out showing great subjects of policy and great demands necessary for the welfare of Ireland which the Representatives of Ireland had united to ask, and which the Representatives of England, Scotland, and Wales had united to refuse."

Then he goes on to state categorically—

"There is no such grievance. There is nothing that Ireland has asked, and which this country and this Parliament has refused. This Parliament has done for Ireland what it would have scrupled to do for Scotland and England."

Again loud cheers, and then the Prime Minister goes further. He said—

"What are the inequalities between England and Ireland? I declare that I know of none, except that there are certain taxes still remaining which are levied upon Scotchmen and Englishmen, and not levied upon Ireland; and likewise that there are certain charges for which public money is freely and largely given in Ireland, and not given in England and Scotland. That seems to me a very feeble case indeed for the argument which has been made, by means of which the fabric of the United Parliament of this country is to be broken up."

May I read a little more? After all, we are greatly dependent upon the arguments of these great men for our opposition to the policy of Repeal. We can

never produce anything better; and as at the present moment the policy of Repeal is the Prime Minister's remedy for the restoration of social order in Ireland—[Mr. GLADSTONE dissented, and cries of "No, no!" from the Ministerial Benches]—I feel that I am not travelling far from the question in placing the most convincing arguments before the House. Then the Prime Minister went on to say—

"If the doctrines of Home Rule are to be established for Ireland, I protest on your behalf that you are just as well entitled to it in Scotland, and, moreover, I protest on behalf of Wales, in which I have lived a good deal, and where there are 800,000 people who to this day—such is their sentiment of nationality—speak hardly anything but their own tongue—I protest on behalf of Wales that they are entitled to Home Rule there."

Now, observe this—

"Can any sensible man, any rational man"—it is strong, though it is redundant—

"can any rational man, can any sensible man, suppose that at this time of day, in this condition of the world, we are going to disintegrate the great capital institutions of the country for the purpose of making ourselves ridiculous in the sight of all mankind, of crippling any power we possess for bestowing what blessings we may through legislation on the country to which we belong?"

Loud cheers from his audience. There is one more sentence, if I am not trespassing too much on your time. [*Cries of "Go on!"*] I have a great mind to keep it for another day. But, Sir, that is not all. The Prime Minister stated, in interrupting my right hon. and learned Friend, that when Mr. Butt first introduced his Home Rule scheme to Parliament he took no part in the debate. The Prime Minister will not suspect me of intentional disrespect if I am obliged to contradict him from the columns of *Hansard*. In the year 1874—I daresay the right hon. Gentleman forgets that year, because it is not a pleasant year for him to recall—Mr. Butt, who was at that time at the head of a considerable Party, moved an Amendment to the Address. [Mr. GLADSTONE made an observation which was inaudible.] Pardon me; perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to proceed. Mr. Butt moved an Amendment to the Address, asking for inquiry and examination into the existing system of government in Ireland, complaining that the Irish people did not enjoy

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the full benefits of the Constitution, and the right hon. Gentleman took part in that debate. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] He made a most able speech; and this is how he described the speech of Mr. Butt. He said—

"What is it my hon. and learned Friend asks us to do? He says he has framed a perfectly intelligible plan by which affairs exclusively Irish are to be discussed in an Irish Parliament, but that affairs not exclusively Irish are to be discussed in this Parliament, and the Members representing Ireland are to come here for that purpose."

That was the object of Mr. Butt in moving an Amendment to the Address; and the right hon. Gentleman thus reasons—

"He"—that is, Mr. Butt—"says great dissatisfaction exists in Ireland, and we are to promise to inquire with a view to the removal of this dissatisfaction. Taking my hon. and learned Friend on his own showing, does he think, if dissatisfaction exists in a country, the vague promise of an intention to inquire into it can be held a fitting mode in which a great Assembly like the Imperial Parliament should meet that state of things? I say, on the contrary, it is a dangerous and tricky system for Parliament to adopt—to come under national dissatisfaction, if it really exists, with the assurance which may mean anything or nothing—which may perhaps consolidate the feelings of Ireland for a moment, and attract a passing breath of popularity, but which, when the day of trial comes, may be found entirely to fail them. It is a method of proceeding which, whatever Party may be in power, or whatever measure may be adopted, I trust this House will never consent to adopt."—*Hansard*, (215, 121.)

[“Hear, hear!”] Those, of course, may be admirable arguments, and I myself thoroughly agree with them; but I am surprised at their being cheered so enthusiastically by hon. Members below the Gangway on this side of the House, because there could not be a more convincing proof afforded to my mind that a few years ago the Prime Minister was perfectly hostile not only to any policy involving Repeal, but to the particular policy now recommended to Parliament—the policy of inquiry and examination for which he now claims the indulgence of Parliament. That policy was only a few years ago, in the words of the Prime Minister, a dangerous one, and one which Parliament ought never to adopt. That was why, as I think I have shown to the House, I was not unjustified in believing—in fact, I was pretty sure—that whatever happened, the two great British political Parties would unite in

opposition to the policy of Repeal. But my calculation has been entirely upset on that point, not only by the speech which the Prime Minister has made to-night, but by the inclusion of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the exclusion of the noble Lord the Member for the Rosendale Division of Lancashire, the Marquess of Hartington, which have shown my error in a most unmistakable manner. I challenge the right hon. Gentleman to deny it—I challenge any single responsible Member on that Bench to get up and deny that the policy which the Prime Minister contemplates as a substantial and remedial policy is a policy of Repeal. If I am wrong, there is no apology I will not make—none. I challenge him to say whether I am right or wrong. Well, the House is very kind in allowing me to explain the failure of all my calculations. With regard to my calculations as to the future of Ireland, of course it was because I was wild enough to base my hopes upon the consistency of the Prime Minister that I made them. But I made another great error in my calculations, also connected with social order; and I expect that some of my Colleagues sitting on this Bench did the same. We totally under-estimated, and we totally miscalculated, the enormous power in Ireland of the Irish National League. [Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: And in England.] Hon. Members below the Gangway need not be ashamed of the power of the Irish League—*Cries of "No!" from the Irish Benches*—they are very proud of it in Ireland. Then, why does the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR), an English Member, appear to be offended and annoyed because I say that when the late Government came into Office, and for a little while after they came into Office, I had under-estimated and miscalculated the power of the National League?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR rose amid cries of “Order!” He said: The noble Lord has made a personal reference to me; and I have a perfect right, in accordance with the Rules of the House, to explain. He seems to imply that I disapproved of his statement. What I said was that we are proud of the power of the National League in Ireland, and also in England.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I am sorry the hon. Member has thought

it necessary to make that interruption, because it only strengthens my argument. I say that the power of the National League in Ireland, supported by the power of the National League in England, and by 86 Members in this House, was a power which the late Government, I admit, has omitted in their calculation, and that they had totally under-estimated it. Now, Sir, I come, if I may be allowed, to that quotation from my speech at Birmingham on which the right hon. Gentleman has laid so much stress. I am glad that he made a quotation from my speech. I may say I feel a kind of personal vanity, because it is the first of my speeches that the right hon. Gentleman has condescended to notice. The words which I used at Birmingham were, I believe, correct and justifiable, so far as official information at that time went, and were based upon facts and figures of crime and outrage. I did not make that statement on my own authority. Before I went to Birmingham, I had the opportunity of passing a few days in Ireland, and of consulting the Lord Lieutenant and the Irish authorities. My statement that the abandonment of the Crimes Act had been abundantly justified was solely limited to the information given me with regard to the state of crime and outrage in Ireland, and to one thing more—namely, to the prospect which the Administration had of dealing with that crime and outrage by the ordinary criminal process. I contend that the statement I made was an accurate statement, and that there was nothing erroneous in it. More than that, it was based on the statement of my right hon. Friend who now leads the Opposition. The Prime Minister said that we had never given any intimation of what our policy with regard to Ireland would be when the new Parliament met, if the social state of Ireland did not improve. May I not ask the right hon. Gentleman, in common fairness, to modify his assertion, that at the time of the General Election, for the purpose of electioneering gain, we stated that the state of Ireland was perfectly satisfactory; that the policy of abandoning the Crimes Act had been a complete success; and that there was no reason to suppose that anything would induce a Conservative Government again to apply to Parliament for exceptional legislation. The state-

ment is that we did that for the purpose of gaining an electioneering advantage. I think I am not misrepresenting the statement; and, of course, it is a point on which I feel a little sensitive. When you come to analyze it, it is not a very pleasant accusation; but I think, when the Prime Minister reads the speech delivered by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) to his constituents, or rather to those from whom he was seeking election, he will be prepared to modify, if not altogether to withdraw, his statement. My right hon. Friend said—

“That the Conservative Party had resolved that they would not introduce exceptional legislation for the prevention of crime in Ireland, unless perfectly convinced that crime could not be prevented by the ordinary law;”

but he added—and let me draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to this—

“That he could assure his hearers that if it should be proved that the powers of the ordinary law did not suffice to preserve peace and order in Ireland, the Ministry would not allow months to elapse, as did Her Majesty's late Government,” (that is, the last Liberal Ministry) “without coming to Parliament to ask it to help them in this matter.”

I do not think that there was any concealment or fraud practised on the electors in that matter by my right hon. Friend, any more than by Lord Salisbury. It was by him clearly stated that the success of the experiment that had been tried was a matter of doubt, and that if we found the ordinary law to be inadequate for the preservation of order and national freedom in Ireland, we should not hesitate to come to Parliament and ask for further powers. With regard to this question of social order in Ireland, when I was myself in Ireland—I think in the middle of October—certainly Lord Carnarvon, and many of the authorities in Ireland, developed to me their views as to the tremendous power of the National League; and I can say that at that time Lord Carnarvon and those who advised him were extremely anxious and alarmed at the growing power of the League in Ireland. [“Hear, hear!”] Are hon. Members from Ireland, who cheer that statement, quite certain—is the House quite certain—that the same alarm, that the same fear and the same nervousness as to the power of the Na-

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tional League in Ireland are not to be found on the Treasury Bench? Well, Sir, obviously at that time no Cabinet meetings were being held—none were held from the middle of October to December, for the Elections were taking place. A Cabinet meeting was held in December—I hope I am not wearying the House too much—I think on the 2nd of December, and Lord Carnarvon and Lord Ashbourne brought before the Cabinet the extraordinary development and the unlimited resources of the National League. That was the nature of the League then—a tremendous and formidable organization. What it was then it is at the present day, without the slightest doubt whatever. Now, the Crimes Act was utterly useless for the purpose of dealing with the National League; and if I was in power to-morrow, without a Colleague, and with irresponsible power, and wished to restore order, I would no more think of renewing the Crimes Act for this purpose than of flying. That is not, to my mind, required for the state of things existing in Ireland now. The Crimes Act was passed to deal with an undetected and an unlimited amount of crime. But in Ireland at present what we have is a power which, by the errors of former Governments, perhaps the last Government, perhaps the Government before that, has been allowed to extend its despotic sway over three Provinces of Ireland—absolutely a despotic sway, and by the side of that power the Queen's Government is powerless. There are two Governments in Ireland at the present moment. That is the fact I wish to draw attention to. There are two Governments in Ireland at the present moment, and of those two Governments that which sits in this House is the weaker. If that is so, I will again venture to challenge the official opinion of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who has now been some time in Office, but who has never given to the House his opinion on this most important question. That is our view of the state of Ireland, and the state of social order there. There are two Governments in the country, and it is absolutely impossible for any man to serve two Governments. A society which is divided against itself is a society which is in a ruinous and dying state. This is our position; this is what we believe. We believe that

the existence of the National League in Ireland, exercising co-ordinate authority in Ireland, has more power and authority than that of the Queen's Government, and has produced an unparalleled state of national demoralization. This is an opinion we are entitled to hold. Hon. Members below the Gangway, I daresay, altogether disagree with it; but, at any rate, they will admit that it is an opinion which the Opposition are entitled to hold, and which right hon. Gentlemen recently in Office are not only entitled to hold, but are bound to place before the House. What was our remedy? It was that those two Governments could not continue to exist if social order was to be maintained; and we proposed by law to suppress the National League. That is a remedy which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister tells us is a bad remedy, because it would have led to Parliamentary discomfiture and disaster. But if the Government believe a certain remedy to be right, should their remedy be kept back for fear of discomfiture and disaster? I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is because he feared it would lead to disaster and discomfiture that he refused to adopt our remedy, and proposes another the details of which we have not before us? The 1st of April may give those details to us; but the nature of them we know beyond any manner of doubt. The remedy of the Prime Minister, in order that he may escape discomfiture and disaster, is not to suppress the National League, but to concede the government of Ireland almost entirely to the National League. When in Office, I and my Colleagues had a most unfortunate prejudice in the matter. We took into our heads a most reactionary and obsolete opinion. We thought it was the duty of Her Majesty's Ministers to support and assert the Government of the Queen; but it appears, from the doctrine which the right hon. Gentleman now holds, that these are unfashionable doctrines, which would lead to discomfiture and disaster. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to make a most extraordinary statement. He said that if the late Government, abandoning the policy of suppressing the League, and taking up some other policy, had come to Parliament with that policy, the late Government knew that they might count

on the generous support of the right hon. Gentleman. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] I shall be glad not to misrepresent the right hon. Gentleman on this point, or to misquote him; but that is certainly what I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say; but I will put it in this way—that if we had produced an Irish policy we might have counted on his generous support. [Mr. GLADSTONE assented.] Certainly we had reasons to believe that we might count on the right hon. Gentleman's support if our policy took a certain direction. If we were to abandon all the traditions of the Tory Party—all the traditions that have animated every English Minister about Ireland, then, indeed, we might have counted upon his support. But, much as we value the right hon. Gentleman's support, we could not buy it at that price. I feel that the House has been very indulgent to me; and although the subject is one which admits of much inquiry, and is one which I think the public have a right to have placed before them in much detail, I will endeavour to conclude my remarks within a very few minutes. I was referring to the power of the National League, and I was asking the House to recollect that that power was greater than that of the Queen's Government. Now, I ask the House to allow me to quote the words of the Members of the League, in order to illustrate the power of the League, and also the fact that that power is as great as ever, although, for a moment, it is disarmed. Nothing could have exceeded the ridicule which the Prime Minister poured on the arguments brought forward by my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Holmes), because he stated that the League had exerted itself to restore order in Ireland, and he referred to the visit of Mr. Davitt to Kerry. My right hon. and learned Friend drew a conclusion from that which the Prime Minister ridiculed. But what does the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon)—one of the most influential Members of the League—say about that organization? I entreat the attention of the House to this quotation. The hon. Member said, on the 17th of February—

"The Irish people were not destined to be caught in a trap. Their eyes were open; their resources were inexhaustible; and"—mark this—"though this splendid organization which

had been built up was very quiet at present, they could meet whatever was before them, perfectly willing to take the field again with undiminished vigour and increased resources, should the Whigs prove treacherous again."

That is the power which, counting on your meeting their wishes, has exerted the tremendous resources of the League in producing a momentary calm in Ireland. What do you think will happen in Ireland if you fall short of satisfying the wishes of hon. Members, or the House of Commons will not support you in meeting their wishes? What sort of measures will it be necessary to propose to Parliament for the restoration of social order in Ireland? It will become a life-and-death struggle between the National League and the Government of the Queen; and on which side will the Prime Minister be? That is a question I wish to put to the House to-night. We see this great struggle coming; you may put it off by various attempts to construct an Irish Parliament. I do not myself believe for a moment that that policy will be accepted by the Imperial Parliament; I believe it will fail. I believe, further, that any policy you may propose which may unite your Cabinet and your Party will not come up to the desires of that powerful organization. I believe it will fall short of it, and that organization will oppose your policy as being inadequate for the National League; but it will go too far for the great common sense of the Parliament of England; and then I want to know, in that case, what will be the state of social order in Ireland itself, and what views and what policy will you then place before Parliament? Are the Opposition asking an unreasonable question of the Government? ["Yes, yes!"] I ask the House to forbear for a few moments. Have we taken up, uselessly, the time of the House of Commons to-night? Were we not bound, holding the opinions which we do, possessing the knowledge which we ought to possess of Ireland—were we not bound to take the earliest Constitutional opportunity offered us by the Forms of Parliament to endeavour to elicit from the Government their views with regard to their policy in Ireland and their views with regard to social order there, as well as those of the House of Commons in the matter? I quite admit that the Liberal Party have

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not taken a large share in this debate; I quite admit that we, as the Opposition, have not succeeded in extracting from the Government that amount of information which, I believe, we have had a right to look for. But that is not essential to our calculations. What we want to do is to lay before the House of Commons and the country, so that the country may not go to sleep, as it is apparently the object of statesmen opposite that it should do, our knowledge of the dangerous state of Ireland, and our views, in the most explicit and formal manner, of the way in which that most dangerous state should be dealt with by the Government of the Queen.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Sir, I rise to make an explanation which the noble Lord would not permit me to give in the course of his speech—of course, he was quite justified in refusing me the opportunity while he was speaking. I do not speak of the policy of Repeal, nor will I speak of the speech at Aberdeen further than to say that I shall take the opportunity of reading it over again. But I refer to the declaration of the noble Lord that he would convict me out of *Hazard* of having been in error when I said I was absent at the time when Mr. Butt brought forward his plan of Repeal. Sir, that statement was strictly true. I was present at the time when Mr. Butt proposed to deal with the question by means of a Committee of Inquiry. His Motion was for an inquiry. I spoke upon that occasion, and I objected, as I should now object, to that method of dealing with the question. The noble Lord does not seem to know that, in 1874, Mr. Butt did bring forward his plan.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I know that quite well. How many speeches can be made?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: That was the occasion upon which I was absent; and if the noble Lord knew that I am sorry he did not say it to the House.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—*Major Sanderson*.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 204; Noes 361; Majority 160.—*Div. List, No. 16.*

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I had hoped, Sir, when my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Armagh Major Sanderson moved the adjournment, the House might have been disposed to agree to that Motion, not merely because of the knowledge and eloquence which my hon. and gallant Friend brings to the discussion of Irish affairs, but because, although three remarkable speeches have been delivered to-night, this debate has been principally remarkable for the conspiracy of silence which has been maintained amongst the Liberal Party. Not one word, in spite of the charges made against the National League, has been heard from its Members; not one word has fallen from those Members of the Government who, like the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland Mr. Trevelyan, if we may judge from their previous utterances, can hardly agree, I should have thought, with very much that has fallen from the Prime Minister; not one word from the right hon. Gentleman who is primarily responsible for the government of Ireland, though he can speak on this subject outside the House. Again, Sir, we have heard nothing from the new Fourth Party represented now by the right hon. and learned Gentleman Sir Henry James who sits behind the Government. I had thought, in those circumstances, with these great omissions, that the House might have been willing to consent to a prolongation of the debate; but so far as we are concerned we are content, after the able speech of my noble Friend Lord Randolph Churchill, to leave this matter where it is. We have made the protest which we felt it our duty to make against what we consider the betrayal of their country by Her Majesty's Government. We are content, Sir, in having made that protest, and I do not propose to put the House to the trouble of a second division.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

SITES FOR THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES—
THE WAR OFFICE AND ADMIRALTY.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE: I beg to move that the debate be now adjourned, and for this reason—that this is the only opportunity we shall have of discussing the question of the sites for the new Admiralty and War Offices, which has been brought very prominently before our notice in the columns of the Press during the past few days, and which involve very important considerations. It is doubtful whether the plans the Government have decided upon are the best which could be obtained; and I, therefore, think it is desirable that we should have an opportunity of discussing the matter.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—
(*Mr. Beresford Hope.*)

MR. W. H. SMITH: This is a matter of great importance; and as it is desirable that there should be no delay in considering the subject, I trust my right hon. Friend (Mr. Beresford Hope) will have the opportunity he seeks given to him.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. CHILDERS): I understand the object my right hon. Friend has in view. It is to raise a debate on the plans for the Admiralty and War Office Buildings, with regard to which since last Session there have been proposals and suggestions made by the Society of Architects. Right hon. and hon. Gentlemen wish to have a debate on the subject; well, obviously, the proper time for such a discussion will be when the Vote for the buildings in the Estimates come on in Committee of Supply. There is a separate and distinct Vote in the Estimates for the proposed Admiralty and War Office. It is in the 1st Class, amongst the Votes for Public Buildings.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I would make a suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Could not an arrangement be made by which that Vote could be taken at a particular time, on a particular day, so as to afford a fair opportunity for the discussion of the matter, which is very important?

MR. SPEAKER: Does the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Beresford Hope) withdraw his Motion?

MR. BERESFORD HOPE: I do.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to*.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Class I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND
BUILDINGS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £31,997, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces."

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES BILL.

(*Mr. Secretary Childers, Mr. Broadhurst.*)

[BILL 120.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. CHILDERS): I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time. I have already explained the effect of the measure. It is in hon. Members' hands; therefore, at this late hour, I will simply content myself with moving the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Secretary Childers.*)

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I was in hopes that the right hon. Gentleman would have postponed this Bill, as he was good enough to do on Tuesday evening, when it came on at a late hour. This Bill, as the right hon. Gentleman must be aware, is of a very objectionable character. No one disputes, of course, that the tradesmen and others who suffered in the recent riotous proceedings in London are entitled to some remedy at law; but the right hon. Gentleman is also aware that the Statute under which these damages for compensation are placed is an obsolete Statute of the time of George IV.—7th & 8th, Chap. 31. This

Bill only deals with the result of the disturbances in the Metropolis. Now, I represent a very important constituency—one of the most important labouring constituencies in the country—and there are several hon. Gentlemen near me who represent similar constituencies, and who entertain views similar to mine on this matter. We, in Blackburn, a few years ago, had a most serious riot and popular tumult. Many tradesmen and others were seriously injured in their businesses; and when it was sought to recover damages under the Act I have referred to, it was found impossible to do so. The Act is of that obsolete character, always dealing with a person called the "Chief Constable," an individual who, in many places, no longer exists. What I would urge, therefore, on the right hon. Gentleman is that he should withdraw his Bill, which is of a piecemeal and highly objectionable character, and introduce a measure which will take in the general interests of the whole community, as was the case with the Bill which was passed in 1827. This Bill, the right hon. Gentleman admits, is one merely proposed to meet a particular case; and I think he informed the House that he was quite prepared to consider the whole matter, which I ventured to submit to him in a Question this afternoon. I hope, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman has considered the circumstances of this case, and the grievous injustice that would be inflicted on large provincial towns such as Nottingham, Manchester, Blackburn, Ashton, and other places where popular tumults may accidentally arise; for were the Bill to pass in its present shape, those towns would be left without compensation for damage which might result from these disorders. I, of course, oppose the Bill on the present occasion; and if I am not supported by an adequate number of Members, I shall use every exertion possible, on subsequent occasions, to endeavour to counteract the course taken by the Government in seeking to apply this legislation solely to the wealthy Metropolis, leaving out of consideration our great provincial towns, which, in the event of suffering damage from riots, will have no means of obtaining a remedy under the defective state of the present law.

MR. ADDISON: I do not propose, at this late hour of the evening, to detain

the House more than one moment, whilst I offer an observation or two in support of the remarks which have just been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Blackburn (Sir Robert Peel). The right hon. Gentleman has alluded to the borough I represent—namely, the borough of Ashton, and I think that what occurred there some 15 years ago is a good illustration of the defective state of the law in the country towns. At that time there was there a lecturer, a notorious man and a bad character, named Murphy. He caused riots in the town, in the course of which damage was done to a Catholic chapel to the extent of more than £1,000. A number of dwellings belonging to the poorer classes were also wrecked; but, under the existing law, it was impossible to obtain compensation. The law is this—that although buildings may be all but gutted, all but destroyed, yet, if those who proceeded in the work of destruction had not the ultimate intention of entirely destroying the buildings, the owners could obtain no compensation whatever. It is necessary to show that those who gutted and injured the buildings had the intention of feloniously destroying them in order to secure compensation. In that way, in the case of the riots to which I have alluded, as well as those referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Blackburn, except in one case, where a house was entirely pulled down, no compensation of any kind was, or could be, paid. Now, Sir, this is a defective state of the law which has caused great dissatisfaction both in Blackburn and Ashton and in other towns; indeed, in all towns where riots have occurred this defective state of the law has been brought under the notice of those who have to administer the law. Now that we have an opportunity, by the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, of having attention brought to bear upon the subject, we do hope that he will enlarge his measure, or bring in one which will remedy the grievance not only of the Metropolis, but of the whole country. We cannot help thinking that unless we oppose this partial Bill, which has been brought in by the Home Secretary, the effect of allowing it to pass will be that the whole matter will go to sleep for a good many years; for the experience of most men is that, when Acts of Parliament of this

local kind are once passed, it is very difficult again to direct attention to the subject and get any remedy whatever. It is for these reasons that I entirely share—and I am sure that those who represent towns which have suffered from riots will also share—the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Blackburn, and that I urge upon the Home Secretary the desirability of withdrawing this Bill, in order to bring in a measure which will really deal with our grievance.

AN HON. MEMBER: I trust the House will bear with me while I venture to add a few observations to those which have just dropped from my hon. and learned Friend who has just sat down. The state of the law is perfectly absurd in regard to riots of this nature. It is that if the injury done is not in the nature of total demolition the person damnified cannot recover compensation. It will be perfectly apparent that as the rioters on the 8th of February were not interfered with by the police, as they did not totally destroy the premises they attacked, therefore the demolition did not come within the interpretation of the "total demolition" of the law. For that reason, those who are damnified cannot recover compensation under the existing law. Now, Sir, there is another point wherein this Bill differs in spirit from the existing law, and that point I submit to the House is a very important one, unless it is extended to the country at large—that is the source from which the compensation is to be recovered. The existing law provides that the source from which the compensation is to be recovered is the Hundred, the place, town, or district, or district of the Hundred; but the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary proposes now to pass into law has for its object to override the existing law; but instead of recovering compensation from the district—which is undoubtedly a wealthy one—of this Metropolis, where the riots occurred, he seeks to spread the compensation over a larger and wider area. If the compensation is collected from a large area, those who have to subscribe towards it do not feel their contributions; but if the compensation is collected from a limited district, the subscribers feel the payment of the tax very acutely. Now, Sir, I submit that is not the principle which ought

to be adopted in the case of the Metropolis, without the same principle being extended to the country generally. Let us, for instance, take a county. It is divided into Hundreds. If a riot takes place, and there is a total demolition or a partial demolition of a felonious nature within the Hundred, the whole county is not called upon to compensate the sufferers, but the Hundred only is so called upon. Although this Act may have for its object—and I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will not think I say it with any personal motive—although this Act may have for its object the whitewashing of certain individuals, it admits into legislation the thin edge of the wedge. I think the Government ought to be prepared to admit the thick edge of the wedge, and it is because they have not as yet shown any disposition to do that that I intend to oppose this Bill.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER: I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary will not accede to the request of my right hon. Friend the Member for Blackburn (Sir Robert Peel). This Bill is one of great importance to the Metropolis, and it is because it only applies to the Metropolis that the Government are asked to postpone its consideration. It may be very well the Government should deal with the whole question, which I understand they are willing to do; but I do trust the right hon. Gentleman will not consent to the postponement of this Bill for the sake of the larger question which he may deal with at a future time.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I hope the right hon. Baronet the Member for Blackburn (Sir Robert Peel) will persevere in his opposition. I should have liked the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to have given us some information in regard to the nature of this Metropolitan Police Fund. I should have been glad, for instance, to have been informed what is the amount of this fund. It appears to me to be rather shabby for a great country like England to take out of the savings of the unfortunate policemen—["No!"] Well, that is a matter which ought to have been explained by the right hon. Gentleman. My impression was that this fund had been subscribed by the police.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: Perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Healy)

Mr. Addison

will allow me to explain that the Metropolitan Police Fund is a fund four-ninths of which is contributed by the State and five-ninths by the Metropolis. The country districts in no way share in the benefits of the fund.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I was going to say that in Ireland you have, for a series of years, adopted the principle of laying a tax upon the unfortunate locality in which the crimes have been committed, and of even taxing the people who are themselves the subjects of the outrages. I am amazed that the Government in Ireland have not adopted some principle whereby those who have suffered injury should be recouped out of a fund similar to the Metropolitan Police Fund. In Ireland there is under old Acts, Acts of William IV., a plan which really seems to me very much like a plan of mutual insurance. If anybody suffers damage or loss, the whole country side or barony is, in the discretion of the Grand Jury, called upon to make the damage or loss good. I think that in cases of this limited character, when injuries are committed, the principle for which the right hon. Baronet Sir Robert Peel contends might well be applied. In this London scheme there is adopted a principle that scarcely appears quite sound; and for my part I think the right hon. Baronet is quite within his right in impeaching the partial nature of the relief of this Bill. Other people besides those in London have suffered from similar events which recently took place in the Metropolis; and unless the Government are prepared to give some assurance that they will introduce a Bill for the relief of the country generally I feel bound to join the opposition to the measure.

MR. CHILDERS: I do not think the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Derry Mr. T. M. Healy can have been in the House when I was asked a Question on this subject. In reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Blackburn Sir Robert Peel I said that while we should propose this Bill to-night, because of the special exigencies of the results of the peculiar riots of the 8th of February, I undertook, with the assistance of my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Mr. Charles Russell), to take up the whole question of the amendment of the 7 & 8 Geo. IV., and endeavour to

put the law into a satisfactory state. Although it is not very long since the 7 & 8 Geo. IV. was passed, that Act has become entirely obsolete. It is not workable, and it is not suited to our modern police organization, and, therefore, it ought to be amended. But it will take some little time to get the amending Bill well drafted; and I do not think, as I said then, it would be wise to defer the present Bill in order that we might meanwhile settle—not a very easy matter—the reform of the Act, 7 & 8 Geo. IV. That was my answer to the general proposition of my right hon. Friend; and I hope, therefore, the House will not defer this Bill. As to the question submitted by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Derry, it is right I should ask him to bear in mind that, practically, the expenses of the Irish Police are entirely borne by the Consolidated Fund. The Police Fund is a fund out of which the Metropolitan Police are entirely paid for. Five-ninths are contributed by the rate upon property within the Metropolis, and the remaining four-ninths are paid out of the Consolidated Fund. It is similar in operation, though not identical, to the fund contributed in the counties and boroughs of Great Britain for the maintenance of the police. This Bill proposes that the damage done on the 8th of February last shall be assessed in a simple manner—in a manner not involving expense to those who suffered—and paid for in the proportion I have explained. Having given this explanation I hope the House will let the Bill pass quickly, so that the damage which has been incurred by a great many people, though not on the average to any very great amount, may be speedily settled. If we let the thing pass along it will be much more difficult to ascertain what the damage in each case was, and there will be a great and natural grievance on the part of those who have suffered. I beg the House to read the Bill a second time to-night, and I renew the promise I have made that the Attorney General and myself will carefully consider the Act 7 & 8 Geo. IV. with a view to its amendment.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I hope my right hon. Friend the Member for Blackburn Sir Robert Peel will press this matter further. The argument is unanswerable—that the rule which ap-

plies to London should apply to the country at large. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary says that the urgency of the matter requires that the Bill should be pushed forward. Now, that is the very argument on which my right hon. Friend (Sir Robert Peel) insisted—that a Bill should be passed for the whole country. Without urgency a Bill will never be passed. It will be considered, and then left over for after consideration. Why should the whole country pay for London, if London does not help to pay for the whole country? This, again, Sir, raises the whole question of local taxation, which we have often had before the House. In the country local taxation falls upon the local taxpayers; and these local taxpayers, already very much overburdened, are called upon to contribute towards the expenses of London without any reciprocity. I feel perfectly certain that the unfortunate persons who have been injured by the recent riots will not be damnsified in any way by two or three months' delay—that it will make no difference to them—[Mr. W. H. SMITH: It will ruin some of them.] Then the compensation must be made adequate. Before the end of the Session a Bill may be passed for the whole country. It cannot take a very long time to adapt the Bill for the whole country as well as for London; and the London shopkeepers, instead of being ruined as my right hon. Friend suggests, would get their payments towards the end of the year. We shall get one Bill for the whole country instead of this pettifogging legislation, first for one county, then for another, then for one town, and then for another.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID: I quite agree that it is desirable this matter should be settled at once; but I, for one, object to some of the people who have made claims receiving any compensation at all. Extremely rich people who have had a few windows broken—people who are living in large private houses at enormous cost—have claimed sums from £5 to £50 for their broken windows. It is all very proper and right to recompense the tradespeople who have suffered, both in property and business, in consequence of the riots; but I do not think that, for very shame, these rich people ought to claim or receive compensation out of the Metropolitan Police Fund. I

make these remarks in the hope that the people to whom I allude will be induced not to ask for compensation when this matter comes before the police receiver.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS: The reason which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has assigned why this Bill should be passed is that the matter is urgent. But, surely, that argument applies with equal force to several provincial towns. It is said that if there be delay there will be much difficulty in settling the claims for compensation. No doubt there will; but if there be that difficulty in London, there will be the same difficulty in provincial towns—in Nottingham, for instance, where similar riots have occurred. The Corporation of the town which I have the honour to represent have before them a large number of claims from sufferers in the late disturbances; but they are completely paralyzed because of the uncertainty of the law. It will be a small consolation to those who have suffered to know that, at some distant time, there is a possibility of a general measure passing. The Home Secretary has spoken of the difficulties involved in the settlement of the question. They may be considerable. The right hon. Gentleman has also urged that some time will be required to remove those difficulties. It is this statement of the right hon. Gentleman which causes me some alarm. I am very much afraid that the delay in the settlement of the matter will prove very injurious to the sufferers out of London, and I ask that the case of the provincial shopkeepers be taken into consideration with the promptitude with which the claims of the suffering shopkeepers of London have been dealt with by the Government.

MR. TOMLINSON: I do not feel that I can go quite so far as some of my hon. Friends in urging that the settlement of the claims of the sufferers in the late riots in London should be postponed till a measure applicable to the whole country is brought in. At the same time, I think it ought to be strongly pressed on the Home Office that a general Bill should be brought in as soon as possible. I cannot see that the difficulties there are in the way of the preparation of a general measure are great; and I hope we shall have a distinct assurance from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, or

Mr. Stanley Leighton

some other Member of the Government, that no delay will be allowed in the introduction of such a measure. With such an assurance I think we ought to be content.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL): It is a noticeable fact that, as far as I can recollect, this matter has not been discussed in Parliament before the present occasion. Although there have been many occasions giving rise to similar losses, and although the law is substantially as stated by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Ashton (Mr. Addison), the question has never been considered in Parliament, nor has attention been publicly drawn to it before the present occasion. The law is in a completely unsatisfactory state, and it is obvious it should be amended. But my hon. and learned Friend, and the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel), will admit that this is not a matter which the Government should take upon themselves to deal with in a day, or without some consideration of the difficulties which surround the matter. I think the House should be satisfied with the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary that the matter will receive early attention, and be dealt with as soon as practicable.

MR. LABOUCHERE: If the right hon. Baronet the Member for Blackburn (Sir Robert Peel) divides against the Bill I shall certainly vote with him. As we know, the State bears four-ninths of the cost of the Metropolitan Police—it is alleged it does that because the police are used for public services—but there is really no earthly reason why the Exchequer should pay four-ninths of the damage done recently in London. If such a demand were made with regard to any provincial town it would not be entertained for a moment. I agree with my hon. Friend Sir Julian Goldsmid, that it is shameful that the Carlton Club and wealthy people should come on the rates and Exchequer for compensation for a miserable window that is broken. Surely they could, in common decency, pay for it themselves. If people came for compensation they ought to plead in *forma pauperis*; when they can pay they ought to pay.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman that if wealthy people have suffered trivial

damage they might meet it out of their own pockets. But I am not aware that any of such people have made claims. [Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID: I know several cases.] Probably they are the cases of some of the hon. Member's own friends. But I speak on behalf of the poor tradesmen whose property has been wrecked, and who have suffered very serious loss. It was not from any lack of care or precaution on their own part that these people suffered. Under these circumstances, and with the assurance which has been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Mr. Charles Russell), I hope the House will pass this Bill, which will save two or three persons from ruin. ["Oh, oh!"] It may be a matter of no consideration to hon. Gentlemen; but I say advisedly that some persons will come to ruin unless they are very speedily recompensed for the losses they have sustained. They come to the authority which, from accident or misfortune, failed to afford them the protection which they have a right to expect, and which ought to have been afforded. Under these circumstances, seeing that this Bill is confined to a particular date and event, seeing that it settles no principle in the future, and leaves the Government full responsibility of altering the general law, I trust the House will allow the Bill to be read a second time.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I wish to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. I suppose that the House must be satisfied with the explanation which he has given, that no time ought to be lost in passing this Bill; but, at the same time, I think that, in the interest of the public purse, we have some right to call upon him to protect the Consolidated Fund. In case of these riots having taken place in the Provinces, the funds of the towns in which they took place would have been held liable; and certainly none of the compensation consequent upon them would have come out of the Consolidated Fund. Now, whatever is just for the country is just for the Metropolis; and I think, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman should adjust this matter so that the compensation shall not come out of the Consolidated Fund at all. It is a matter of great interest to

the country that this should be done, and I think the House has the right to call on the right hon. Gentleman to clear us from the imputation of dealing in a special manner with the Metropolis.

MR. DEASY: I do not see why we in Ireland should be asked to contribute towards the payment for any damage done in England, unless it is understood that the people of England are also prepared to contribute their portion of the cost of any damage done during riots in Ireland. If the people of London cannot afford to wait until a measure to settle the general question has been passed, why were the people of Blackburn, where serious damage was done, compelled to wait, as they have been, for several years? In regard to Dublin, serious riots, resulting in great damage to property, have taken place from time to time; but no Government has ever proposed to contribute from Imperial funds one farthing in aid of the local rates struck for the purpose of compensating owners of property which was injured. Then, again, in the case of Derry, the Government would not give a single penny towards the damage done there, although they now call upon us to contribute towards the cost of the damage done in the English Metropolis. If the right hon. Member (Sir Robert Peel) presses this question, I, as an Irish Member, will certainly support him, and I will promise him my assistance to resist the Bill in its future stages.

MR. COURTNEY: I confess that I share the feeling of the hon. Member in this matter. When I was at the Treasury, I had constantly before me claims made on behalf of London upon the Consolidated Fund. It is said that this compensation question is urgent; but I wish to make this suggestion—that the Bill should be so altered that the whole sum wanted should come out of the police rate, which furnishes five-ninths of the Police Fund, and not out of the contribution from the Consolidated Fund at all. That can be done; and if the right hon. Gentleman would consent to the arrangement the second reading of the Bill may be taken at once.

MR. CHILDERS: I will undertake to consider whether the suggestion of my hon. Friend cannot be adopted.

Mr. Illingworth

SIR ROBERT PEEL: There are so many defects in this Bill that we are now to have a quantity of fresh suggestions put into it. What I would suggest is that it should be withdrawn altogether—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman is not entitled to make a second speech. Only the Minister in charge of the Bill has a right of speaking again.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: Three times.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister in charge of a Bill certainly has the right of making an explanation in regard to his Bill when it is necessary.

MR. JAMES STUART: I am certainly strongly in favour of the proposition of the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney), provided that the Metropolis were responsible for the management of the police for whose remissness it is proposed to rate it; but I think that it is highly improper that the people of London should be called upon to pay this police rate at all, when they have not the shadow of control over the police.

MR. SMALL: Irish Members are very much surprised to find that there is no such law in England on these matters as those which prevail in Ireland. I cannot see why the same laws are not enforced in London as those we have in Dublin; and it appears to me that the proper course for the Government to adopt in regard to this matter is to bring in a general Bill, having retrospective action. It is an extraordinary thing for the Government to bring in a Bill dealing with a matter which has already taken place, and for which the existing law does not provide, without attempting to provide machinery for similar cases which may happen in the future. I quite agree with a remark which was made by one hon. Member—that this is the right time to bring pressure to bear upon the Ministry, for I am quite sure that if we refuse to pass this measure, then we shall very soon obtain a most satisfactory general Bill. If the House refuses to do anything at all in this case of the Metropolis, until the cases of Blackburn, Nottingham, &c., have been similarly dealt with, I am satisfied that we shall see an adequate general measure passed without delay.

MR. M. J. KENNY: What I want to know, Mr. Speaker, is this—How are the Government going to carry out the proposal of the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney)? How can they differentiate between the police rate and the Police Fund? [MR. COURTNEY: Put the charge on the rate.] It is simply an ingenious scheme of evasion to suggest that the compensations should be taken out of the five-ninths of the Police Fund, and not out of the other four-ninths. It is a fact that the two items—that from the rate and that from the Consolidated Fund—have to be amalgamated at some time or other, and I cannot see how they can be differentiated. I do not see why we should make a difference in the case of London. I am not aware that Colonel Jackson, when his house was attacked at Blackburn, received compensation. [An hon. MEMBER: He did.] Well, then, Colonel Jackson was lucky; but other persons in Blackburn, whose property was damaged at the same time, did not. I will, however, modify my objection to the Bill if the Government will insert a clause in it providing that compensation out of the Consolidated Fund shall be given to the people in Ireland whose property is injured on these occasions. If that is done, I am sure that my hon. Friends will also be willing to modify their opposition to the Bill at this stage, and give it a fair consideration when it gets into Committee.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 106; Noes 79: Majority 27.—(Div. List, No. 17.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

MOTIONS.

—

POST OFFICE, SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CONTRACT ST. VINCENT TO THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA.)

RESOLUTION.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HENRY H. FOWLER), in rising to move the Resolution, said: I do not want, at this late hour, to enter into any details on this subject, because I understand that it is the desire of hon. Members that the debate should be ad-

journed. If the Motion is made for the adjournment I shall not object.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Contract, dated the 19th day of January 1886, for the Construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa be approved."—MR. HENRY H. FOWLER.)

MR. LABOUCHERE: I did hope, seeing that this is a proposal to levy a heavy charge upon the Exchequer for a number of years, that the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) would have brought it forward at a reasonable hour. It is perfectly monstrous that these midnight raids should be made upon the Treasury. I know one hon. Member is absent who, if he is correct in his statement, is prepared to show that this contract ought not to be made.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—MR. LABOUCHERE.)

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: I shall be glad to have the opportunity of showing that this is a contract which ought to be signed in the public interest; at all events, that it is absolutely necessary to be settled in one way or the other. I shall bring it up to-morrow.

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

IRISH INDUSTRIES.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Natural Resources and the Present Condition of Manufacturing and Productive Industries in Ireland, and to consider and report by what means those Natural Resources may be more fully developed, and how those Industries may be encouraged and extended.—MR. SESTON.)

RIVER LEA.

Select Committee on River Lea nominated of, —MR. ABRAHAM LIMERICK County, West, MR. ATTORNEY GENERAL, MR. SEATON-BOWTH, MR. RIVER COOK, SIR GUYER HUNTER, SIR HENRY ROBERTS, SIR LEWIS PELLY, and MR. PICKERSILL, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(MR. ATTORNEY GENERAL.)

TITHE RENT-CHARGE RECOVERY BILL.

(On the Motion of Mr. Stanley Leighton, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Recovery of Tithe Rent-Charge, ordered to be brought in

by Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Raikes, and Mr. Kenyon.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 129.]

BANKRUPTCY (AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' WAGES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stanhope, Bill to amend the Law relating to Bankruptcy so far as relates to Agricultural Labourers' Wages, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Compton Lawrance, Mr. Solater-Booth, and Mr. Long.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 130.]

BURIAL GROUNDS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to Burial Grounds.

Resolution reported:— Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Secretary Childers, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, and Mr. Broadhurst.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 131.]

House adjourned at Two o'clock.

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When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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Unclaimed Deposits, 2R. 1846

Actions for Debt (Limitation) Bill
(*Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. A. Acland, Mr. Glyn,
Mr. Locris*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Mar 2 [Bill 196]

**ADDISON, Mr. J. E. W., Ashton-under-
Lyme**
Compensation for Damages, 2R. 2001
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Ap-
pointment to the Recordership of Liverpool,
1328
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S T

Administration and Expenditure — The Great Spending Departments
Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Mar 1, 1847

ADMIRALTY—First Lord (*see* HAMILTON, Right Hon. Lord G. F.)

ADMIRALTY — First Lord (*see* RIPON, Marquess of)

ADMIRALTY—Civil Lord (*see* DUFF, Mr. R. W.)

ADMIRALTY—Secretary to (*see* RITCHIE, Mr. C. T.)

ADMIRALTY—Secretary to (*see* HIBBERT, Right Hon. J. T.)

ADVOCATE, The LORD (*see* BALFOUR, Right Hon. J. B.)

Africa (South)—Affairs of

Question, Observations, Sir Robert Fowler; Reply, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan); Observations, Sir Frederick Stanley Feb 19, 1911

Bechuanaland—Sale of Spirits, Question, Sir Robert Fowler; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) Feb 23, 1913

The Transvaal—Import Duties, Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) Mar 4, 1900

ALLISON, Mr. B. A., *Cumberland, Eskdale*
Maintenance of Social Order (Ireland), Res. 1906

Allotments

Moved, That there be laid before this House "Return (1.) of all agricultural holdings in England and Wales, both of arable and pasture land, occupied as allotments or field gardens, of one-eighth of an acre and not exceeding four acres; (2.) of all garden allotments exceeding one-eighth of an acre attached to cottages; (3.) of all charitable trusts in England and Wales the trustees of which are trustees within the meaning of the first and fourth clauses of the Allotments Extension Act, 1882" (*The Earl of Onslow*) Feb 22, 1913; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Question, Mr. Henry Tollermeade; Answer, The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Heneage) Feb 25, 1919

Allotments and Small Holdings

Question, Colonel Brookfield; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Feb 25, 1926

Allotments and Small Holdings—cont.

Agricultural Labourers, Question, Sir John Lubbock; Answer, The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Heneage) Mar 4, 1900

Allotments and Small Holdings Bill

(Mr. Jess Collings, Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Captain Verney, Mr. Arch, Dr. Foster, Mr. Flower, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Newman)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 53]

Allotments Bill (Mr. Finch-Hatton, Mr. Birkbeck, Viscount Newcark)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 57]

AMBROSE, Mr. W., *Middlesex, Harrow*
Land Registry, 2R. 1001, 1002

Law and Justice—Appointment to the Recorder'ship of Liverpool, 895

America (Central)—The Panama Canal

Question, Mr. Magnias; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) Feb 19, 1911

Appointments under the Crown

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the method of appointment and apportionment of salaries and duties under the Crown" (Mr. Cossham) Feb 23, 1911; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Arbitration Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Bramwell*)

l. Presented; read 1^o Feb 25 (No. 17)

ARCH, Mr. J., *Norfolk, N.W.*

Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 483

ARMY (*Questions*)

Ammunition — Orders to Sir W. Armstrong, and Co., Question, Mr. Carbutt; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 22, 1911

Appointments — Prince Henry of Battenberg, Questions, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 26, 1901; Mar 1, 1915

Arms

Defective Bayonets, Questions, Mr. Hickman, Mr. Carbutt, Captain Fellowes; Answers, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. H. S. Northcote) Jan 26, 1917

Manufacture of Swords, Question, Colonel Sallis-Schwabe; Answer, The Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Woodall) Feb 23, 1927

Steel for Sword Bayonets, Question, Mr. Johns; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 22, 1900

Tenders for Swords, Question, Mr. Mappin; Answer, The Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Woodall) Feb 25, 1911

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ARMY—Arms—cont.

Testing of Side-Arms, Question, Colonel Salis-Schwabe; Answer, The Secretary of State (Mr. W. H. Smith) Jan 22, 187; Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Woodall) Mar 1, 1891

Use of German Steel for Sword Blades, Question, Mr. Carbutt; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 22, 1893

Woolwich Arsenal—Discharge of Workmen—Martini-Henry Rifles for the Indian Army, Questions, Mr. Howell, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. W. H. Smith, Lord Randolph Churchill, Captain Price, Sir Henry Tylor; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) Mar 4, 1911

Artillery—Vacancies for Subaltern Officers, Question, Colonel Hughes-Hallett; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 22, 1893

Barracks—India—Richmond Barracks, Question, Sir James Ferguson; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. H. S. Northcote) Jan 25, 311

Cladding—Factory, Pimlico, Questions, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Magnus; Answers, The Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Woodall) Feb 25, 1222

Discipline—Instructors in Belfast Barracks, Question, Mr. Ewart; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. H. S. Northcote) Jan 25, 305

Egypt—Soudan Campaign—The Royal Irish Regiment, Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 25, 1209

Finance—Effects of a Deceased Soldier—Case of Dennis McDonnell, Questions, Mr. O'Keefy; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Mar 1, 1545

Manufacturing Departments—Small Arms Factory, Enfield—Discharge of Workmen, Question, Lord Algernon Percy; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 25, 1235; Question, Sir Henry Tylor; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Mar 4, 1409

Medical Staff—The Serbian and Bulgarian Campaigns, Question, Sir Trevor Lawrence; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 25, 1209

Militia

Miss Kerr, Carron Militia, Question, Mr. Haydon; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 25, 1213

"Old" Adjutants in Irish Regiments, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbett; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 26, 1372

Pensioners—Case of Michael Heron, 1st Royal Irish, Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 25, 1024

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Quartermasters—Ineligibility for Army Departments, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. H. S. Northcote) Jan 26, 421

Recruiting, Report of the Inspector General of, Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 25, 1214

Volunteers

Artillery Volunteers, Question, Mr. Mark Stewart; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Mar 1, 1522

Capitation Grant, Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) Feb 25, 1032

Mounted Volunteer Infantry, Question, Observations, Viscount Midleton; Reply, The Under Secretary of State for War (Lord Sandhurst) Mar 2, 1663

Army (India)

Indian Military Leave, Question, Mr. Shirley; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Lightfoot Kay-Shuttleworth) Feb 26, 1399

ASHMOURNE, Lord Lord Chancellor of Ireland

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ATTORNEY GENERAL (see RUSSELL, Mr. C.)

ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (see HOLMES, Right Hon. H.)

Australia and New Zealand—The Parcel Post

Question, Mr. Spensley; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) Feb 25, 1029

BADEN-POWELL, Mr. G., *Liverpool, Kirkdale*

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BAGGALLAY, Mr. E., *Lambeth, Brixton*

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BAKER, Mr. L. J., *Somerset, Frome*

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BALFOUR, Right Hon. A. J. (President of the Local Government Board), *Manchester, E.*

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BALFOUR, Right Hon. J. B., *Clackmannan, &c.*

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BALFOUR, General Sir G., *Kincairdineshire*

Army (Supplementary Estimates, 1885-6)—Warlike Stores and Works, 1635, 1638

Navy (Supplementary Estimates, 1885-6)—Navy Services, 1291

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Bankruptcy (Agricultural Labourers' Wages) Bill

(Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Compton Lawrance, Mr. Selater-Booth, Mr. Long)

c. Ordered; read 1st Mar 4 [Bill 130]

Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill

(Mr. Peter McDonald, Mr. Henry Gill, Mr. Clancy, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. O'Hanlon)

c. Ordered; read 1st Jan 22 [Bill 47]

BARCLAY, Mr. J. W., *Forfarshire*

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BARRY, Mr. J., *Wexford S.*

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BARTLEY, Mr. G. O. T., *Islington, N.*

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BARTELOT, Colonel Sir W. B., *Sussex, Hoveham*

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Army (Supplementary Estimates, 1885-6)—Warlike Stores and Works, 1635

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Maintenance of Social Order (Ireland), Res. 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975

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BRANCHAMP, Earl

Lunacy Acts Amendment, 2R. 1499

Beer Adulteration Bill

(Baron Dunsdale,

Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, Mr. Hailey, Mr. Round, Mr. Abel Smith)

c. Ordered; read 1st Jan 22 [Bill 51]

Beer Adulteration No. 2 Bill (Mr.

Barnard, Mr. Herbert Mackay, Mr. Charles Hall, Mr. Fitch, Mr. Joseph Cullen)

c. Ordered; read 1st Jan 22 [Bill 59]

Beer Adulteration No. 3 Bill

Mr. Quiller, Mr. Ingham, Mr. Hennage, Mr. Everett

c. Ordered; read 1st Jan 22 [Bill 66]

BIRTH, Mr. G., Glasgow, Central

Glasgow Bridge, &c. 2R. 1337

Scotland—Education Department—Gaelic in Board Schools, 1769

Belfast Main Drainage Bill

c. Moved, "That the Petition against the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, deposited in the Private Bill Office on the 19th instant, be printed and circulated with the Votes" (Mr. Sexton) Feb 25, 1880; Motion agreed to
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Belfast Main Drainage Bill, that they do insert in the Bill Clauses for the following purposes :—

To assimilate the Municipal franchise of the borough of Belfast to the existing Parliamentary franchise;

To enable every person qualified to vote at a Municipal election in Belfast to be a candidate for election to the office of councillor or alderman;

To constitute the present boundary of the Parliamentary borough of Belfast the boundary of the Municipal borough, and to direct and provide for a new division of the Municipal borough into wards, as recommended in the Report of the Municipal Boundaries (Ireland) Commission, dated the 27th of June 1873, and to authorize a proportionate increase in the number of aldermen and councillors;

To provide for an entire new election of all the aldermen and councillors of the borough, upon the reformed franchise, within the present year" (Mr. Sexton Mar 2, 1877; Previous Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put". The Chairman of Ways and Means; after long debate, Question put; A. 84, N. 200; M. 116 (D. L. 14

BELMORE, Earl of

Parliament—Ventilation of the Committee Rooms, 868

BENEFORD, Lord (C. W., Marylebone, A.

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Metropolis—Metropolitan Police Force—Organization, Res. 1413

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BETHELL, Commander G. R., York, E.R., Holderness

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Supply—Orange River Territory, &c. 1627

BIGGAR, Mr. J. G., Caran, W.

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State of Ireland—Charge against Emergency Men at Cornafane, Co. Caran, 1034

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BIRKBECK, Sir E., Norfolk, E.

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BLAKE, Mr. J. A., *Carlou*

Ireland—Fishery Piers and Harbours—The Irish Church Fund, 1886
Inspectors of Irish Fisheries—Sea and Coast Fisheries Fund, 1887

BLAKE, Mr. T., *Gloucester, Forest of Dean*

Forest of Dean—Unfenced Quarries, 1898

BLANE, Mr. A., *Armagh, S.*

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Law and Justice—Firing at the Person—Case of Robert Cooper and F. G. Bleakley, 1370
Poor Law—Armagh Union—Removal of a Pauper by the Relieving Officer, 1753
Public Meetings—Speech of Mr. G. H. Smith at Newry, 1369
Supply—County Court Officers, &c. Ireland, 799

BLUNDELL, Colonel H. B. H., *Lancashire, S.W., Ince*

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Copyhold Enfranchisement, 2R. 1161
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BOORD, Mr. T. W., *Greenwich*

Post Office (Parcel Post)—Carriage of Parcels in Suburban and Rural Districts, 879

Borough Funds Bill (*Mr. Kenrick, Mr. Edward Clarke, Major Dickson, Mr. Picton, Mr. Woodhead*)

c. Ordered; read 1st Mar 3 [Bill 122]

BORTHWICK, Sir A., *Kensington, S.*

London School Board Election Expenses, 1383

Boundaries of Towns (Ireland) Bill

(*Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Lane, Mr. Small, Mr. Tuite, Mr. William Abraham*)

. Ordered; read 1st Jan 22 [Bill 23]

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BRAND, Hon. H. R., *Gloucester, Stroud*

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Broadhurst, Mr., Under Secretary of State for the Home Department

Question, Mr. Gent-Davis: Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers), The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) Mar 4, 1875

BRODRICK, Hon. W. St. J. F., Surrey, Guildford

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BRUNNER, Mr. J. T., Cheshire, Northwich

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Burial Grounds Bill Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Secretary Alders, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Broadhurst;

c. Question, Mr. Richard; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) Mar 1, 1861; Question, Mr. Shirley; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) Mar 4, 1902

Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1st Mar 4 [B. 131]

Burial Law Amendment Bill (Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Richard, Mr. Carvell Williams);

c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1st Jan 22 [Bill 45]
Bill withdrawn Mar 4

BRYCE, Mr. J., Aberdeen, S.
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The Under Secretary of State for India, Sir

Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth Feb 23, 1214

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Licensed Opium Shops, Question, Mr. Hunter; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) *Feb 22, 904*

The Chinese Government, Question, Mr. M'Laren; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bourke) *Jan 22, 192*

Burmah (Expenses of Military Operations)

Lords

Moved to resolve, "That Her Majesty having directed a military expedition of Her forces charged upon Indian revenues to be despatched against the King of Ava, this House consents that the revenues of India shall be applied to defray the expenses of the military operations which may be carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions" (*The Earl of Kimberley*) *Feb 22, 849*; after debate, Motion agreed to

Commons

Notice of Resolution, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) *Feb 18, 607*

Moved, "That Her Majesty having directed a Military expedition of Her forces charged upon Indian revenues to be despatched against the King of Ava, this House consents that the revenues of India shall be applied to defray the expenses of the Military operations which may be carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions" (*Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth*) *Feb 22, 939*

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "this House is of opinion that it would be unjust to defray the expenses of the Military operations in the Kingdom of Ava out of the revenues of India" (*Mr. Hunter*) v.; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 297, N. 82; M. 215; Div. List, A. and N., 986; main Question put, and agreed to

BURT, Mr. T., Morpeth

Coal Mines—Usworth Colliery Explosion, 892
Coal Mines Regulation Act (1872) Amendment, 2R. 1867

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment, 2R. 1090

Labour Statistics, Res. 1773

Spain — Case of Mr. Welford, Missionary at Fernando Po, 833

Butter Substitutes Bill (*Mr. Conway, Mr. Lane, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Leamy, Mr. Finucane, Mr. Biggar*)

c. Ordered; read 1st *Jan 22* [Bill 16]

BUXTON, Mr. E. N., Essex, Walthamstow
East London Water, 2R. 1665

CAMBRIDGE, Duke of (Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief)

Colonies — Imperial and Colonial Defences — Address for Returns, 1348
Kingdom of Ava, Res. 858

CAMERON, Dr. C., Glasgow, College

Burmah — Military Executions — The Provost Marshal, 188, 189, 317, 896, 897, 1038

Committee of Selection — Nomination of Committee, 407, 414, 415

Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), Motion for Leave, 1328

Lunacy (Vacating of Seats), Comm. Motion for reporting Progress, 1342

Navy—Supply of Cutlasses, 1381

Navy Estimates—Shipbuilding Votes, 425

Navy (Supplementary Estimates, 1885-6) — Navy Services, Amendt. 1385, 1302

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Inland Revenue—Illicit Stills, 417

Law and Justice—Mr. R. W. Renton, Procurator Fiscal of East Fife, 308, 309, 890; —Procurator Fiscal of Orkney, 1515 Universities, 1891

Sporting Lands Rating, 2R. 1487

Supply — Courts of Law and Justice in Scotland, &c. 779, 780; Amendt. 789

Secretary for Scotland, 768, 771; Amendt. 774

CAMERON, Mr. J. M., Wick, &c.

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Law and Justice (Scotland) The Procurator Fiscal of Orkney, 1514, 1515

Railways—Fish Traffic Rates, 419, 897

CAMPBELL, Sir A., Renfrew, W.

Glasgow Bridges, &c. 2R. 1356

Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 396

CAMPBELL, Sir G., Kirkcaldy, &c.

Burmah—Annexation of Upper Burmah, 1218, 1219

Military Executions—The Provost Marshal, 188, 314, 316

Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), Motion for Leave, 1329

Imperial Revenue (Ireland and Great Britain), Res. 1052

Mauritius—Appointment of Mr. Clifford Lloyd as Lieutenant Governor, 892

Parliament—Business of the House—Order of Public Business, Res. 918, 919

Parliament — Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 656

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CAMPBELL, Sir G.—*cont.*

Parliamentary Representation in the Colonies—Colonial Voters, 1392

Scotland—Errors in Statistical Returns—Return of Municipal Burghs, 1885, 1877, 1878

Supply—Embassies and Missions Abroad, 1858

Orange River Territory, &c. 1609

Superannuation and Retired Allowances, 1360

CAMPBELL, Mr. H., *Fermanagh, S.*

Colonial Ecclesiastical Appointments, 1372

Ireland—Post Office—Questions

Erection of a Telegraph Pole on Private Property at Enniskillen, 1376

Postmaster of Italy, 1375, 1734

The late Postmaster of Ballyheigue, Co. Kerry, 1897

CAMPBELL, Mr. J. A., *Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities*

Scotland—Aberdeen University—Chair of Physiology, 1765

CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Right Hon. H., (Secretary of State for War), *Stirling, &c.*

Army—Questions

Army Medical Officers—The Servian and Bulgarian Campaign, 1204

Discharged and Invalided Men—Case of Michael Heron, 1st Royal Irish, 1024

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Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Questions

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CAMPERDOWN, Earl of

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CARBUTT, Mr. F. H., *Monmouth, &c.*

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CAREW, Mr. J. L., *Kildare, N.*

Ireland—Railways—Accident at Athy Railway Station, 14-9

CARLISLE, Bishop of

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CAVENDISH, Lord E., *Derbyshire, W.*

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CHAMBERLAIN, Right Hon. J., *Birmingham, W.*

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Public Health Act, 1875—Removal of Dead Bodies, 1035

CHANCE, Mr. P. A., *Kilkenny, S.*

Ireland—Illegal Use of Firearms—Case of Joseph Delaney, Morris, Co. Carlow, 18-3

Magistracy—Kilkenny County, 1491

CHANCELLOR, The Lord *see* HALSBURY, Lord)

CHANCELLOR, The Lord *see* HERMELL, Lord)

CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND, The Lord (*see* ARDRENE, Lord)

CHANCELLOR of the DUCHY of LANCASTER (*see* CHAPLIN, Right Hon. H.)

CHANCELLOR of the DUCHY of LANCASTER
(*see* HENEAGE, Right Hon. E.)

CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (*see*
BEACH, Right Hon. Sir M. E.
HICKS-)

CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (*see*
HARCOURT, Right Hon. Sir W. G.
V.)

CHANNING, Mr. F. A., *Northampton, E.*
Railways—Railway Couplings, 1192

CHAPLIN, Right Hon. H. (Chancellor
of the Duchy of Lancaster), *Lin-*
colnshire, Sleaford
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in An-
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471, 480

Charitable Trusts (Allotments Extension
Act, 1882)

Moved for "Return of all charities known to
the Charity Commissioners, the income of
which is shown to be distributable in articles
in kind or in money, in the 'General Digest
of Endowed Charities' laid before Parlia-
ment on the motion of Lord Robert Montagu
between the years 1868 and 1876, as supple-
mented by the information subsequently ac-
quired by the Charity Commissioners; and
distinguishing those charities the income of
which may be otherwise applied in pursuance
of schemes established by the Charity Com-
missioners" (*The Earl of Onslow*) Mar 4,
1873; Motion agreed to

Charity Commissioners — Scheme for
Christ's Hospital

Question, Mr. Howard Spensley; Answer, The
Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon
Playfair) Feb 23, 1923; Questions, Mr. W.
H. James, Mr. Howard Spensley; Answers,
The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon
Playfair) Mar 4, 1875

CHILDERS, Right Hon. H. C. E. (Secre-
tary of State for the Home Depart-
ment), *Edinburgh, S.*

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Burials—Burial Grounds Bill, 1842
Church of England—Convocation—"The
House of Laymen," 1196
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tion, Res. 1415, 1448
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Sites for the New Public Offices—War Office
and Admiralty, 1999
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mittee, 1806, 1808
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Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
(Mr. Bryce) Feb 26, 1385
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Church Boards Bill (Mr. Albert Grey, Mr.
Stafford Howard, Sir John Lubbock, Mr.
Meier, Mr. Houldsworth, Sir U. Kay-
Shuttleworth, Mr. Gerald Balfour)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 54]

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CHURCHILL, Right Hon. Lord R. H. S.
Secretary of State for India,
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Supply—Colonial Local Revenue, &c. 1254
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Church of England

Conventions—"The Hour of Laying on" Ques-
tions, Mr. Ptoles, Colonel Waring, Mr.
Sexton; Answers, The Secretary of State
for the Home Department (Mr. Childers),
Mr. Speaker Feb 25, 1195
Corporation Rectory and Trinity College, Cam-
bridge, Question, Sir Robert Peck; Answer,
Mr. Speaker Feb 25, 1212
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Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury
(Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Feb 19, 713

Church of Scotland Bill *Mr. Finlay, The
Marquess of Strathfield*

c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed
to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1^o
Jan 22 [Bill 6]

Church Patronage Bill *(Mr. Rylands, Mr.
Leatham, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Bruston)*

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 4]

Civil Service Writers

Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The
Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir William
Harcourt) Feb 19, 706

CLANCY, Mr. J. J., Dublin Co., N.

Belfast Main Drainage, Res. 1723
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Landlord and Tenant—Mr. H. McDougall,
Agent to the Gormanstown Estate, Co.
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Supply—Registration of Voters, Ireland, 1900

CLARK, Dr. G. B., *Caithness*

Army—Quartermasters, 421
Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), Motion for Leave,
1330
East India—Burmah—Expenses of Military
Operations, Res. 973
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sion, 712
Supply—Orange River Territory, &c. 1623

CLARKE, Mr. E. G., *Plymouth*

Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in An-
swer to, 245, 249

CLIFFORD OF CHUDLEIGH, Lord

Lunacy Acts Amendment, 2R. 1502

Coal Mines Bill

(*Sir Richard Cross,*

Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Forster)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 10 [Bill 92]
Read 2^o, and committed for Monday next;
after short debate Mar 3, 1871

Coal Mines Regulation Act 1872' Amend-

ment Bill *(Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. F.
P. O'Connor)*

c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 23 [Bill 104]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^o"
Mar 3, 1870
Amend. to leave out "now," add "upon the
day six months" (Mr. Teminzen); Ques-
tion proposed, "That 'now,' &c.," after
debate, Amendt. withdrawn
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2^o

Coal Mines—The Unworth Colliery Ex-
plasion

Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, The Secretary
of State for the Home Department (Mr.
Childers) Feb 22, 892

**Coast Defences — Defence of the Coast of
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Question, Sir Henry Havelock-Allan; Answer,
The Secretary of State for War Mr. Camp-
bell-Bannerman) Feb 22, 850

COBB, Mr. H. P., *Warwick, S. E., Rugby*

Education Department—Elementary Schools
—Free Education, 1031
Law and Justice—Murder of Police Constable
Hine at Fenny Compton, 1249

COHES, Mr. L. L., *Paddington, N.*

Committee on Local Administration—Guaran-
teed Capital of Railways, 1027
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(Sir William Harcourt) Mar 1, 1816

COLERIDGE, Hon. B., *Sheffield, Attercliffe*
Lunacy Acts Amendment, 2R. 1495
South-Eastern Europe—Greece and Turkey, 1032

COLLINGS, Mr. J., *Ipswich*
Parliament—Business of the House, 441
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(*Secretary to the Local Government Board*)
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Supply—Registration of Voters, England, 1261, 1266

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COLONIES—Secretary of State for (*see* GRANVILLE, Earl)

COLONIES—Under Secretary of State for (*see* MORGAN, Right Hon. G. Osborne)

Colonies

Colonial Ecclesiastical Appointments, Question, Mr. Henry Campbell ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) Feb 26, 1372

Parliamentary Representation—Colonial Voters, Question, Sir George Campbell ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) Feb 20, 1392

Colonies—Imperial and Colonial Defences

Address for "Returns of the number of naval and military officers now employed in the service of the Colonies by the permission of the Board of Admiralty and of the War Office ; of officers who have, in addition to the above, applied for permission so to serve ; of assistance given to the Colonial Governments in ships, guns, or other military stores" (*The Viscount Sidmouth*) Feb 26, 1345 ; after short debate, Return amended, and agreed to

COMMERELL, Admiral Sir J. E., *Southampton*
Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment, 2R. 1110
War Office—The Powder Magazine at Bermuda, 426

COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION—Vice President (*see* PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Sir Lyon)

Common Juries Remuneration Bill (Mr. Crompton, Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Eugene Wason, Sir John Swinburne, Mr. Johns)

c. Ordered ; read 1st Feb 19 [Bill 95]

Commons and Inclosure Acts Amendment Bill (Mr. Walter James, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Mr. Joicey, Mr. Cobb)

c. Ordered ; read 1st Feb 19 [Bill 99]

Compensation for Damages Bill

(Mr. Secretary Childers, Mr. Broadhurst)

c. Ordered ; read 1st Feb 26 [Bill 120]

Question, Sir Robert Peel ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) Mar 4, 1896

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2nd" Mar 4, 2000 ; after short debate, Question put ; A. 106, N. 79 ; M. 27 (D. L. 17) ; Bill read 2nd

Contagious Diseases Acts Repeal Bill

(Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Stansfeld, Sir Robert Fowler)

c. Ordered ; read 1st Jan 22 [Bill 33]

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act—Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Fife

Question, Viscount Grimston ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Heneage) Mar 2, 1758

Conveyancing (Scotland) Act, 1874, Amendment Bill

(Dr. Cameron, Mr. Craig-Sellar, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Lyell)

c. Ordered ; read 1st Mar 2 [Bill 127]

CONYBEARE, Mr. C. A. V., *Cornwall, Camborne*

Burmah—Military Executions—The Provost Marshal, 316

Criminal Law—Assaults upon Children, 424

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India (Telegraph Department)—Promotion—Grievances of Officers, 896

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Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women), 2R. 695

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Tenure of Town Houses (Ireland), 2R. 1143

COOK, Mr. E. R., *West Ham, N.*

Metropolitan Board of Works (Water Supply, &c.), 2R. 1166

Post Office—Extra Postage, 1537

COOKE, Mr. O. W. R., Newington, W.
Ireland—Suppression of the National League, 805
Metropolis, Disturbances in the—Action of the Home Department, Explanation, 604
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Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women), 2R. 695

COOPER, Mr. O. E., Middlesbrough, Brentford
Metropolitan Board of Works (Water Supply, &c.), 2R. Amendt. 1165

Copyhold and Customary Tenure Bill
(*Mr. Banister Fletcher, Mr. C. M. Warrington, Mr. H. L. W. Lawson*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 19 [Bill 94]

Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill
(*Mr. Charles James, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Miller*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 26]
Read 2^o, after short debate Feb 24, 1886

Copyhold Enfranchisement [Stamp Duty]
Res. considered in Committee, and agreed to Feb 26, 1886
Res reported Mar 1

Copyright 'Works of Fine Art' Bill
(*Mr. Hastings, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Agnew*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Mar 3 [Bill 125]

CORRY, Mr. W. J., Wicklow, E.
Army (Auxiliary Forces—Irish Militia), 1372
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Interest in Wicklow, 1025
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Morocco—State of the Prisons, 1025
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Corrupt Practices (Municipal Elections) Scotland Bill (*Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. W. A. Hunter*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 22 [Bill 106]

CORRY, Sir J. P., Armagh, Mid
Belfast Main Drainage, Res 1699

COSHAM, Mr. H., Bristol, E.
Appointments under the Crown, Motion for a Select Committee, 1074, 1079
Loans to Landowners, 1472
Maintenance of Social Order (Ireland), Res. 1493
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COSHAM, Mr. H.—cont.
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County Government
Local Taxation—Legislation, Questions, Viscount Curzon, Mr. Saunders; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) Feb 22, 1886
Representative Councils, Question, Mr. Saunders; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir M. Hicks-Beach Jan 26, 1886

County Government (Ireland) Bill
Mr. John O'Donnor, Mr. Timothy Healy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Small
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 2]

COURTNEY, Mr. L. H., Chairman of Committees, Cornwall, Bodmin
Belfast Main Drainage, Res. Previous Question moved, 1692, 1719
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Police and Sanitary Regulations, Res. 1265, 1366
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Supply—Colonial Local Revenue, &c. 1246
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COWEN, Mr. J., Newcastle-on-Tyne
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COWPER, Earl
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COX, Mr. J. R., Clonsilla, E.
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CRANBORNE, Viscount, Lancashire, N.E., Devon
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CRANBROOK, Viscount (Lord President of the Council)

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Ireland, Condition of ("Boycotting," &c.), 868
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CRAWFORD, Mr. D., Lanark, N.E.

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CREMER, Mr. W. R., Shoreditch, Haggerston

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Supply—Colonial Local Revenue, &c. 1244, 1246

CRILLY, Mr. D., Mayo, N.

Belfast Main Drainage, Res. 1726
Ireland—Fishery Piers and Harbours—Works at Killybegs and Polnamuck, Co. Mayo, 1204
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Crofters (Scotland) Bill

(The Marquess of Stafford, Dr. Farquharson)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 17]

Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill

(Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland)

c. Observation, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) Feb 22, 910
Motion for Leave (Mr. Trevelyan) Feb 25, 1304; after debate, Motion agreed to; Bill "to amend the Law relating to the tenure of Land by Crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for other purposes relating thereto" ordered; read 1^o

[Bill 118]

CROMPTON, Mr. C., Staffordshire, Leek

Tenure of Town Houses (Ireland), 2R. 1143
Unclaimed Deposits, 2R. 1848

Cross, Right Hon. Sir R. A. (Secretary of State for the Home Department), Lancashire, S.W., Newton
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l. Presented ; read 1^o Mar 1 No. 24,

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c. Ordered ; read 1^o Mar 3 [Bill 123]

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c. Read 2^o, and referred to a Select Committee, after short debate Mar 2, 1865

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(*Mr. Finlay, Mr. M'Lagan*)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 79]

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c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 19 [Bill 98]

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Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Rayleigh*)

i. Presented; read 1^o Mar 2 (No. 25)

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(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Dr. Commins, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Jesse Collings*)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 60]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^o" Feb 23, 1079; after debate, Moved, "That

[cont.]

Employers' Liability Act Amendment (1886) Bill
—cont.

the Debate be now adjourned" (*Viscount Cranborne*): after further short debate, Question put, and negatived

Original Question again proposed: after short debate, original Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2^d

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, and that it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire into the operation of 'The Employers' Liability Act, 1880.'" 1114; after short debate, Motion agreed to

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment (No. 2) Bill

(*Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Joigny, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Lockwood*)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 76]

Employers' Liability Act—Kindred Legislation in Foreign Countries

Question, Mr. W. F. Lawrence; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Mr. Bryce*) Feb 26, 1890

Endowed Schools Acts

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed 'to inquire into the operation of 'The Endowed Schools Act, 1869,' and the amending Acts, and to consider and report how far it may be expedient to amend the powers exercised under them by the Charity Commissioners'" (*Sir Lyon Playfair*) Feb 22, 1906; Motion agreed to

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(*Sir Herbert Maxwell, Lord Algermon Perry, Mr. Long, Sir Robert Fowler*)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 46]

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(*Mr. Sexton, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Harris, Mr. P. J. O'Brien, Mr. Channon, Mr. Justin McCarthy*)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 26]

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o. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 73]

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o. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 29]

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l. Presented; read 1^o Feb 22 (No. 18)
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c. Read 2^o, after short debate Feb 26, 1352

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c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 19 [Bill 93]

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Fowler*)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 22 [Bill 107]
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Arklow Harbour Works, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Feb 22, 844

Harbour Works at Castell and Kilkerrin, Co. Galway, Question, Mr. Foley; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Mar 1, 1534; — *at Ince-inil*, Question, Mr. B. Kelly; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Feb 26, 1370

Fishery Piers and Harbours (Ireland)

Bundoran, Co. Donegal, Question, Mr. B. Kelly; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Feb 26, 1371

Bunstrawish Pier, Co. Donegal, Question, Mr. B. Kelly; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Feb 26, 1374

Keshill Head, Glenties, Co. Sligo, Question, Mr. P. McDonald; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Feb 23, 1027

Works at Killybeg and Polnamuck, Co. Mayo, Question, Mr. Cully; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Feb 25, 1204

The Irish Church Fund, Question, Mr. Blake; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Mar 4, 1446

Poor Law (Ireland)

Apprentice Union — Relief of the Lads, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks Beach) Jan 26, 424

Armagh Union — Removal of a Pauper by the Relieving Officer, Question, Mr. Alexander Blane; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Mar 2, 1753

Arran Islands, Relief of Distress in the, Question, Mr. Canney; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks Beach) Jan 26, 424

Electors of Guardians — Mr. Joseph D. Grier, Clerk to the Curran Poor Law Board, Question, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Mar 1, 1543; Mar 4, 1893

IRELAND—Poor Law—cont.

Out-Door Relief, Question, Mr. Dwyer Gray; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Feb 25, 1213

Post Office (Ireland)

Appointment of Surveyors' Clerks, Question, Mr. T. M. Heal; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Feb 26, 1366

Erection of a Telegraph Pole on Private Property at Enniskillen, Question, Mr. Henry Campbell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Feb 26, 1370

Galway Mills, Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Mar 1, 1535

Parcel Post — Rural Letter Carriers, Question, Mr. O'Hanlon; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Mar 4, 1889

Postmaster of Bala, Question, Mr. Henry Campbell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Feb 26, 1376; Question, Mr. Henry Campbell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Arnold Morley) Mar 2, 1754

Postmaster of Ballisodare, Co. Kerry, the late, Question, Mr. Henry Campbell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Mar 4, 1497

Postmaster of Dromanagh, Co. Tyrone, Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Mar 4, 1497

Post Office at Clashisunny, Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Mar 1, 1544

Post Office at Tralee, Question, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Feb 25, 1029

Law and Justice (Ireland)

Case of Morgan Brien, Cork Winter Assizes, Question, Mr. P. J. O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Feb 26, 1360

Case of Michael Storey, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Feb 22, 844

Court of Bankruptcy — Mr. L. H. Derring, Official Assignee, Question, Mr. Peter McDonald; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Feb 26, 1374

The late Official Assignee, Mr. C. H. James, Questions, Mr. Peter McDonald; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Feb 25, 1197

Firing of the Fens — Case of Robert Cooper and J. G. Bickley, Question, Mr. Alexander Blane; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Feb 26, 1370

The Magistracy (Ireland)

Kilkeany Co., Question, Mr. Chance; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Mar 4, 1663

IRELAND—*The Magistracy*—cont.

Mr. John O. Payne, J.P., Cork, Question, *Mr. Gilhooly*; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar 2, 1752*

Royal Irish Constabulary

Question, Lord Charles Beresford; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Jan 25, 320*

Alleged Disorder — Conduct of Police at Bennetsbridge, Co. Kilkenny, Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 25, 1191*

Clothing Contracts, Questions, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) *Feb 26, 1884*

Extra Police at Clones Fair, Co. Monaghan, Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 23, 1033*

Force at Mullingar, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 23, 1020*

Police Barrack at Meenacaddy, Co. Donegal, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar 4, 1887*

The National League

Legislation for the Suppression of—The Protection of Life, Property, Order, &c., Notice, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Jan 26, 416*; Question, Mr. Radcliffe Cooke; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Feb 22, 905*

Local Courts, Question, Observations, The Earl of Limerick, Lord Ashbourne; Replies, The Lord President of the Council (Earl Spencer), The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Earl Granville) *Feb 25, 1181*

Murder of Mr. Curtin, Questions, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Parnell; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar 1, 1529*

Prisons (Ireland)

Mountjoy Convict Prison, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 18, 588*

Suicides in Galway Gaol, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 18, 589*

State of Ireland

"*Boycotting*," &c. Question, Observations, Viscount Cranbrook; Reply, The Lord President of the Council (Earl Spencer); Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury *Feb 22, 868*; Questions, Captain M'Callmott, Mr. W. O'Brien, Mr. Johnston; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar 1, 1535*;—" *Boycotting* " at *Clonmel*, Question, Colonel Waring; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar 4, 1890*

Charge against Emergency Men at Cornafane, Co. Caran, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 23, 1031*

IRELAND—cont.

Crime and Outrage (Ireland)

Alleged Cruelty to a "Boycotted" Woman, Notice of Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Observations, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Sir William Hart Dyke) *Jan 22, 192*; Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Healy; Answers, Sir William Hart Dyke *Jan 25, 312*

Alleged Outrages near Dundalk, Question, Mr. Joseph Nolan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar 1, 1519*

Alleged Outrages at Richfordstown, Clonakilty, Co. Cork, Question, Mr. Hooper; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 22, 885*

Fictitious Outrages, Moville, Co. Donegal, Question, Mr. James O'Doherty; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 25, 1200*

Outrage upon Randal M'Sweeney, Question, Captain M'Calmont; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar 2, 1765*

Malicious Burning at Newcastle West, Co. Limerick — Compensation, Question, Mr. William Abraham (Limerick, W.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 23, 1021*

Riot at Armagh, Question, Mr. Alexander Blane; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 23, 1021*

Riot at Clones, Co. Monaghan, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 23, 1033*; *Mar 1, 1529*

Evictions (Ireland)

Co. Mayo, Question, Mr. Deasy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 23, 1026*

Co. Tyrone, Question, Mr. Matthew Kenny; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 23, 1029*

Employment of the Military Forces of the Crown, Notice of Resolution, Mr. Lewis *Mar 1, 1512*;—*Return for 1884-5*, Questions, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Dillon; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar 4, 1910*

Evictions and Civil Bill Processes — The Returns, Questions, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Brodrick; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Jan 26, 423*

Landlord and Tenant (Ireland)

Estate of Colonel Clive, Question, Mr. Nolan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 22, 876*

The Kingston Estates, Questions, Mr. Lewis, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. Lalor; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar 4, 1879*

Mr. Michael Lynch, Barna, Co. Galway, Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Feb 25, 1196*

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Ireland—Landlord and Tenant—cont.

Mr. H. McDougall, Agent to the Gormanstown Estate, Co. Meath, Questions, Mr. Clancy : Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Feb 23, 1201
[See title *Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881*]

Ireland (Electoral Statistics)

Moved for Return, 1. "Of the number of registered electors in each county, city, and borough, or division of a county, city, or borough, in Ireland returning members to Parliament; 2. Of the number of electors who voted in each of the above at the late general election; 3. Of the number of electors, voting in each of the above at the late general election, who declared themselves illiterate" *The Earl of Limerick* Jan 25, 302; Motion agreed to

Ireland (Erictions)—Case of the Widow Anne Shaw, Co. Monaghan

Amendt. on Committee of Supply Feb 10, To leave out from "That," add "the falsification of the records of the Monaghan County Court by the Clerk of the Peace, observed on by the Court of Appeal, calls for the immediate removal of the officials implicated" *(Mr. Timothy Healy)* v., 717; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Questions, Mr. Macartney, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Mar 2, 1759

Ireland, Government of — Ministerial Policy

Moved, "That the Ministerial plan for government of Ireland be introduced forthwith, and take precedence of all public business up to report" *(The Lord Warren)* Jan 28, 297; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Ireland—Industries

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Natural Resources and the Present Condition of Manufacturing and Productive Industries in Ireland; and to consider and report by what means those Natural Resources may be more fully developed, and how those Industries may be encouraged and extended *(Mr. Sexton)*

Ireland, Lord Lieutenantcy of

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the time has now come when the post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland may be abolished with advantage" *(The Earl of Kimberley)* Jan 28, 276; after debate, Motion withdrawn

Ireland—Maintenance of Social Order

Notice of Resolution, Mr. Holmes Mar 2, 1871

Amendt. on Committee of Supply Mar 6, To leave out from "That," add "this House is
(cont.

Ireland—Maintenance of Social Order—cont.

unwilling to entertain Estimates for the Civil Establishments in Ireland before being placed in possession of the policy which Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue for the restoration and maintenance of social order in that country" *(Mr. Holmes)* v., 1917; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" *(Major Sanderson)*, Question put, A. 204, N. 364; M. 160 D. L. 16; Question again proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Ireland and Great Britain — Imperial Revenue and Population

Moved, "That there be laid before this House, a Return of the Gross Imperial Revenue of Ireland derived from taxation, and of the Population of Ireland for the years 1831, 1861, 1871, and 1881, and a like Return for Great Britain for the same years, being in both cases a continuation, in like form, of Parliamentary Paper, No. 407, of Session 1874" *(Sir Joseph M'Arthur)* Feb 23, 1039; after debate, Amendt. made, in lines 3 and 4, by leaving out "Great Britain," and inserting "England and Scotland" v.; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

ISAACS, MR. L. H., *Newington, Watworth*
Poor Law—Out-door Relief during Existing Distress, 591, 592

Italy—Arrest of Professor Nichol

Question, Sir Henry Roscoe; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs *(Mr. Bryce)* Feb 14, 606

JACKS, MR. W., *Leith, &c.*

Merchant Service—The Smack "Columbine," 707

Navy (Supplementary Estimates, 1885-6) — Navy Services, 1302

Supply—Courts of Law and Justice in Scotland, &c. 779; Amendt. 791

JACKSON, MR. W. L. (Secretary to the Treasury), *Leeds, N.*

Ireland—Globe Lands—Purchasers under the Land Act of 1869, 309

Improvement of Landed Property, 308

Scotland—Forrester and Fishings, 617

Inland Revenue—Illicit Stills, 617

(After Resignation,

Supply—Courts of Law and Justice in Scotland, &c. 779, 793

Dover Harbour, 747, 749

Inland Revenue, 1271

JACOB, MR. J. A., *Derbyshire, Mid*
Education Department—Technical Education, 1785

JAMES, Right Hon. Sir H., *Bury, Lancashire*

Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women), Motion for Adjournment, 697, 701

JAMES, Hon. W. H., *Gateshead*

Charity Commissioners — Christ's Hospital Schemes, 1875

New Forest—Mutilation of Holly Trees, 1211

JAMES, Mr. C. H., *Morther Tydovil*

Copyhold Enfranchisement, 2R. 1159

JENNINGS, Mr. L. L., *Stockport*

Education—Non-Attendance at Schools, 708, 900

JOHNS, Mr. J. W., *Warwick, Nuneaton*

Army (Small Arms) — Steel for Sword Bayonets, 890

Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 144

Political Meetings, Speeches at—Mr. Thomas Hughes, 1018

Supply—Courts of Law and Justice in Scotland, &c. 782, 783, 792

Dover Harbour, 763

Post Office, 1284

JOHNSON-FERGUSON, Mr. J. E., *Leicester, Loughborough*

Public Health Act, 1876 — Removal of Dead Bodies, 1034

JOHNSTON, Mr. W., *Belfast, S.*

Belfast Main Drainage, Res. 1721

Ireland—Questions

Alleged Boycotting, 1527

Correspondence on the Irish Question, 1915

Lighthouses — Attendance of Keepers at Divine Service on Sundays, and Education of Children, 1885

Lord Randolph Churchill at Belfast—Extra Police, 1535

Orange Emergency Committee (Co. Cavan), 1763

Ireland—Maintenance of Social Order, Res. 1957

Madagascar—Treaty with France, 312

Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 136, 203

Supply—Colonial Local Revenue, &c. 1247

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation, Motion for Leave, 1654

JONES-PARRY, Mr. T. D. L., *Carnarvon, &c.*

Wales—Inspector of Slate and Sett Quarries, 1191

Justices' Jurisdiction Bill [H.L.]

(*The Lord Bramwell*)

1. Presented; read 1st Feb 25 (No. 18)

KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Sir U. J. (Under Secretary of State for India), *Lancashire, Clitheroes*

Committee on Indian Administration — Questions

Covenanted and Uncovenanted Civil Service, 1032

Government of India Act, 1858, 709

Guaranteed Capital of Railways, 1037

Pay of Native Officials, 1031

East India, Burmah—Questions

Annexed Territory, 898, 899, 1219

Licensed Opium Shops, 904

Military Executions—British Authorities—The Provost Marshal, 897, 1038

East India, Burmah (Expenses of Military Operations), 607; Res. 939

India—Questions

Army—Indian Military Leave, 1389

Bengal—Legal Appointments, 712

Finance, &c.—Depreciation of Silver, 1032;

—Depreciation of the Rupee, 1383

Religious Provisions — Protestant Chaplains and Catholic Priests, 882

Telegraph Department — Promotion — Grievances of Officers, 896

KELLY, Mr. B., *Donegal, S.*

Ireland—Questions

Commissioners of Irish Lights—Pensions of Servants, 1371

Fishery Piers and Harbours—Bandoran, Co. Donegal, 1371;—Bunnatoochan Pier, Co. Donegal, 1374

Piers and Harbours—Harbour Works at Donegal, 1370

KENNAWAY, Sir J. H., *Devon, Honiton*

Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 130

KENNY, Mr. M. J., *Tyrone, Mid*

Compensation for Damages, 2R. 2013

Ireland (Ejections)—Co. Tyrone, 1029

Tenants of Glebe Lands (Ireland), 1485

KENRICK, Mr. W., *Birmingham, N.*

Parliamentary Papers for Public Libraries, 1881

KILMORRY, Earl of

Lord Lieutenantcy of Ireland, Res. 276, 297

KIMBER, Mr. H., *Wandsworth*

Africa (South)—Transvaal, 1900

Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, Motion for Adjournment, 398

Trade and Commerce—Subsidies by Foreign Nations, 1904

KIMBERLEY, Earl of

Burmah—Military Executions—The Provost-Marshal, 184, 276

Government of Ireland—Ministerial Policy, Res. 301

Lord Lieutenantcy of Ireland, Res. 296

Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 78, 81

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KIMBERLEY, Earl of—cont.

Parliament—Sir William Rose, K.C.B., late Clerk of the Parliaments, 185

(*Secretary of State for India*)

Kingdom of Ava, Res. 849, 862, 864
Metropolis, Disturbances in the, 574

KING, Mr. H. S., Hull, Central

Law and Justice—Compensation to Seamen Witnesses, 1394

Tariff and Customs Act, 1876—Forfeitures, 310

LABOUCHERE, Mr. H., Northampton

Army—Prince Henry of Battenberg, 1391, 1845

Compensation for Damages, 2R. 2009

Law and Justice (England and Wales) — New Magistrates, 1391

Metropolis — Re-organization of the Police, 1221

Parliament—Order of Business, 429

Parliament — Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 225, 230

Parliamentary Oath—Mr. Bradlaugh, 419

Pensions, 1390

Post Office—Submarine Telegraph Contract (St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa), Res. Motion for Adjournment, 2014

Supply—Colonial Local Revenue, &c. 1280

Dover Harbour, 744, 749

Embassies and Missions Abroad, 1845

Foreign Office, 759

Orange River Territory, &c. Amendt. 1614

Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill

(*Mr. Mayo, Mr. T.*

P. O'Connor, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr.

Sutton, Mr. Sheehy

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 10]

Read 2^o, after debate Mar 2, 1910

Labour Statistics

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, immediate steps should be taken to ensure in this Country the full and accurate collection and publication of Labour Statistics" (*Mr. Bradlaugh*) Mar 2, 1768

Amendt. to leave out from "That," insert "a Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means of collecting and publishing statistics as to Labour in the United Kingdom" (*Mr. R. Stanshope* &c.); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.:" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn, main Question put, and agreed to

LALOR, Mr. R., Queen's Co., Leix

Ireland—Authority of the Crown, 1227

Inland Navigation and Drainage—Barrow

Drainage Commission, 1808

Landlord and Tenant — The Kingston Estates, 1840

Lambeth Water Bill

c. Read 2^o, after short debate Mar 1, 1845

Moved, "That the Bill be committed" (*Sir Charles Forster*); Amendt. at end, add "to

(cont.

Lambeth Water Bill—cont.

a Select Committee, to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection" (*Mr. Thorold Rogers*); Question proposed, "That those words be there added:" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; main Question, as amended, put and agreed to

LAMINGTON, Lord

Metropolis — Sunday Meetings in the Squares and Parks, 1174, 1181

Public Offices, the New, Res. 1173

LANCASTER—Chancellor of the Duchy
see CHAPLIN, Right Hon. H.)

LANCASTER—Chancellor of the Duchy
see HENRIAGE, Right Hon. E.)

Land Cultivation Bill (*Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Arch, Mr. Burt*)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 71]

Land Highlands and Islands Bill

(*Mr. Gavin Clark, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. James Collings, Mr. Burt*,

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 48]

Land Law (Ireland Act 1881) Amendment Bill

(*Mr. Connolly, Mr.*

Parnell, Mr. Timothy Healy, Mr. Sutton,

Mr. William O'Brien)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 1]

Land Law (Ireland Act, 1881—Irish Land Commission Sub-Commissioners)—Sittings in Kerry

Question, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. John Morley*) Mar 4, 1903

Land Laws—Legislation

Question, Viscount Ebrington; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. W. E. Gladstone*) Feb 26, 1394

Landlord's Right of Distress Abolition Bill (*Mr. Crompton, Mr. Winterbottom,*

Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Brunner)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 43]

Land Purchase Facilities Bill

Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Joseph Bolton, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. James Collings)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 41]

Land Registry Bill [H.L.]

(*The Lord Chancellor*)

- l. Presented; read 1^o Jan 25 (No. 7)
Read 2^a; Committee negatived; read 3^a Jan 26,
408
c. Read 1^o (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Feb 10
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^o"
Feb 22, 1896 [Bill 91]
Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned"
(Mr. Ince); after short debate, Question
put, and negatived
Original Question again proposed, 1002; after
short debate, original Question put, and
agreed to; Bill read 2^o
Committee; Report; read 3^o, after short
debate Mar 1, 1899

Land Registry Office—The Registrar

Questions, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Edmund Robert-
son; Answers, The Chancellor of the Ex-
chequer (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) Jan 26,
420

Land Tax Commissioners' Names Bill

(Mr. Leveson Gower, Mr. Henry H. Fowler)

- c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 24 [Bill 118]
Read 2^o Mar 1

Land Tenure and Transfer Bill

(Mr. Ince, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Stanhope
Kenny)

- c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 83]

LANE, Mr. W. J., Cork Co., E.

Belfast Main Drainage, Res. 1729, 1733, 1734
Labour Statistics, Res. 1801
Navy — Haulbowline Dock (Cork Harbour),
1203
Navy (Supplementary Estimates, 1895-6) —
Navy Services, 1300, 1304
Supply—Colonial Local Revenue, 1249
Constabulary Force in Ireland, 835

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)

Appointment to the Recordership of Liverpool,
Questions, Lord Claud Hamilton, Sir R.
Ashton Cross; Answers, The Secretary of
State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) Feb 19, 715; Questions, Lord Claud
Hamilton, Mr. Forwood; Answers, The Se-
cretary of State for the Home Department
(Mr. Childers) Feb 22, 894; Questions, Mr.
Crilly, Mr. Addison; Answers, The Attorney
General (Mr. Charles Russell) Mar 1, 1528
Compensation to Seamen Witnesses, Question,
Mr. King; Answer, The President of the
Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) Feb 26,
1384
Convict Labour, Question, Mr. Dawson; An-
swer, The Secretary of State for the Home
Department (Mr. Childers) Mar 4, 1898
*High Court of Justice—The Bar Library in
the Law Courts*, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Con-
nor; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury (Mr.
Leveson Gower) Feb 26, 1392
The Long Vacation, Question, Mr. Arthur
O'Connor; Answer, The Attorney General
(Mr. Charles Russell) Feb 18, 590

LAW AND JUSTICE (England and Wales)—cont.

*Murder of Police Constable Hine at Penny
Compton*, Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The
Secretary of State for the Home Department
(Mr. Childers) Feb 26, 1389
New Magistrates, Question, Mr. Labouchere;
Answer, The Secretary of State for the
Home Department (Mr. Childers) Feb 26,
1391
Public Executions, Question, Sir Joseph Pease;
Answer, The Secretary of State for the
Home Department (Mr. Childers); Ques-
tion, Mr. O'Kelly [no reply] Feb 26, 1382;
Question, Mr. Gregory; Answer, The Se-
cretary of State for the Home Department
(Mr. Childers) Mar 4, 1895

Criminal Law

Assaults upon Children, Question, Mr. Cony-
beare; Answer, The Secretary of State for
the Home Department (Sir R. Ashton
Cross) Jan 26, 424

**Law and Police—Employment of a Blood-
hound in Pursuit of Poachers**

Question, Mr. Saunders; Answer, The Se-
cretary of State for the Home Department
(Mr. Childers) Feb 26, 1392

Law of Evidence Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Bramwell*)

- l. Presented; read 1^o Feb 25 (No. 19)

**LAWRENCE, Sir J. J. Trevor, Surrey,
Reigate**

Army Medical Officers—Servian and Bulgarian
Campaign, 1208

**LAWRENCE, Mr. W. F., Liverpool, Aber-
cromby**

Employers' Liability Act (1830) Amendment,
2R. 1114
Employers' Liability Act—Kindred Legislation
in Foreign Countries, 1390
Merchant Shipping—The "Mary Mark," 1198

**LAWSON, Mr. H. L. W., St. Pancras, W.
Leaseholds Enfranchisement, 1916**

Leaseholds Enfranchisement Bill

Question, Mr. Lawson; Answer, The First
Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone)
Mar 4, 1916

**Leaseholds (Facilities of Purchase of Fee
Simple) Bill (Mr. Lawson, Mr. Burt,
Mr. Puleston, Colonel Hughes, Mr. Holden,
Mr. Arthur Cohen)**

- c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 22 [Bill 104]

LEIGHTON, Mr. S., Shropshire, Oswestry
Compensation for Damages, 2R. 2006
Ireland — "Boycotting" — Alleged Outrage,
193, 312
Metropolis, Disturbances in the—Action of the
Home Department—Explanation, 606

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LEITCH, Earl of
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 53

LETTERIDGE, Sir R., Kensington, N.
Admiralty—Sale of Surplus and Unserviceable Stores, 1030
Committee on Indian Administration—Pay of Native Officials, 1030
East India—Burmah—Expenses of Military Operations, Res. 990

LEWIS, Mr. C. E., Londonderry
Ireland—Questions
Arms Act, 877
Commissioners of National Education—Appointment of Head Inspectors, 1909
Evictions—Employment of the Military Forces of the Crown, 1812;—Return for 1884-5, 1910
Landlord and Tenant—The Kingdon Estates, 1879

Licensing Laws (Amendment) (Local Control) Bill (Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Huddersfield, Mr. C. T. Dyle Acland)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 53]

LIMERICK, Earl of
Greece—Collective Note of the European Powers, 303
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c. Ordered: read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 81]

Metropolitan Board of Works (Keeping of Firewood) Bill *(Sir James McGarel-Hogg, Mr. Morgan Howard)*

c. Ordered: read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 81]

Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c. Bill *Mr. Rider C.A., Sir James McGarel-Hogg)*

c. Ordered: read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 84]

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c. Ordered: read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 81]
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Morocco—*State of the Prisons*

- Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) Feb 22, 1923

MOUNT-EDGUMBE, Earl of (Lord Steward of the Household).
Parliament—Queen's Speech—Her Majesty's Answer to the Address, 831

MOWBRAY, Right Hon. Sir J. R., *Oxford University*

- Ecclesiastical Commissioners — Extraordinary Tithe, 887
Parliament—Election of a Speaker, 8
Parliament—Committee of Selection, Nomination of Committee, 411, 414 ; Amendt. 418
Police and Sanitary Regulations, 1367
Post Office—The Unification, 1905

MULHOLLAND, Mr. H. L., *Londonderry, N.*

- Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, 2R. 1020, 1026
Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1761

MUNDELLA, Right Hon. A. J. President of the Board of Trade. *Sheffield, Brightside*

- Depression of Trade and Industry—The Commission of Inquiry, 714, 715
Electric Lighting Act, 1892 — Provisional or Private Bills, 1763
Importation of Irish Cattle — The Monthly Returns, 1761
Ireland — Commissioners of Irish Lights — Lighthouse Keepers, 1019
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Penalons of Servants, 1371
Labour Statistics, Res. 1787, 1804
Law and Justice — Compensation to Seamen Wreckers, 1344
Midland Railway, 2R. 1078, 1076, 1077
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Savings Banks Returns (England and Scotland), 1761

Scotland — Harbours — Invergordon Harbour, 1752

Trade and Commerce—Falsely Marked Goods, 1544; — Imports of Butter and Butterine, 1031

Municipal Boundaries (Dublin) Bill

(Mr. Chance, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Murphy)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 20]**Municipal Franchise (Ireland) Bill**

(Mr. James O'Brien, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Mayne, Mr. Peter M'Donald)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 9]**Municipal Franchise (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill**

(Mr. Johnston, Mr. De Cobain)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 75]**MURPHY, Mr. W. M., Dublin, St. Patrick's Ireland—Royal Irish Constabulary — Clothing Contracts, 1384****NAPIER OF MAGDALA, Lord Kingdom of Ava, Res. 865****National Provident Insurance**

Select Committee appointed, "to inquire into the best system of National Provident Insurance against Pauperism" (Sir Herbert Maxwell) Feb 25

National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill

(Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray, Mr. Conway)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 12]**NAVY (Questions)****Admiralty—Naval Pensions.** Question, Captain Price; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) Feb 25, 1205; —**Sale of Surplus and Unserviceable Stores.** Question, Sir Roper Lethbridge; Answer, The Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Woodall) Feb 23, 1030**Expenditure.** Question, Mr. Pearce; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) Mar 4, 1909**Haulbowline Dock (Cork Harbour).** Questions, Mr. Lane; Answers, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) Feb 25, 1203**H.M.S. "Bellerophon."** Question, Sir John Gorst; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) Mar 2, 1787**Queen's Regulations, The—Promotion of Seamen.** Question, Captain Verney; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) Mar 4, 1914**NAVY—cont.****Royal Yacht "Osborne."** Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) Feb 23, 878**Shipbuilding on the Tyne.** Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) Jan 25, 313**Special Promotions.** Question, Captain Verney; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) Mar 2, 1764**Side Arms—Supply of Cutlasses.** Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Woodall) Feb 26, 1381**Use of a Gunboat by a Resident Magistrate at Bantry.** Question, Mr. T. C. Harrington; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) Mar 1, 1538**Navy—Coast Defences**

Moved, "That there be laid before this House Reports of Admiral Hamilton or of any other officer commissioned to inquire into Coast Defences and the Royal Naval Volunteer Artillery Corps" (The Viscount Sidmouth) Feb 23, 1008; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

New Forest, The—Mutilation of Holly Trees

Question, Mr. W. H. James; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) Feb 25, 1211

NEWNES, Mr. G., Cambridge, E., Newmarket

Public Meetings—Speech of Lord Randolph Churchill at Belfast, 1224

New Zealand—The Treaty of Waitangi

Question, Sir John Gorst; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) Mar 4, 1884

NOLAN, Colonel J. P., Galway, N.

Harbours of Refuge, 1038

Imperial Revenue (Ireland and Great Britain), Res. 1070

Ireland—Questions

Landlord and Tenant — Estate of Colonel Clive, 876

Post Office—Galway Mails, 1535

Sea and Coast Fisheries — Trawling in Galway Bay, 307, 902

Seed Supply Act — Fourth Instalment of Rate — Postponement of Payment, 316, 903, 1534, 1894

Post Office—Telegraphic Addresses, 1899

Supply—Dover Harbour, 744, 750

Orange River Territory, &c. 1631

Post Office, 1283, 1284

Town Holdings, Motion for a Select Committee, 1894

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation, Motion for Leave, 1552

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NOLAN, Mr. J., *Louth, N.*

Ireland—Crime and Outrage—Alleged Outrages near Dandalk, 1319
Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, 2R. 1435, 1836, 1937

NORRIS, Mr. E. N., *Tower Hamlets, Limehouse*

Mr. Bradlaugh, 1901
Parliament—Business of the House, 905

NORTHBROOK, Earl of
Kingdom of Ava, Res. 654

NORTHCOTE, Hon. H. S., Financial Secretary, War Department, *Exeter*
Army (Discipline)—Disorders in Belfast Barracks, 305

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Richmond Barracks, Dublin, 311
Testing of Sidearms—Defective Bayonets, 418

War Office—Powder Magazine at Bermuda, 426

After Resignation

Electric Lighting Act, 1442—Provisional or Private Bills, 1763
Parliament—Public Business, 1767
Post Office—Post Cards, 1824

NORTON, Mr. R., *Kent, Tanbridge*
Poor Law—Derivative Settlements, 1520

Oaths Bill

(*Mr. Serjeant Simon, Mr. Stanfeld, Mr. Hennage, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Channing*)
Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered, read 1st Jan 23 [Bill 64]

O'BRIEN, Mr. J. F. X., *Mayo, S.*
Imperial Revenue (Ireland and Great Britain), Res. 1044
Savings Banks Returns England and Scotland, 1761

O'BRIEN, Mr. P. J., *Tipperary, N.*
Ireland—Law and Justice—Case of Morgan Brien, Cork Winter Assizes, 1540

O'BRIEN, Mr. W., *Tyrone, S.*
Ireland—Alleged "Boycotting," 1526
Glebe Lands—Purchases under the Land Act of 1469, 309;—Tenants of, 1473, 1445
Maintenance of Social Order (Ireland), Res. 1921, 1931, 1954

O'CONNOR, Mr. A., *Donegal, E.*
Army (Supplementary Estimates, 1553-6, —Warlike Stores and Works, 1611
Coal Mines Regulation Act (1872), Amendment, 2R. 1419, 1469
Employers' Liability Act (1440) Amendment, 2R. 1450, 1405, 1114

O'CONNOR, Mr. A.—cont.

High Court of Justice—The Long Vacation, 590;—The Bar Library in the Law Courts, 1393

Ireland—Questions

Department of the Registrar General—Scheme of Re-organization, 1404

In and Navigation and Drainage—The Barrow, 549

Local Government Board—Report of Inspector on the Proposed Amalgamation of Portions of the Donoughmore Union with the Unions of Roscrea and Abbey-lis, 549

Lunatic Asylums—The Resident Medical Superintendent, Letterkenny Asylum, 1215

Poor Law—Abbey-lis Union—Relief of the Labourers, 424

Prisons—Mountjoy Convict Prison, 148,—Suicides in Galway Gaol, 549

Royal Irish Constabulary—Clothing Contracts, 1345,—Police Barracks at Meenacaddy, Co. Donegal, 1457, 1846

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation, Motion for Leave, Motion for Adjournment, 1660

Supply—Constabulary Force in Ireland, 833;—Dover Harbour, 743, 745

O'CONNOR, Mr. J., *Tipperary, S.*

Ireland—City of Cork Steam Packet Company—"Boycotting," 1936

O'CONNOR, Mr. T. P., *Liverpool, Scotland*

Belfast Main Drainage, Res. 1718, 1720

Coal Mines Regulation Act (1872) Amendment, 2R. 1870

Maintenance of Social Order (Ireland), Res. 1923, 1949, 1957, 1920

Mauritius—Appointment of Mr. Clifford Lloyd as Lieutenant Governor, 892

Parliament—Order—Argumentative Questions, 1190

Political Meetings—Speech of Mr. John Morley at Chelmsford, 901,—Speech of Mr. Thomas Hughes, at Chester, 1019

Railway Rates, 899

Supply—County Court Officers, &c. Ireland, 804

O'DONNELLY, Mr. J. E., *Donegal, N.*

Ireland—Crime and Outrage—Fictitious Outrages, Mov. Co. Donegal, 1200

Sea and Coast Fisheries—Grievance of the Foyle Fishermen, 1193

O'HANLON, Mr. T., *Cavan, E.*

Ireland—Post Office—Parcel Post—Rural Letter Carriers, 1449

O'HRA, Mr. P., *Donegal, N.*

Ireland—Crime and Outrage—"Boycotted" Cattle—City of Cork Steam Packet Company, 1900

Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, 2R. 1423

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O'KELLY, Mr. J., Roscommon, N.

Army—Effects of a Deceased Soldier—Case of Dennis M'Donnell, 1545, 1546
 Burmah—Annexed Territory, The, 899
 Military Executions—The Provost Marshal, 316
 Egypt—Questions
 British Force in Egypt and the Soudan, 1534
 Operations in the Soudan, 1391
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 Ireland—Landlord and Tenant—The Kingston Estates, 1880
 Post Office at Clashaganny, 1546
 Law and Justice (England)—Public Executions, 1382
 Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 249
 Supply—Courts of Law and Justice in Scotland, &c. 793

ONslow, Earl of

Allotments, Motion for a Return, 843, 848
 Charitable Trusts (Allotments Extension Act, 1882), Motion for a Return, 1873

ORDNANCE — Surveyor General (see WOODALL, Mr. W.)

Outlawries Bill

c. Read 1^o Jan 21

Pacific (Western), Islands of the—The New Hebrides—see title Western Pacific

PAGET, Sir R. H., Somerset, Wells

Midland Railway, 2R. 1674
 Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 463

PALMER, Mr. C. M., Durham, Jarrow

Spain—Commercial Negotiations, 420

Parish Churches Bill [H. L.]

(The Lord Bishop of Peterborough)

l. Presented; read 1^o Jan 21 (No. 5)

Paris Industrial Exhibition

Question, Mr. Spensley; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Mar 1, 1547

Parliament

LORDS—

MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENT Jan 12
 The Session of Parliament opened by Commission
 The Commons directed to proceed to the choice of some proper Person to be their Speaker
 A Royal Commission, Speaker of the House of Commons, l'resented and Approved Jan 13, 19
 ROLL OF THE LORDS—Garter King of Arms attending, delivered at the Table (in the usual manner) a List of the Lords Temporal

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PARLIAMENT—LORDS—cont.

in the First Session of the Twenty-third Parliament of the United Kingdom (No. 8) Jan 12, 3
 Certificate of the Election of Sixteen Representative Peers for Scotland, delivered and read Jan 12, 4
 CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS—Henry Graham, esquire, appointed to the Office of Clerk of the Parliaments, vacant by the death of Sir William Rose, K.C.B. Jan 12, 4

Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech

The QUEEN being seated on the Throne, and the Commons being at the Bar, with their Speaker, The Lord Chancellor delivered Her Most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament Jan 21, 32

The Queen's Speech having been reported by The LORD CHANCELLOR; An Address to HER MAJESTY thereon moved by The Duke of ANNECORN (the Motion being seconded by The Earl of SCARBROUGH) Jan 21, 36; after debate, Address agreed to, *nemine dissente*

HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS reported Jan 28, 531

Address and Answer ordered to be printed and published

Chairman of Committees—The Earl of Rodsdale appointed, *nemine dissente*, to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for this Session Jan 21

Committee for Privileges—appointed Jan 21
 Sub-Committee for the Journals—appointed Jan 21

Appeal Committee—appointed Jan 21

Receivers and Tryers of Petitions—appointed Jan 21

Standing Orders Committee nominated Feb 19; List of the Committee, 703

Committee of Selection nominated Feb 19; List of the Committee, 704

Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod—Select Committee appointed and nominated Feb 26; List of the Committee, 1350

Election of Representative Peers for Scotland—Minutes of Meeting, presented and ordered to lie on the Table Jan 21, 84

Pirate Bills

All Petitions relating to Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present Session referred to the Standing Orders Committee unless otherwise ordered Feb 19

Parliament — Sir William Rose, K.C.B., late Clerk of the Parliaments

Moved to resolve "That this House is deeply sensible of the loss which they have sustained by the death of Sir William Rose, K.C.B., the late Clerk of the Parliaments, and think it right to record the just sense which they entertain of the zeal, ability, diligence, and integrity with which he executed his important duties in that and other offices in the service of this House during a period of 50 years" (The Marquess of Salisbury) Jan 23, 184; Motion agreed to, *nemine dissente*

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PARLIAMENT—LORDS—cont.

RESIGNATION OF MINISTERS

Statement of The Lord President of the Council (*Viscount Cranbrook*) Jan 28, 531; House adjourned till Monday next

Statement of The Marquess of Salisbury Feb 1, 533; House adjourned till Thursday
House adjourned till Monday next Feb 4, 533

THE NEW MINISTRY

On the Motion of Earl Granville, House adjourned till Thursday the 19th instant, except for Judicial Business Feb 5, 535

THE MINISTRY OF THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, AS FORMED ON THE ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE IN FEBRUARY 1886, 541

Policy of Her Majesty's Government—Ministerial Statement, Earl Granville Feb 15, 543, debate thereon

Parliament—Ventilation of the House

Ventilation of the Committee Rooms, Question, The Earl of Belmore. Answer, The First Commissioner of Works The Earl of Morley Feb 22, 566

Moved, "That the evidence of John Percy, Esquire, M.D., taken before the Select Committee on the Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod in session 1869, be laid upon the Table, and that the same be printed" (*The Earl of Limerick*) Mar 2, 1664, after short debate, Motion agreed to, to be printed (No. 26)

COMMONS—

MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENT Jan 12, 5

A Book containing a List of the Names of the Members returned to serve in this Parliament, delivered to Sir Thomas Erskine May by Kenneth Augustus Mair Mackenzie, Clerk of the Crown in Chancery in Great Britain (See Rolls of Lords, and List of the Commons)

Message from The Lords Commissioners Jan 12, 5

The House went up to the House of Peers; and being returned—The House proceeded to the

Election of a Speaker

The Right Honourable Arthur Wellesley Peel unanimously called to the Chair Jan 12, 5

Mr. SPENCER reported Her Majesty's Approval, and took and subscribed the Oath Jan 13, 30

Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh)

Letters received by Mr. Speaker from The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), Mr. Henry Cecil Raikes, and Sir John H. Kennaway Jan 13, 21; The Entry in the Votes, 24

Questions, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer Jan 26, 46; Question, Mr. Norris; Answer, The Attorney General (Mr. Charles Russell) Mar 4, 1601

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—cont.

Privileges—Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed Jan 21

Public Petitions—Select Committee appointed Jan 25; List of the Committee, 403

Standing Orders—Select Committee nominated Jan 26; List of the Committee, 407

Committee of Selection

Moved, "That the Committee of Selection do consist of Nine Members" (*Sir John R. Mubray*) Jan 26, 407; after short debate, Moved, "That the debate be now adjourned"

(*Mr. J. W. Barclay*), after further short debate, Question put; A. 43, N. 399; M. 356; D. L. 2)

Original Question put, and agreed to

Moved, "That the name of Lord Edward Cavendish be placed upon the Committee" (*Sir John R. Mubray*), after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; List of the Committee, 416

Printing—Select Committee appointed and nominated Feb 10; List of the Committee, 642

Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms (House of Commons)—Committee appointed and nominated Feb 22; List of the Committee, 1007

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH

Address to Her Majesty, Notice of Amendments, Mr. Jesse Collins, Mr. J. W. Barclay, Mr. Hunter Jan 21, 66

The Queen's Speech having been reported by Mr. Speaker; A humble Address thereon moved by Viscount Cranston (the Motion being seconded by Mr. Horacewood) Jan 21, 67; after long debate, Moved, "That the debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Saxton*); Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

Debate resumed Second Night Jan 22, 193; after long debate, Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Third Night] Jan 23, 331

Amendment at end of 6th paragraph, add "But this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty their regret that the Revenues of India have been applied to defray the expenses of the military operations carried on in the Kingdom of Ava, without the consent of Parliament as required by 'The Government of India Act, 1854'" (*Mr. Hunter*), 331; Question proposed, "That these words be there added;" after debate, Amendment withdrawn

Amendment to insert, after "Agriculture," in 11th paragraph "and humbly to represent the pressing necessity for securing without delay to the cultivators of the soil such conditions of tenure as will aid and encourage them to meet the new and trying circumstances in which the Agriculture of the Country is placed" (*Mr. Barclay*), 346; Question proposed, "That these words be there inserted," after debate, Moved, "That the debate be now adjourned" (*Sir Richard Temple*), after further short debate, Motion withdrawn

Question again proposed, "That these words be there inserted," 394; after short debate,

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—cont.

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Kimber*); Question put, and negatived

Question put, "That those words be there inserted;" A. 183, N. 211; M. 28; Div List, A. & N. 400

Main Question proposed; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Jesse Collings*); Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

Debate resumed [Fourth Night] Jan 26, 442

Amendt. to insert, after "transient," in 11th paragraph, "but this House humbly expresses its regret that no measures are announced by Her Majesty for the present relief of these classes, and especially for affording facilities to the agricultural labourers and others in the rural districts to obtain allotments and small holdings on equitable terms as to rent and security of tenure" (*Mr. Jesse Collings*), 443; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after long debate, Question put; A. 329, N. 250; M. 79; Div List, A. & N. 525

Main Question, as amended, proposed

After short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be adjourned till Thursday" (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*); Question put, and agreed to

Moved, "That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Thursday" (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*); Question put, and agreed to

Personal Explanation, Mr. Llewellyn Feb 18, 606

Debate resumed [Fifth Night] Feb 18, 607

After debate, Amendt. at end of 15th paragraph, insert "This House humbly expresses its regret that in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech the reference to the condition of the people in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland is of a vague and indefinite character, and contains no satisfactory assurance that such Legislation as the serious nature of the case demands will be undertaken, and is of opinion that, until a Land Bill dealing in a comprehensive manner with the proved and admitted grievances of the Highland People has been passed into Law, the Civil or Military Forces of the Crown should not be employed to evict those People from their hereditary homes" (*Mr. Macfarlane*), 612; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after further debate, Question put; A. 104, N. 234; M. 130 (D. L. 4)

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to Committee appointed, to draw up an Address to be presented to Her Majesty upon the said Resolution; List of the Committee, 663

Report of Address brought up, and read Feb 18, 663; after short debate, Address agreed to

Her Majesty's Answer to the Address reported Feb 22, 911

Condition of Ireland, Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*) Jan 25, 319

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—cont.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Questions, Mr. Woodall, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Joseph Cowen, Mr. Parnell; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*), Mr. Speaker Jan 26, 429

New Rules of Procedure, Notice of Resolutions, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*) Jan 21, 86; Question, Mr. Raikes; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*) Jan 25, 320

Introduction of Public Bills, Observations, Mr. Joseph Cowen, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*) Jan 22, 192

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Moved, "That the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address, in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, have precedence, this day, over the Notices of Motion" (*The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*) Jan 26, 431

After short debate, Amendt. to leave out all after "precedence" to end of Question, add "on all days on which it is set down over Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day" (*Mr. Parnell*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after further short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Amendt. at end of Question, add "and Tomorrow over other Orders of the Day and the Notices of Motions" (*Sir William Harcourt*); Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

PRIVATE BILLS

Ordered, "That the Chairman of the Select Committee on Standing Orders have leave to seek a Conference with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining (under Standing Order 79), in which House of Parliament the respective Private Bills should be first considered, and to report the same to the House" (*Sir John Mowbray*) Jan 28

Police and Sanitary Regulations—Municipal and Local Authorities. Moved, "That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee not exceeding nine Members, to whom shall be referred all Private Bills promoted by Municipal and other Local Authorities, by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations which deviate from, or are in extension of, or repugnant to, the General Law

That Standing Order 173A shall be applicable to all Bills referred to the said Committee

That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records

That Five be the quorum" (*Mr. Broadhurst*) Feb 26, 1361; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Sesson*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Main Question put, and agreed to

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—cont.

RESIGNATION OF MINISTERS

Statement of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Chancellor of the Exchequer

Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Monday next" (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) Jan 28, 832; Question put, and agreed to

Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer

Moved, "That this House will, at the rising of the House this day, adjourn till Thursday" (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) Feb 1, 531; Question put, and agreed to

THE NEW MINISTRY

Moved, "That this House will, at the rising of the House this day, adjourn till Saturday, at Three of the clock" (*Mr. Arnold Morley, Secretary to the Treasury*) Feb 4, 536; Question put, and agreed to

On Motion of the Secretary to the Treasury House adjourned till Thursday 18th February Feb 6

THE MINISTRY OF THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE AS FORMED ON ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE Feb 16, 541

Policy of Her Majesty's Government, Ministerial Statement, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone); Observations, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach Feb 14, 581

Controverted Elections

Ordered, That the Clerk of the Crown do attend this House forthwith with the last Return for the St. Andrews District of Burghs, and amend the same by striking out the name of Stephen W. Lumsden, esquire Feb 16, 540

The Clerk of the Crown attending, amended the same accordingly

Order—Argumentative Questions, Notice of Question, Colonel Waring; Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Speaker Feb 29, 1190

Privilege—Interference of Peers in Election of Members of this House, Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbett, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Attorney General (Mr. Charles Russell) Feb 29, 1196; Questions, Mr. T. H. Bolton, Colonel Brookfield; Answers, The Attorney General (Mr. Charles Russell), Mar 1, 1215

Standing Orders

Question, in Standing Order 143a, in line 40, after the word "Metropolis," to leave out the words "or Scotland," put, and agreed to Feb 25, 1184; Question, in line 50, after the word "Department," to insert the words "and as regards Scotland, the Secretary for Scotland," put, and agreed to

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS

The Chairman of Committees, Questions, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Joseph Cowen, Sir Robert Fowler; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Feb 10, 718

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—Business of the House and Public Business—cont.

Mr. Leonard H. Courtney, Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall, to be Chairman of Committees

Observations, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Reply, Mr. Speaker; Observations, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Feb 22, 911

Moved, "That the Notices of Motions relating to Parliamentary Procedure and East India, Burmah (Expenses of Military Operations) have precedence of the Orders of the Day"

The First Lord of the Treasury, Mr. W. E. Gladstone, 913; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Moved, "That the Orders of the Day subsequent to the Order for the Committee on the Land Registry Bill (*Lords*) be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of a Bill relating to Crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland"

The First Lord of the Treasury, Mr. W. E. Gladstone Feb 25, 1228, Motion agreed to
Observation, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Feb 25, 1304, Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Feb 26, 1194

The Army, Navy, and Civil Service Estimates, Questions, Viscount Falkland, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Northcote; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Mar 2, 1768

DOUBLE RETURNS

County of Monaghan (Northern Division) and County of Derry (Northern Division)

Letter received by Mr. Speaker from Timothy M. Healy, Esquire, electing to serve for South Derry Jan 21, 45

County of Cork and Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division)

Letter received by Mr. Speaker from E. Dwyer Gray, Esquire, electing to serve for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division) Jan 21, 86

Eastern Division of Donegal and Eastern Division of Queen's County—Mr. Arthur O'Connor, returned for the Eastern Division of Donegal, and for the Eastern Division of Queen's County, stated that he elected to sit for East Donegal Jan 26

Scotland Division of Liverpool and Borough of Glasgow

Letter received by Mr. Speaker from Thomas P. O'Connor, Esquire, electing to serve for the Scotland Division of Liverpool Jan 25, 405

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

List of Claims to Vote of the Dublin Port and Dock Board, Questions, Mr. Peter McDonald, Mr. Macartney; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) Feb 25, 1197

List of Voters, Question, Sir Bernhard Samuelson; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) Mar 1, 1521

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—Parliamentary Elections—cont.

Parliamentary Voters—Registration of Voters—Legislation, Questions, Mr. Conynbare, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Feb 22*, 907

Secrecy of the Ballot, Question, Mr. Everett; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar 4*, 1903

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER

The National Ensign, Question, Mr. Radcliffe Cooke; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Leveson Gower) *Feb 22*, 879

House of Commons' Arrangements—Select Committee of 1867-8—Over-crowding in the House, Question, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Feb 22*, 907

Members' Places—Attendance and Places of Members—Securing of Seats, Question, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Jan 28*, 427

Parliament—Disqualification of Members—Mr. Octavius Vaughan Morgan

Moved, "That it be referred to a Select Committee of Seven Members to consider whether Mr. Octavius Vaughan Morgan is disqualified from sitting and voting as a Member of this House, under the Statute 22 George 3, c. 45, and to report their opinion thereon" (Sir John Lubbock) *Feb 19*, 839; Motion agreed to

Ordered, That the Order appointing a Select Committee to consider whether Mr. Octavius Vaughan Morgan is disqualified from sitting and voting as a Member of this House, be read and discharged" (Sir John Lubbock) *Feb 24*

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS

Representative Peer for Ireland

Jan 13—Viscount Bangor, v. Earl of Erne, deceased

Representative Peer for Scotland

Feb 18—Earl of Dundonald, v. Lord Borthwick, deceased

Took the Oath for the First Time

Jan 14—The Lord Bishop of Chester
The Lord Bishop of Southwell

New Peers

Jan 19—Sir Thomas Bateson, baronet, created Baron Deramore of Belvoir in the county of Down
Garnet Joseph Baron Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., General and General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the Forces in Egypt, created Viscount Wolseley of Wolseley in the county of Stafford

[cont.]

PARLIAMENT—LORDS—New Peers—cont.

Henry John Montagu-Douglas-Scott, commonly called Lord Henry John Montagu-Douglas-Scott, created Baron Montagu of Beaulieu in the county of Southampton

The Right Honourable Charles John Baron Colville of Culross in that part of the United Kingdom called Scotland, K.T., created Baron Colville of Culross in the county of Perth

Jan 21—John Henry Lord Fermanagh—Was (in the usual manner) introduced by virtue of a Patent dated the thirteenth day of January 1876, his father, the first Baron (Earl of Erne in the Peerage of Ireland, a representative Peer for Ireland), who was created by such Patent, never having taken his seat as Lord Fermanagh

Jan 26—William Buller Fullerton Baron Elphinstone in that part of the United Kingdom called Scotland, created Baron Elphinstone of Elphinstone in the county of Haddington

Feb 8—The Right Honourable Sir Farrer Herschell, Knight, Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, created Baron Herschell of the city of Durham

Feb 18—Sir Charles Henry Mills, baronet, created Baron Illingdon of Illingdon in the county of Middlesex

Feb 23—Sir Edmund Beckett, baronet, created Baron Grimthorpe of Grimthorpe in the East Riding of the county of York

Feb 25—Sir Henry Allsopp, baronet, created Baron Hindlip of Hindlip in the county of Worcester and of Alsop-on-le-Dale in the county of Derby

Sat First

Jan 12—The Earl of Buckinghamshire, after the death of his grandfather

Jan 19—The Earl of Wilton, after the death of his brother
The Duke of Newcastle, after the death of his father

The Marquess of Abercorn, after the death of his father

Jan 21—The Viscount Halifax, after the death of his father

Jan 28—The Lord Houghton, after the death of his father

Mar 4—The Earl of Stradbroke, after the death of his father

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS

New Writs Issued

Jan 21—For Croydon, v. Sir William Grant-ham, knight, one of the Justices of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice

For Armagh County (Mid Division), v. John M'Kane, esquire, deceased
For Edinburgh (South Division), v. Sir George Harrison, knight, deceased

[cont.]

PARLIAMENT — COMMONS — *New Writs Issued* —
cont.

- For Carlow County, v. Edmond Dwyer Gray, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said County of Carlow, and also for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division), hath elected to sit for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division)*
- For Monaghan County (Northern Division), v. Timothy M. Healy, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said County of Monaghan (Northern Division), and also for the County of Derry (Southern Division), hath elected to sit for the County of Derry (Southern Division)*
- Feb 1—For Galway, v. Thomas P. O'Connor, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said Borough of Galway, and also for the Borough of Liverpool (Scotland Division), hath elected to sit for the Borough of Liverpool (Scotland Division)*
- For Queen's County (Osney Division), v. Arthur O'Connor, esquire, who, having been returned as a Member for the said Queen's County (Osney Division), and also for the County of Donegal (Eastern Division), hath elected to sit for the County of Donegal (Eastern Division)*
- Feb 4—For Edinburgh County, v. Right honble. William Ewart Gladstone, First Lord of the Treasury*
- For Derby Borough, v. Right honble. Sir William Vernon Harcourt, Chancellor of the Exchequer*
- For Edinburgh Southern Division, v. Right honble. Hugh Callaghan, Secretary of State*
- For Stirling District of Burghs, v. Right honble. Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Secretary of State*
- For Birmingham (Western Division), v. Right honble. Joseph Chamberlain, President of the Local Government Board*
- For Hawick District of Burghs, v. Right honble. George Otto Trevelyan, Secretary for Scotland*
- For Sheffield Borough (Brightside Division), v. Right honble. Anthony John Mundella, President of the Board of Trade*
- For Hackney Borough (South Division), v. Charles Russell, esquire, Attorney General*
- Feb 6—For Newcastle upon Tyne, v. John Morley, esquire, Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland*
- For Leeds (Southern Division), v. Right honble. Sir Lyon Playfair, Vice President of the Council*
- For Great Grimsby, v. Edward Hennessy, esquire, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster*

[cont.]

PARLIAMENT — COMMONS — *New Writs Issued* —
cont.

- For Berwick County, v. Honble. Edward Marjoribanks, Controller of the House hold*
- For Bedford County (Southern Division), v. Cyril Flower, esquire, Commissioner of the Treasury*
- For Stafford County (North Western Division), v. George Granville Lessor Gower, esquire, Commissioner of the Treasury*
- For Clackmannan and Kinross, v. Right honble. John Blair Balfour, Lord Advocate of Scotland*
- For Elgin District of Burghs, v. Alexander Asher, esquire, Her Majesty's Solicitor General for Scotland*
- For Banff County, v. Robert William Duff, esquire, Commissioner of the Admiralty*
- For Northampton County (Mid Division), v. Honble. Charles Robert Spencer, Groom in Waiting*
- Feb 18—For Flintshire, v. The Right honble. Richard de Aquila Grosvenor, commonly called Lord Richard Grosvenor, (Chiltern Hundreds)*
- For Somerset County (Southern Division), v. The Right honble. Frederick Edward Gird Lambert, commonly called Viscount Kilcourse, Vice Chamberlain of the Household*
- For Cardiff Borough, v. Sir Edward James Reed, K.C.B., Commissioner of the Treasury*
- For Borough of Grantham, v. John William Mellor, esquire, Judge Advocate General*
- Feb 24—For the Battersea Division of the Borough of Battersea and Clapham, v. Octavius Vaughan Morgan, esquire, Manor of Northstead*

New Members Sworn

- Jan 26—The Hon. Sidney Herbert, Croydon*
- Feb 1—Right Hon. Hugh Callaghan, Secretary of State*
- Feb 19—John Aloysius Blake, esquire, Carlow County*
- The Honble. Edward Marjoribanks, Berwick County*
- The Right honble. Sir William George Granville Venables Vernon Harcourt, knight, Derby Borough*
- Alexander Asher, esquire, Elgin District of Burghs*
- The Right honble. Anthony John Mundella, Sheffield (Brightside Division)*
- Cyril Flower, esquire, Bedford County (London Division)*
- The Right honble. John Morley, Newcastle upon Tyne*
- The Right honble. John Blair Balfour, Combined Counties of Clackmannan and Kinross*

[cont.]

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—New Members Sworn—
cont.

The Honble. Charles Robert Spencer,
Northampton County (Mid Division)
The Right honble. Edward Heneage,
Great Grimsby
Charles Russell, esquire, *Hackney*
(South Division)
The Right honble. George Otto Trevelyan,
Hawick District of Burghs
The Right honble. Joseph Chamberlain,
Birmingham (West Division)
The Right honble. Sir Lyon Playfair,
K.C.B., *Leeds (South Division)*
Robert William Duff, esquire, *Banff County*
The Right honble. Hugh Culling Eardley Childers, *Burgh of Edinburgh (South Division)*
The Right honble. Henry Campbell-Bannerman, *Stirling District of Burghs*
George Granville Leveson Gower, esquire, *Stafford County (North Western Division)*
Sir James Porter Corry, baronet, *Armagh County (Mid Division)*
The Right honble. William Ewart Gladstone, *Edinburgh County*
Feb 19—Stephen O'Mara, esquire, *Queen's County (Ossoy Division)*
Feb 22—William Henry O'Shea, esquire, *Galway Borough*
Feb 25—Right honble. Frederick Edward Gould Lambart, commonly called Viscount Kilcourse, *Somerset County (Southern Division)*
John William Mellor, esquire, *Grant ham*
Mar 1—Sir Edward James Reed, K.C.B., *Cardiff Borough*
Patrick O'Brien, esquire, *Monaghan County (Northern Division)*
Octavius Vaughan Morgan, esquire, *Battersea*

Parliamentary Elections Bill (Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Shirley)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 82]

Parliamentary Elections (Polls) Bill (Mr. Joseph Cowen, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Agnew)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 24]

Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) (Ireland) Bill (Mr. Twiss, Mr. Chance, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Alexander Blane)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 8]

Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) (Scotland) Bill (Mr. Hunter, Mr. Barclay, Dr. Clark, Mr. Esal-mont, Mr. Edmund Robertson)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 84]

Parliamentary Franchise Bill

(Mr. Moulton, Mr. A. Acland, Mr. Dillwyn)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Mar 3 [Bill 124]

Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill (Mr. Woodall,

Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Stanfeld, Mr. Yorke)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jun 22 [Bill 70]
Moved, "That the Bill now be read 2^o"
Feb 13, 1890; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (Sir Henry James); after further short debate, Question put: A. 102, N. 159; M. 57 (D. L. 6)
Original Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2^o

Parliamentary Procedure

Select Committee on Procedure, Question, Mr. Norris; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Feb 22, 1905
Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the question of Procedure in the House of Commons, and to report as to the amendment of existing Rules, and upon any New Rules which they may consider desirable for the efficient despatch of business" (The First Lord of the Treasury, Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Feb 22, 1921; after debate, Motion agreed to
Questions, Question, Captain Verney; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Feb 26, 1893

Parliamentary Voters (Registration) Bill

(Sir Julian Goldsmid, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Robson, Mr. M'Ivor)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 19 [Bill 100]

PARNELL, Mr. O. S., Cork

Belfast Main Drainage, Res. 1740
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Ireland—Irish National League—Murder of Mr. Curtin, 1630
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Payment of Members Bill (Mr. Spensley, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Boyd-Kinnear, Mr. Conybeare)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 24 [Bill 112]

PEARCE, Mr. W., Lanark, Govan

Glasgow Bridges, &c. 2R. 1358
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Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury
Mr. Henry H. Fowler; Feb 26, 1874; Ques-
tions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Secre-
tary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H.
Fowler) Mar 1, 1840

PERCY, Lord A., *St. George's, Hanover*
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ganization, Res. 1394, 1412

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ton

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ment, 2R. 1554

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S. W.

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town; Reply, The Lord President of the
Council (Earl Spencer) Feb 26, 1840

Police Constables' Pensions Bill

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Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. Rusk, Sir George
Russell)

c. Ordered; read 1st Jan 22 [Bill 28]

Police Forces Enfranchisement Bill

(Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Lord Claud
Hamilton, Mr. Radcliffe Cooke, Mr. Cowen,
Sir George Russell)

c. Ordered; read 1st Jan 22 [Bill 3]

Police Superannuation and Pensions Bill

Question, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson. Answer,
The Secretary of State for the Home De-
partment (Mr. Childers) Feb 25, 1896

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Derivative Settlements, Question, Mr. Norton;
Answer, The President of the Local Govern-
ment Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) Mar 1,
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Outdoor Relief during the Existing Distress,
Questions, Mr. Innes; Answers, The First
Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone),
The President of the Local Government
Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) Feb 16, 1891

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill

Mr. Edward Harrington, Mr. Edmund Dwyer
Gray, Mr. Barton, Mr. Timothy Healy, Mr.
Jordan;

c. Ordered; read 1st Jan 22 [Bill 5]

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(*Mr. Matthew Kenny, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. James O'Doherty, Mr. Timothy Harrington*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 40]

POSTMASTER GENERAL (*see* **MANNERS**,
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Mails between Cyprus and Alexandria, Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) *Feb 26, 1889*

Postal Union, The—Extension to Australasia, Questions, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Feb 22, 879; Feb 25, 1223*

Post Cards, Question, Mr. Northcote; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar 1, 1894*

Colonial Post Cards, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar 4, 1900*

The Universities, Question, Mr. Shirley; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Feb 25, 1208*; Question, Sir John R. Mowbray; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar 4, 1905*

The Parcel Post

Australia and New Zealand, Question, Mr. Spensley; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Feb 23, 1020*

Connection with France and Italy, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Lord John Manners) *Jan 25, 305*

France and England, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Feb 25, 1219*

Carriage of Parcels in Suburban and Rural Districts—Letter Carriers, Question, Mr. Boord; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Feb 22, 879*

Rural Letter Carriers, Question, Sir Richard Webster; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar 4, 1890*

Telegraph Department

Addresses of Telegrams, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar 1, 1525*; Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar 4, 1890*

Delivery of Telegrams, Question, Mr. Forwood; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Feb 22, 886*

Overhead Telegraph and Telephone Wires—The Recent Snowstorm, Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The Postmaster General (Lord John Manners) *Jan 25, 307*; Ques-

Post Office—Telegraph Department—cont.

tion, Mr. M'Iver; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Jesse Collings) *Mar 4, 1893*

Telegraph Clerks—Sunday Work, Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar 4, 1878*

Post Office—Submarine Telegraph Contract (St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa)

Moved, "That the Contract, dated the 19th day of January 1866, for the Construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa be approved" (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar 1, 1862*; after short debate, Debate adjourned Debate resumed *Mar 4, 2013*

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (Mr. Labouchere); after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

POWELL, Mr. F. S., Wigan

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment, 2R. 1087

Labour Statistics, Res. 1779

POWER, Mr. P. J., Waterford, E.

Supply—Public Education, Ireland, 1240

PRICE, Captain G. E., Devonport

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Woolwich Arsenal—Discharge of Workmen, 1913

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PRIME MINISTER (*see* **GLADSTONE**, Right Hon. W. E.)

Private Bill Legislation Bill (Mr.

Sellar, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Raikes, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Robertson)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 22]

Private Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) Bill

(Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Dilwyn, Mr. P. J. Power, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Mayne)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 25 [Bill 89]

Probation of First Offenders Bill

(Mr. Howard Vincent, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir Algernon Borthwick, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Molloy)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 39]

Public Health Act, 1875—Removal of Dead Bodies

Question, Mr. J. E. Johnson-Ferguson; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Feb 23, 1034* [See title *Metropolis*]

[cont.]

Public Health Acts (Improvement Expenses) Bill (*Mr. Dodds, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. Arnold Morley, Mr. William Cook, Mr. Bullard*)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 7]

Public Libraries, Parliamentary Papers for

Question, Mr. Kenrick; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*) Mar 4, 1881

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Disloyal Meeting at the Criterion Restaurant, Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The Attorney General (*Mr. Charles Russell*) Feb 26, 1886

Speech of Lord Randolph Churchill at Belfast, Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. John Morley*) Feb 19, 717; Feb 24, 1116; Question, Mr. Newnes; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department, Mr. Childers Feb 25, 1224; Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. W. E. Gladstone*) Feb 26, 1393;—*Extra Police*, Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. John Morley*) Mar 1, 1535; Observations, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Reply, The First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. W. E. Gladstone*), 1547

Speech of Mr. Chamberlain at Birmingham—"Ransom," Question, Baron Henry de Worms; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. J. Chamberlain*) Feb 22, 876; Notice of Question, Viscount Grimston; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. J. Chamberlain*) Feb 23, 1015

Speech of Mr. Thomas Hughes at Chester, Questions, Mr. Johns, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The Attorney General (*Mr. Charles Russell*) Feb 23, 1015

Speech of Mr. John Morley at Chelmsford, Questions, Baron Henry de Worms, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. John Morley*) Feb 22, 901

Public Offices (Sites)

Moved to resolve "That in the opinion of this House no further steps either of demolition or construction ought to be taken under the Public Offices Site Act before Her Majesty's Government have heard the deputation from the Institute of Architects, arranged to take place on the 1st of March next" (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) Feb 25, 1170; after short debate, Motion withdrawn. Observations, Mr. Berkeford Hope; Reply, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir William Harcourt Mar 4, 1902

Public Parks and Recreation Grounds—

Public Park at Dulwich

Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (*Sir James McGarel-Hogg*) Mar 4, 1906

PULSTON, Mr. J. H., Devonport

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Quarter Sessions (Boroughs) Bill

(*Mr. Pould Williams, Mr. John Bright, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Houldsworth*)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 37]

RAIKES, Right Hon. H. C., Cambridge University

Parliament—New Rules of Procedure, 320, 321

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Railway Regulation Bill (*Mr. Channing,*

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(*Durham*), *Mr. C. S. Parker, Mr. Jacoby,*

Mr. Lawson)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 10 [Bill 97]

Railways

Couplings, Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Mundella*) Feb 25, 1192

Fish Traffic Rates, Question, Mr. Macdonald Cameron; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. E. Stanhope*) Jan 26, 419

Railway Rates—Legislation, Questions, Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Dr. Cameron, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Mundella*) Feb 23, 897

RANSAY, Mr. J., Falkirk, &c.

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Rates (Dublin Bill)

(*Mr. Shashy, Mr.*

Edmond Dwyer Gray, Mr. Mayne, Mr.

Henry Gill, Mr. Timothy Harrington)

c. Ordered, read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 21]

RATHBONE, Mr. W., Carnarvonshire, Arfon

Supply—Orange River Territory, &c. 1618

Real Assets Administration Bill (*Mr.*

Arthur O'Connor, Mr. M'Larn, Mr. Molloy

c. Ordered, read 1^o Feb 22 [Bill 169]

REDESDALE, Earl of (Chairman of Committees)

Clerk of the Parliaments, Office of, and Office of Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, Appointment and Nomination of Select Committee, 1860

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Supply—Constabulary Force in Ireland, 829, 831

Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Dillon, Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Chance, Mr. Timothy Healy, Mr. Harrington, Mr. Small*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 13]

REID, Mr. H. G., *Aston Manor*
Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), Motion for Leave, 1332

Removal Terms (Burghe) (Scotland) Act (1881) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. J. W. Barclay, Mr. Eugene Wason*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 22 [Bill 105]

Representation of the People Act (1884) Extension Bill (*Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Lionel Cohen, Mr. Hunt, Sir Roper Lethbridge*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 25]

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c. Ordered; read 1^o Feb 22 [Bill 101]

Rivers Pollution (River Lea)

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the condition of the River Lea, and to make such recommendations as may appear necessary" (*Mr. Attorney General*) Feb 25, 1342; after short debate, Motion agreed to
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c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 27]

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Sir John St. Aubyn, Mr. Courtney, Mr.

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c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 28 [Bill 88]

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Richardson, Mr. Goutley, Mr. Paulton

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 74]

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c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 15]

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c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 44]

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- c. Ordered; read 1^o *Feb 24* [Bill 114]

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 farlane; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr.
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 tary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar 2,*
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 swer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Bal-
 four) *Feb 25, 1207*
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 Habitations, 849

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Shop Hours Regulation Bill

Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Burt, Mr. Macnaghten,
Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Rathbone

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 56]

Moved, “That the Bill be now read 2^o”

Feb 14, 679; after short debate, Motion

agreed to; Bill read 2^o

Moved, “That the Bill be referred to a Select

Committee;” Motion agreed to

Moved, “That this House do now adjourn”

(*Mr. Beresford Hope*); after short debate,

Question put; A. 137, N. 142; M. 8 (D.L. 8)

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(*Mr. Jordan, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Chance, Mr.*

Reynolds, Mr. Flynn

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 42]

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Questions, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Dillon; Answers,

The Secretary to the Admiralty (*Mr. Hib-*
bert) Mar 2, 1766

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Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis)**Bill [H.L.]**

(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*)

1. Presented; read 1^o Mar 4 (No. 27)

Southwark and Vauxhall Water Bill

c. Read 2^d, and committed to a Select Committee Mar 1, 1811

Spain

Case of Mr. Welford, Missionary at Fernando Po, Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) Feb 22, 893

Commercial Negotiations, Questions, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Tomlinson; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bourke) Jan 26, 420

Differential Duties, Question, Mr. Forwood; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) Feb 23, 1035

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Charity Commissioners—Schemes for Christ's Hospital, 1025, 1875

Paris Industrial Exhibition, 1547

Spirits in Bond (Great Britain and Ireland) Bill (Mr. Flynn, Colonel Nolan, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Peter McDonald, Mr. O'Hanlon)

c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 52]

c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 52]

Sporting Lands Rating (Scotland) Bill

(Dr. Cameron, Marquess of Stafford, Mr. Mackintosh, Dr. Farquharson)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 25 [Bill 86]

Read 2^d, after short debate Feb 26, 1487

Committee—R.P. Mar 1

STAFFORD, Marquess of, Sutherland

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STANLEY, Right Hon. Colonel (afterwards Sir F. A.) (Secretary of State for the Colonies), Lancashire, N., Blackpool

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STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL, Lord
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Questions, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Sutherland; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bourke) Jan 25, 304; Question, Mr. Magnie; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) Feb 19, 711

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Navy Estimates—Shipbuilding Votes, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty Mr. Ritchie Jan 26, 425
Army Estimates, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone Mar 4, 1916

SUPPLY

Resolved, That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty Feb 14

Estimates referred

Considered in Committee Feb 19, 726—CIVIL SERVICES SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-86—CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS—Votes 7, 10, 15—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS—Votes 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 15, 34, 41—CLASS I.I.—LAW AND JUSTICE—Votes 5, 17, 27, 29

Resolutions reported, and, after debate, agreed to Feb 21, 843

Considered in Committee Feb 25, 1224—CIVIL SERVICES SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-86

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SUPPLY—cont.

—CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART—Votes 7, 8, 14—CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES—Votes 3 & 8—CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES—Votes 1 & 4—CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS—Votes 4 & 6:—REVENUE DEPARTMENTS—Votes 2 & 3—NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-86)

Resolutions reported Feb 26

Considered in Committee Mar 1, 1530—CIVIL SERVICES ESTIMATES—CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES—Votes 1 & 8—ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1885-86

Resolutions reported Mar 3

Considered in Committee Mar 4, 3000—CIVIL SERVICES ESTIMATES—CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS—Vote 1—R.F.

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SWINBURNE, Sir J., Staffordshire, Lichfield
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TALBOT, Mr. J. G., Oxford University
Police and Sanitary Regulations, Res. 1364

Tariff and Customs Act, 1876—Fetures

Question, Mr. King; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) Jan 25, 310; Question, Mr. King; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) Feb 19, 708

Technical Education (Ireland) Bill

(Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Lane, Mr. A. O'Connor, Mr. Edmund Dwyer Gray)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 18]

TEMPLE, Sir R., Worcester, Bromham

Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 146; Motion for Adjournment, 394

TENNANT, Sir C., Peebles and Selkirk

Scotland—Fisheries—Tweed Fisheries Acts, 1733

Tenure of Land Scotland Bill

(Mr. Barclay, Sir George Balfour, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Fairclough)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 26]

Tenure of Town Houses (Ireland) Bill

Mr. Crilly, Mr. Small, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Peter McDonald, Sir Thomas Hamilton)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 11]
Bill withdrawn, after long debate Feb 24, 1117

Thames, Pollution of the—Report of the Royal Commission
Questions, Mr. Thorold Rogers; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) Feb 25, 1220

Theatres, &c. Metropolis) Bill

(Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Macfarlane)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 69]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^o" Feb 19, 837
Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (Mr. Henry H. Fowler); after short debate, Motion agreed to; Debate adjourned

THURLOW, Lord

Freshwater Fisheries (Eels), 2R. 1169
Metropolis—Riots, The, 563, 576, 577, 843
Sunday Meetings in the Squares and Parks, 1178
Metropolitan Police Force—Departmental Committee of 1879, 1017

Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment Bill

(Mr. Brookfield, Mr. Farquharson)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 65]

Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment Bill

(Mr. Norton, Mr. Knatchbull-Inglessen, Mr. Pomfret)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 61]

Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Redemption Bill

(Mr. Thomas Bolton, Mr. Thorold Rogers, Mr. Boriase, Sir John Lubbock)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 63]

Tithe Rent-Charge Recovery Bill

(Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Kenyon)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Mar 4 [Bill 129]

Tobacco (Ireland) Bill

(Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Pyne, Mr. Barry, Mr. Condon, Mr. O'Hanlon)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 32]

TOLLEMACHE, Mr. H. J., Cheshire, Eddisbury

Allotments and Small Holdings—The Returns, 1219

TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., Preston

Coal Mines Regulation Act (1872) Amendment, 2R. 1851, 1855
Compensation for Damages, 2R. 2068
Spain—Commercial Negotiations, 421
Supply—County Courts, 773, 774
Courts of Law and Justice in Scotland, &c. 788
Trade and Commerce — Bounties to Italian Shipping, 310

Town Holdings

Moved "That a Select Committee be appointed, 'to inquire into the terms of occupation and the compensation for improvements possessed by the occupiers of town houses and holdings in Great Britain and Ireland'" (Colonel Nolan) Mar 2, 1804; after short debate, Motion agreed to

Trade and Commerce

Bounties to Italian Shipping, Question, Mr. Tomlinson; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. E. Stanhope) Jan 23, 310
Falsely Marked Goods, Questions, Mr. Hickman, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) Mar 1, 1843
Imports of Butter and Butterine, Question, Captain Field; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) Feb 23, 1031
Subsidies by Foreign Nations, Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) Mar 4, 1004

Trade and Industry, Depression of

Distress at Shipbuilding Ports, Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) Feb 19, 710
The Commission of Inquiry, Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) Feb 19, 714; Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) Feb 19, 715
The Unemployed—Harbours of Refuge, Question, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) Feb 19, 713

Tramways Acts (Ireland) Amendment Bill

(Colonel Nolan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Foley, Mr. Harris, Mr. Molloy)

c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 78]

TREASURY—First Lord (*see* GLADSTONE, Right Hon. W. E.)

TREASURY—Lord of (*see* GOWER, Mr. G. G. L.)

TREASURY—Financial Secretary to (*see* JACKSON, Mr. W. L.)

TREASURY — Financial Secretary to (*see* FOWLER, Mr. Henry H.)

TREASURY — Secretary to (*see* MORLEY, Mr. Arnold)

Trees (Ireland) Bill

(Mr. Gilhooly, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Marwyn, Mr. Pyne, Mr. O'Hanlon)
c. Ordered; read 1^o Jan 22 [Bill 30]

